

CASE STUDY

University of Manchester: Training for both students and staff

About University of Manchester:

- Russell Group University ranked 34th in the world, eighth in Europe and sixth in the UK (2018)
- About 40,000 students
- More than 12,000 staff
- Annual income of more than £1 billion
- 83% of research ranked as 'world-leading' or 'internationally excellent' (2014)
- Largest UK medical school with over 400 students per year

Why SAGE & THYME training was chosen

SAGE & THYME was a training package that answered two of the current needs:

- How can the communication skills curriculum further support early year medical students to feel able to recognise and respond to patient's emotions and concerns safely?
- How can the University further support staff to feel enabled to support students by recognising and responding to their worries and concerns?



Benefits of SAGE & THYME training for Universities:

- Teaches clinical students (e.g. medicine, nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, speech and language therapy) how to listen and respond to patients' emotional concerns, without needing to 'fix' them
- Teaches staff how to provide low level emotional support to students, knowing when they should refer a student on to mental health services
- Teaches staff and students a structure on how to support anyone with worries (e.g. colleagues, peers)

Adoption Process:

- As the SAGE & THYME training strengthened the pre-existing aims of the medical school curriculum the senior teaching staff approved its adoption.
- Funding was obtained from CHERIL (Centre for Higher Education Research, Innovation and Learning), an internal education fund aimed at enhancing teaching and learning, to pay for 12 staff members to be trained as SAGE & THYME facilitators and to cover the cost of the licence and the packs needed to run the training.
- A range of staff (medical doctors, allied health professionals, non-clinical academics, and actors) were enrolled on to the SAGE & THYME Facilitator training.
- To fit within the constraints of the timetable, Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) gave the University permission to amend how the traditional 3 hours SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshop was taught and agreed a revised approach to the teaching.
- The teaching was delivered to first-year medical students in their first semester.
- The workshop was split into two parts: part 1 covered the first group work exercise and the presentation in a 50 minutes lecture slot to all year 1 students; and part 2 (a week later) covered the remaining group work and rehearsals in 2 hours to 30 students at a time.

Adoption Process:

- Three optional 3 hours workshops were also offered to year 2 medical students with positive evaluation.
- In addition to adoption in the medical school, the school of nursing, midwifery and social work provided SAGE & THYME training to its first-year nursing students. As with the medical students, a different approach to the teaching was agreed with MFT, to fit within the timetabling restrictions.
- Five workshops were delivered to University staff throughout the year with positive evaluation and demand for more workshops in 2019/20.
- As the students are only taught SAGE & THYME once per year, running the workshop for staff has the additional benefit of keeping the SAGE & THYME facilitators' skills current.

Impact of SAGE & THYME training

The medical students were asked to write "one sentence that sums up your first thought/feeling about speaking to a worried patient/or their relatives" before and after the workshop:

Before the workshop students wrote:	I feel worried I might make it worse Do they want to talk to <i>me</i> ? I want help
After the workshop students wrote:	Feel more confident/comfortable Have a strategy (e.g. ask if there's anything else, repeat back) Follow structured approach

- The medical students also rated the following (mean values where maximum score was 10):
 - Confidence in talking about emotional troubles: **8.29**
 - Willingness to talk to people who are emotionally troubled: **8.25**
 - How likely the training was to influence their practice: **8.6**
 - **59%** of students reported the training impacted the way they spoke to patients on clinical visits 8 months later.
- Initial evaluation from staff indicated that 100% would recommend the training to others.
- The data collected from the staff and nursing students are still being evaluated.



Cost of setting-up training and evaluation (2018 prices)

- S&T facilitator training: ~£12,800
- Licence: £1,320 (annual fee)
- Learner packs: ~£1,100
- Consultancy: ~£600
- Evaluation: ~£2,300
- TOTAL: £18,120**

About SAGE & THYME

The SAGE & THYME Foundation Level workshop was created by staff and a patient at Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust, to teach anyone how to notice distress, listen carefully and respond helpfully to anyone who has concerns. It places published research evidence about effective communication skills within a memorable structure using the mnemonic 'SAGE & THYME'.

To discuss how SAGE & THYME could benefit your organisation, please contact Rachael/Mandy on:

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