Doctors for Choice UK Education Roadshow: Inspiring the Next Generation of Abortion Providers

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Background

- Limited abortion teaching in UK medical schools[1]
- Teaching focused on ethico-legal aspects, rather than clinical patient care[1]
- Students recognise abortion teaching as important[2]
- Inequalities in teaching and learning opportunities across UK[3]

Aim: Develop an alternative approach for comprehensive abortion education

Methods

The DfCUK Student Conference was delivered as a one-day education event based in London for UK healthcare students, including Medical, Nursing, Midwifery and PA students.

Talks: UK Law & Abortion Provision; Clinical Aspects of Abortion; Abortion Stigma and Respectful Care; Education for Choice & Abortion Talk

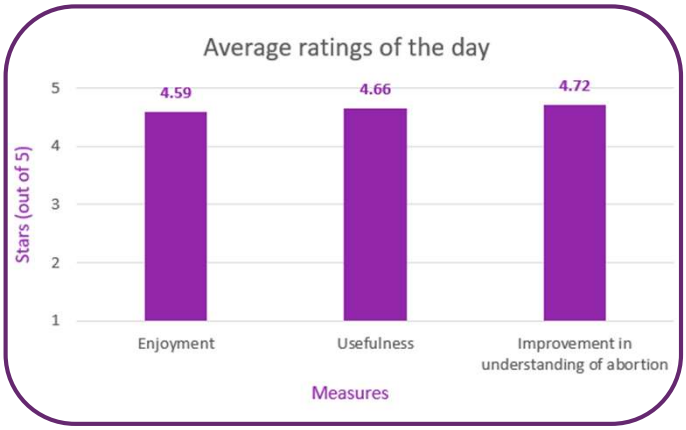
Workshops: Manual Vacuum Aspiration practical; Clinical Communication Skills in Abortion; Abortion and the Arts

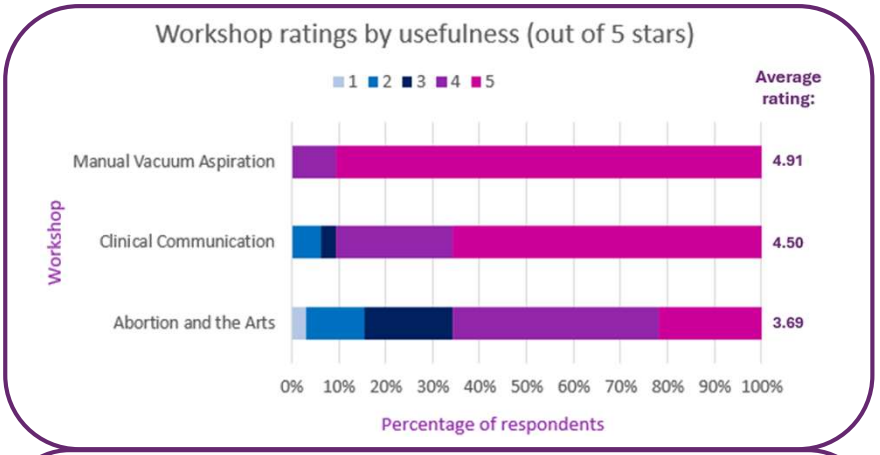
Panel: Abortion Providers Panel

Following the conference, attendees completed an anonymous survey evaluating the educational value of the day and its individual sessions.

Results

35 student attendees → 32 survey respondents (91%)
(Degrees represented in the survey: 29 Medical,1 Nursing, 1 Midwifery, 1 PA)





What attendees liked…

- "Passionate", "knowledgeable" and "inspiring" speakers
- "I loved the interaction aspect…felt very engaging"
- "Good mix of information and workshops"
- Many opportunities to ask questions
- Meeting like-minded people with different backgrounds and stages in training
- "The real-life experience of the panel was invaluable"

What they suggested…

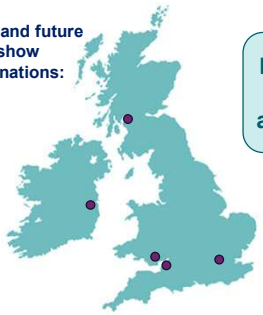
- An outline of career pathways into abortion care and portfolio-building
- "Add in challenging cases to the communication workshop!"
- "A patient's perspective would be really interesting"
- More hands-on workshops, in particular producing something in the arts workshop
- More time to network with panellists and other students
- "More education on navigating the emotional aspects of abortion"

Conclusions

- **Attendees found the event a useful and engaging way of accessing abortion education**
- **Future changes could include developing sessions on careers advice, patient perspectives and supporting patients' decision-making**

Following the conference, the model has since been developed into a UK wide 'roadshow', touring UK and Irish medical schools, run by medical students with support from local doctors.

Past and future roadshow destinations:



- Improve access to evidence-based abortion education
- Inspire future abortion care providers
- Engage a wider range of medical students
- Reduce abortion stigma

Next Steps

- **Recruit and support medical students and doctors to run local roadshows**
- **Develop resources based on feedback**
- **Expand geographical reach of roadshow**
- **Integrate teaching into medical school curricula to ensure all students receive comprehensive teaching on abortion care**

References
1. Rennison C, Woodhead EJ, Horan C, Lohr PA, Kavanagh J. Abortion education in UK medical schools: a survey of medical educators. BMJ Sex Reprod Health. 2022 Jul;48(3):210-216. doi: 10.1136/bmjsrh-2021-201387. Epub 2022 Apr 4. PMID: 35379751.
2. Horan C, Zadeh PG, Rennison C, Hoggart L, Kavanagh J. A qualitative analysis of medical students' attitudes to abortion education in UK medical schools. BMJ Sex Reprod Health. 2022 Jul;48(3):205-209. doi: 10.1136/bmjsrh-2021-201385. Epub 2022 Jan 31. PMID: 35102002.
3. Doctors for Choice UK, Kavanagh J, Webb H, Islam M, Hallgarten L, Lyons A. Freedom of Information Request about abortion teaching at UK medical schools [Internet]. 2026 Sept [cited 2026 Oct 27]. Available from: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60b12062ad04e748c6c49fc9/t/6ac63cdf76031e5f7810d1a4/1791376607350/DFC+FOI+Report+Sept+2026.pdf

We are grateful to our sponsors for supporting the day and enabling us to reimburse attendees' travel costs to make the event more accessible:
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