Appendix 1: Email (survey instrument)

Dear........

Factors Influencing the Inclusion of ‘Complementary and Alternative Medicine’ (CAM) in Undergraduate Medical Education

I am writing to Deans (or equivalent) of UK medical schools in respect of the above research project. This work, funded by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, aims to examine the inclusion of ‘Complementary and Alternative Medicine’ (CAM) in undergraduate medical syllabi. (The attached document provides further background to the project.) The growth of CAM provision within Higher Education has recently attracted the interest of various academics; however such attention has largely centred on non-clinical (BSc) degrees. The aim of the present project is to systematically consider the issue in respect of clinical undergraduate medical degrees (MBBS, MBChB or equivalent).

To this end, I would be extremely grateful if you would be so kind as to provide answers to the following (six) questions. Alternatively, if another colleague better placed than yourself to provide answers, I would be grateful if you would be able to pass this request to that person. Answers may be short (simply yes/no), however further details would be greatly appreciated where applicable. Answers will be collated, evaluated and the results submitted for publication in a peer reviewed academic journal. I hope that this will result in the issue gaining more attention, and possibly helping to inform future syllabus design. All answers will be treated in the strictest confidence. Answers will not be identified by institution name or interviewee name.

1. Does your syllabus presently contain any taught or practice components relating to the subject and methods commonly termed “complementary & alternative medicine” (CAM)?
2. If your syllabus has no CAM components, has the subject been discussed amongst your staff?
3. Are you aware of any requests, pressures or requirements from others (such as students, practitioners, the GMC, etc) to incorporate CAM into the syllabus?
4. Do you have any plans to amend your syllabus in respect of CAM components?
5. Do you consider that your staff would generally be in favour of or opposed to an increased prominence of CAM in medical education?
6. Do you personally consider the matter to be a problem?

A subsequent aim of this project is to follow up where applicable by conducting semi-structured interviews (either face-to-face or by telephone). I would be grateful if you would indicate whether you would be willing to participate in such an interview.

I do hope you will be able to co-operate with this research project.

Best wishes
Kevin

***************************************************************************
K.R. Smith, PhD
Lecturer / Biomedical Sciences Programme Leader
School of Contemporary Sciences
Abertay University
Dundee
United Kingdom
DD1 1HG
tel +44 (0)1382 308664

Relevant publications