

RISE-MD: RUSH INTEGRATIVE SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL DOCTORS

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INTRODUCTION

Addiction Medicine faculty in the Dept. of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and The Center for Compulsive Behavior and Addiction, at Rush University recently developed a new multipronged educational program designed to strengthen Rush Univ infrastructure regarding prevention and treatment for substance use disorders (SUD). This is called the Rush Integrative SUD Education (RISE) program.

In 2017, 19.7 million Americans ages 12 or older had SUD related to use of alcohol or illicit drugs (National Survey on Drug Use and Health, SAMHSA).

Drug overdoses claimed 63,600 lives in 2016, 70,237 lives in 2017, and 67,367 lives in 2018. This is a total of 201,204 lives in three years (CDC).

As patients suffering with addictions are encountered in most medical disciplines, addiction training of all physicians is critical. Yet, medical schools typically lack a comprehensive SUD educational curriculum.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Overarching Goal

To increase the number of physicians that deliver high quality, evidence-based treatment for SUD, including opioid use disorder (OUD).

Objective 1

Augment SUD knowledge and skills of our medical students *via* integrating additional, evidence-based SUD-information into the existing medical college curriculum.

Objective 2

Provide medical student graduates with the DEA-X buprenorphine waiver training to address the treatment needs created by the opioid epidemic.

Objective 3

Develop online and new face-to-face delivery methods of SUD-related topics relevant to all health professionals that can be readily implemented and inserted into existing curricula.

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APPROACH TO EDUCATIONAL CHANGES

The RISE program was created in 2019. RISE was designed to be an evidence-based, inter-professional health education program with a band width that allows for adaptation to all health professional colleges at Rush University, i.e., medical, health sciences and nursing. To efficiently dovetail SUD topics into existing curricula, RISE-MD worked directly with the Medical School Committee for Curriculum and Education. Thus far, aspects of the curriculum have been implemented in medical school and physician assistant training. Here, we outline the approaches used for integrating addiction medicine into existing education programs for each of the four years of medical student experience at Rush University Medical College.

Fourth Year Medical Students

The COVID-19 pandemic imposed unprecedented educational challenges for training of our medical students, and courses had to be immediately redeveloped to accommodate social distancing. Accordingly, we implemented a *virtual addiction medicine elective* for the summer of 2020. Using the interactive learning platform Entrada, this elective was designed in 3 weeks by addiction medicine faculty working with the Office of Integrated Medical Education. This online course contains ~30 hours of curriculum material, including the following topics:

- The language of addiction
- How stigma affects the treatment of SUD
- Clinical neurobiology of use disorders related to opioids, alcohol and stimulants
- Harm reduction education specific to opioid use disorder
- The Provider Clinical Support System (PCSS) buprenorphine waiver course for medical students (released in April 2020)
- Opioid stewardship *via* use of the CDC interactive, online education modules on responsible opioid prescribing
- Online naloxone training for opioid overdose prevention
- Special populations and vulnerability for SUD
- Education on physicians' risk factors for SUD and treatment

Third Year Medical Students

For the class of 2022, curricular integration for addiction medicine topics occurred in the *Basic Life Support* course. Here, opioid overdose prevention training was provided, and the online PCSS buprenorphine waiver course was required in the Psychiatry Clerkship.

Second and First Year Medical Students

These are didactic-heavy years in medical training, and RISE-MD faculty worked closely with the various Course Directors and the Medical School Committee on Curriculum and Education to integrate addiction education into this curriculum. Key to this partnership was the message that patients with addictions will be encountered in most medical disciplines, and that *ALL* students need a firm appreciation for, and understanding of addition disorders. Accordingly, RISE-MD faculty and the Course Directors were able to identify a timeline and key topics for addiction-relevant teaching throughout years 1 and 2 curriculum. The chosen venue is short, online teaching modules that focus on the “fundamentals” of key issues related to addictions, include the following:

- Neurobiology of addiction
- The language of addiction
- How stigma affects the treatment of SUD
- Neuroplasticity and how drug and behavioral addictions change the brain
- Newly formulated addiction-relevant case-based learning modules

SUMMARY

The initial phases of the RISE-MD program demonstrated that addiction education can be efficiently integrated into an existing medical school curriculum. Key to this process is utilizing virtual platforms, working closely with Course Directors and Institutional Committees and Offices that are responsible for the Curriculum, and to dovetail into existing courses (e.g., Basic Life Support) and/or electives (e.g., Addiction Medicine). While assessments and evaluations are ongoing, preliminarily feedback from participating students is very positive.

We plan to disseminate the RISE-MD program and its components to other medical schools and health professional programs via conferences, publications and the MED-ED portal.

We expect that this innovative and timely addiction education program will significantly increase the number of highly qualified practitioners able to care for patients with SUD, and drug and behavioral addictions.

For more information on curriculum detail, please contact Dr. Ruchi Fitzgerald using Ruchi_M_Fitzgerald@rush.edu