

## 'Education Hour': online sexual health continuing professional development during the COVID-19 pandemic provides opportunities and inclusivity

Sexual health services have continued to provide care for patients throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Maintaining an engaged workforce has been challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic due to shielding, quarantining, experiencing redeployment, having unscheduled time off and concerns about COVID-19 transmission at work. We have previously shown that engaging clinicians in continuing professional development (CPD) improves work satisfaction and reduces unscheduled time off work.<sup>2</sup> In July of 2020, we reintroduced a dedicated hour of live online sexual health education, 'Education Hour', using Microsoft teams with two 20 min prerecorded presentations of either audit, quality improvement projects, back to basics, research or journal club and involved the whole multi-disciplinary team (MDT) and wider Sussex sexual health network. Clinicians have access to the presentations after the live event. Forty out of 101 clinicians (17 doctors, 13 nurses, 8 health advisers, 1 pharmacist and 1 administration officer) responded to an anonymous online survey evaluating Education Hour. Clinicians rated Education Hour as excellent (median Likert score 4.55/5.0) and stated that Education Hour improved their

clinical knowledge (4.42) and their clinical practice (4.33) and felt it is safer accessing education online (4.15). Furthermore, 42% accessed the presentations after the event. In the free-text responses, clinicians appear to value the inclusivity of Education Hour as it involves more of the MDT than face-to-face education previously did, partly because prerecorded online presentations are less intimidating, so all members of the MDT feel comfortable presenting or engaging in the postpresentation discussion. Clinicians stated that Education Hour has improved team building and communication between clinicians and departments and is accessible anytime and anywhere, for those working less than full time or remotely. Provision of online education appears to be a highly acceptable method of providing CPD during the COVID-19 pandemic and offers unique opportunities, including improved accessibility and team building in a less intimidating environment.

**Aisling Moyle,<sup>1</sup> Sophie Ross,<sup>1</sup> Martin Jones,<sup>2</sup> Judith Zhou,<sup>3</sup> Colin Fitzpatrick,<sup>1</sup> Daniel Richardson** <sup>1,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, Brighton, UK

<sup>2</sup>Avenue House, Eastbourne District General Hospital, Eastbourne, UK

<sup>3</sup>Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Worthing, UK

<sup>4</sup>Brighton and Sussex Medical School, Brighton, UK

**Correspondence to** Dr Daniel Richardson, Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust, Brighton, UK; docdanielr@hotmail.com

**Handling editor** Anna Maria Geretti

**Contributors** DR, AM and SR designed the study and collected and analysed the data. All authors contributed to the final manuscript.

**Funding** The authors have not declared a specific grant for this research from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent for publication** Not required.

**Provenance and peer review** Not commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

This article is made freely available for use in accordance with BMJ's website terms and conditions for the duration of the covid-19 pandemic or until otherwise determined by BMJ. You may use, download and print the article for any lawful, non-commercial purpose (including text and data mining) provided that all copyright notices and trade marks are retained.

© Author(s) (or their employer(s)) 2020. No commercial re-use. See rights and permissions. Published by BMJ.



**To cite** Moyle A, Ross S, Jones M, *et al.* *Sex Transm Infect* Epub ahead of print: [please include Day Month Year]. doi:10.1136/sextrans-2020-054872

Received 10 November 2020

Revised 16 November 2020

Accepted 28 November 2020

*Sex Transm Infect* 2020;**0**:1.

doi:10.1136/sextrans-2020-054872

### ORCID iD

Daniel Richardson <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0955-6307>

### REFERENCES

- 1 Crane MA, Popovic A, Stolbach AI, *et al.* Reporting of sexually transmitted infections during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Sex Transm Infect* 2020;sextrans-2020-054805.
- 2 Fitzpatrick C, Buckingham T, Merrell McCoe J J, *et al.* Engaging sexual health nurses in research and quality improvement is associated with higher job satisfaction and lower rates of unscheduled time off work. *International Journal of STD AIDS*.