The impact of being part of a THET Links Partnership to develop a palliative care degree program in Sub Saharan Africa

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Background:
A THET (Tropical Health & Education Trust) Links Health Partnership was established between a UK Faculty comprising clinical & academic palliative care staff from across the UK to support the development of a palliative care degree in Uganda.

Aim: To identify the impact on the UK Faculty of participating in the partnership
Method: Descriptive electronic survey, comprising open ended & closed questions sent to all UK Faculty (17) 14 (82%) responded. Data analysed using thematic analysis & descriptive statistics.

Impact of the visit on teaching/education skills
7 (50%) respondents noted the visit had impacted upon their UK practice. Examples included teaching, writing degree materials & delivery.

"I am more confident to deliver sessions without PowerPoint & they are generally more interactive." UK Faculty respondent 3

More interactive methods (the African students were not fans of didactic teaching although did like written information to be provided)" UK Faculty respondent 9

Impact on Clinical Practice
Most respondents gave examples including working with limited resources, greater knowledge of symptoms & increased confidence.

"Cost effective investigation and management." UK Faculty respondent 12

"Previously, as a trainee there was always someone else to ask, but I now have more confidence in my abilities & feel ready for a Consultant post." UK Faculty respondent 10

"Much more aware of working without access to normal range of investigations & interventions" UK Faculty respondent 8

Impact on Personal Development
11 respondents commented on the impact on their own personal development.

"Every trip I make helps me grow personally in a variety of different ways, usually in terms of adaptability, team-work, learning how to mentor & support staff and students". UK Faculty respondent 11

"I cannot forget the experience of seeing people struggle for the basics in life and have found some new perspective in my own life in relation to this". UK Faculty respondent 8

Conclusion:
Being part of this volunteer programme has shown multiple benefits for the participants, including the personal impact on their lives.

As well as the overarching goal of improved access to palliative care through education.

This model clearly has positive impacts for UK staff.

First Degree Cohort Graduation

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