



UCL

The Estelle Wolfson Emerging Women Leaders Programme at UCL

A report prepared for Lady Estelle Wolfson
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It is our pleasure to provide this report detailing the activity of the Estelle Wolfson Emerging Women Leaders programme at UCL, established with your generous support, for which we continue to be immensely grateful.

Below we have summarised our key milestones and achievements since the programme's launch. We have been unavoidably impacted by COVID-19 but we are confident that this has been mitigated through a swift move to online platforms, and by the enthusiastic uptake of this shift by the programme members.

Emerging Women Leaders programme: aims and objectives

Your support has enabled us to develop and run the Estelle Wolfson Emerging Women Leaders programme to increase the readiness of women doctors for leadership positions, and to explore options for further expansion.

Our objectives, on setting this up, were:

- To build on the success of the first two Lady Estelle Wolfson Emerging Women Leader programmes at the Royal College of Surgeons of England (RCSE), and the Royal College of Physicians (RCP)
- To engage high profile and female medical leaders (from UCL and beyond) in the support of emerging women leaders
- To bespoke this core short course for female doctors, who are interested in, and show potential for, leadership positions
- To create a short, blended-learning component to the course, using the digital educational technology expertise available at UCL
- To explore the potential for collaboration with other medical schools, and for international expansion of the course
- To work with the RCSE and RCP organisers to share experience, and to enhance networking opportunities for the programme participants
- To embed the programme into the medical school, so it is sustainable for the future

Impact of COVID-19

Covid-19 has had an impact on the course by necessitating the transferral of teaching from face-to-face to an online platform as UCL Medical School followed Government advice and closed all its buildings to protect students and staff. This occurred in March 2020 shortly after our third face-to-face session, and we were quick to explore alternative methods to deliver the course content. Having now moved to a virtual platform we have had three very successful online events with all speakers giving their presentations remotely. The WhatsApp group, and online resources are very popular. Participants have also been very positive about their mentors.

Due to the interruption, the first year of the course will now be running until December 2020. The participants are keen to have another face-to-face event if possible, and we will look to the future with the hope of arranging this, should the global situation allow. The next online session will be on the 17th September. We still have robust plans in place to continue to develop two further years of EWL courses.

Recruitment

We launched a recruitment campaign in the autumn of 2019 using local contacts and social media.

We were delighted to have had more than 60 applicants from female doctors who were towards the end of their registrar training, or early in their consultant appointment. Our selection criteria included prioritising a mix of seniority, specialty and ethnicity. The candidates were more likely to be selected if they had not been on a formal leadership course before.

Twelve participants were enrolled on the course, which began with the first face-to-face day on the 19th December 2019. The course was free of charge for participants, but they were expected to cover their own travel and subsistence expenses.

Highlights

External speakers have comprised of an outstanding selection of well-known female leaders who shared their leadership journeys, highlighting their pitfalls while being a female leader and their approach to overcoming these barriers. All of these senior women have provided excellent insight into how to progress, when to be tough, the importance of the team, and how to remain persistent and resilient.

So far, we have hosted:

Dr Suzy Lishman, past President of the RCPATH, pathologist

Professor Carrie McEwan, Chair AoMRC, ophthalmologist

Professor Jenny Higham, Principal, St Georges Medical School, gynaecologist

Professor Wendy Reid, Medical Director HEE, gynaecologist and medical educator

Professor Wendy Burn, President RC Psych, psychiatrist

Professor Lesley Regan, President RCOG, gynaecologist

Professor Ijeoma Uchegbu, Professor of Pharmacy at UCL and Pro-Vice Provost for Africa and the Middle East, pharmacologist

Ms Celia Ingham Clark, NHS England - general surgeon (online)

Dr Henrietta Hughes, National Guardian general practitioner (online)

Dr Jayne Kavanagh, women's health campaigner medical educator and ethicist (online)

Professor Geeta Menon, Postgraduate Dean and ophthalmologist

Dr Faye Gishen Associate Director UCLMS, palliative care physician

Dr Ruth Law RCP Councillor, geriatrician

Upcoming Speakers

Professor Dame Parveen Kumar-Medical Author, gastroenterologist

Dr Clare Gerada, Chair NHS Assembly, GP

Dame Clare Marx, Chair GMC and surgeon

Dr Lesley Kay, GIRFT lead and rheumatologist

Mentoring

Each participant was paired with a mentor, and encouraged to meet for a mentoring session approximately every six weeks. The mentors were paired to reflect the interests of the participants. A guide to being a mentor and a mentee were provided.

To support each session and provide the blended learning component, an online repository was created where course materials were stored, and an informal WhatsApp group set up for participants to share their thoughts and ideas.

Participants were also encouraged to keep a reflective log of what they had been learning throughout the course.

Informal feedback for these sessions was extremely positive. The participants particularly liked the opportunity to interact with the successful female role models.

We have planned a more formal personal evaluation at the end of the course, when participants will present a reflective account to the group on how the course has impacted their own leadership journey throughout the year.

Feedback can be viewed on our Twitter account, [accessible through this link](#).

We appointed a part-time course administrator on a sessional basis, to maintain contact with participants, support the online resource development, and provide administrative support to the course directors.

Face-to-face teaching

The face-to-face events were designed to provide interactive theory sessions following a theme in leadership training and were delivered by Course Directors Professor Dame Jane Dacre, Professor of Medical Education and Ms Deirdre Wallace, Principal Teaching Fellow from UCL.

Small group facilitation was provided by Ms Tina Nyazika and Ms Cat Phillips, both senior educators from UCL Medical School.

Each face-to-face event was enhanced by the addition of a presentation by at least two inspirational leadership journey narratives provided by successful female doctors. The aim was to highlight learning points in their career journeys, provide insights in how to overcome hurdles along the way and to serve as role models.



Above: an interactive face-to-face session taking place

The future of the programme

We have modified the course to be able to continue delivering an effective leadership curriculum during COVID-19. We will continue with a virtual platform with the delivery of live online events until December. The participants have formed a very cohesive group, and keep in touch with each other regularly. There is no doubt they would prefer face-to-face teaching but appreciate our efforts to continue the course during this pandemic. We hope to have a final face-to-face session with a celebration towards the end of the year.

We have not yet extended the course internationally due to COVID-19, but continue to keep links with the other Emerging Women Leaders courses.

We will need to remain flexible, but are determined to offer the course to another cohort as soon as possible. This will be preferable using the original format, but if not, we will continue with the responsive online version. The impact of COVID-19 has forced us to modernise our remote delivery. This process will continue.

Thank you for enabling us to set up the Estelle Wolfson Emerging Women Leaders Programme at UCL. With emerging evidence of the negative impact of the pandemic on women's careers, making this course is more important than ever, and we are deeply grateful for your support.

For more information, please contact:

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