

EMBEDDING SUSTAINABILITY IN MEDICAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

The Student MedAID London Approach

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BACKGROUND

Student MedAID London is a volunteer organisation designed to coordinate the redistribution of excess medical supplies to places in need, with the intention of alleviating lack of access to medical equipment.

Additionally, the platform also strives to embed sustainability education amongst medical students; achieved through a series of social media informative campaigns and events.

METHODS

HOW ARE WE INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY IN MEDICAL PRACTICE?

Under the leadership of our Resources director, student volunteers from different universities across London contacted local hospitals and GP practices for excess equipment. We employed the WHO sustainability criteria to evaluate specific offers for donation.

- The equipment is appropriate to the setting
- The equipment is not expired, of good quality and safe
- The equipment is affordable and cost-effective
- The equipment is easy to use and safe
- The equipment conforms to the recipients policies, plans and guidelines

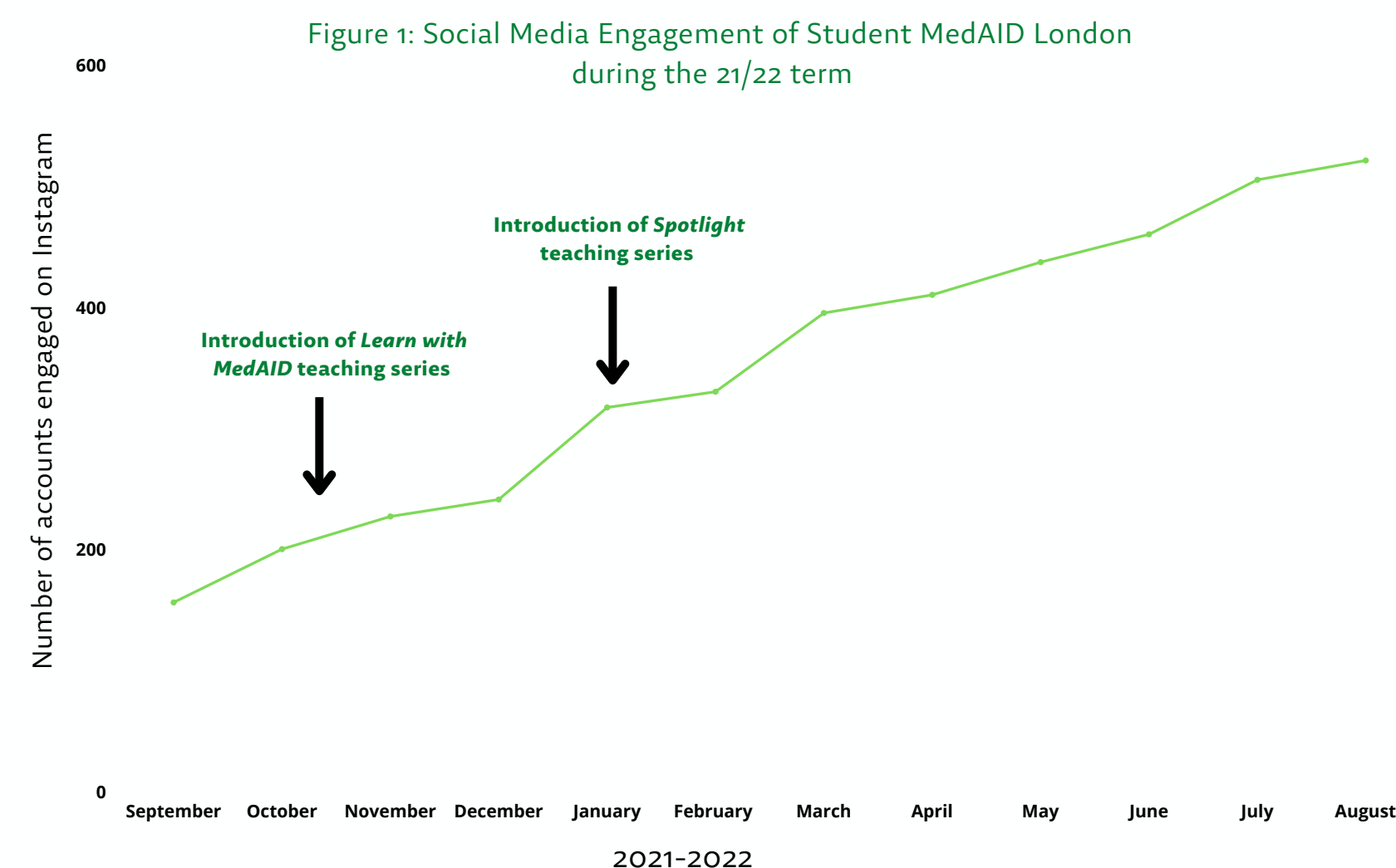
Further methods to ensure sustainability including utilisation of the "Flipped Model Operation" - where any equipment donated to an organisation specifically meets their needs and reduces stockpiling on both parties. Additionally, each receiving organisation was further screened for eligibility to receive particular types of equipment such as availability of a reliable water supply. This was to reduce incidence of inappropriate donations being made to communities ill equipped to operate them, constituting an increase in financial burden on their part by disposal costs, as well as loss of opportunity costs on our end, due to failure in ensuring distributive justice.

HOW ARE WE INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY IN MEDICAL EDUCATION?

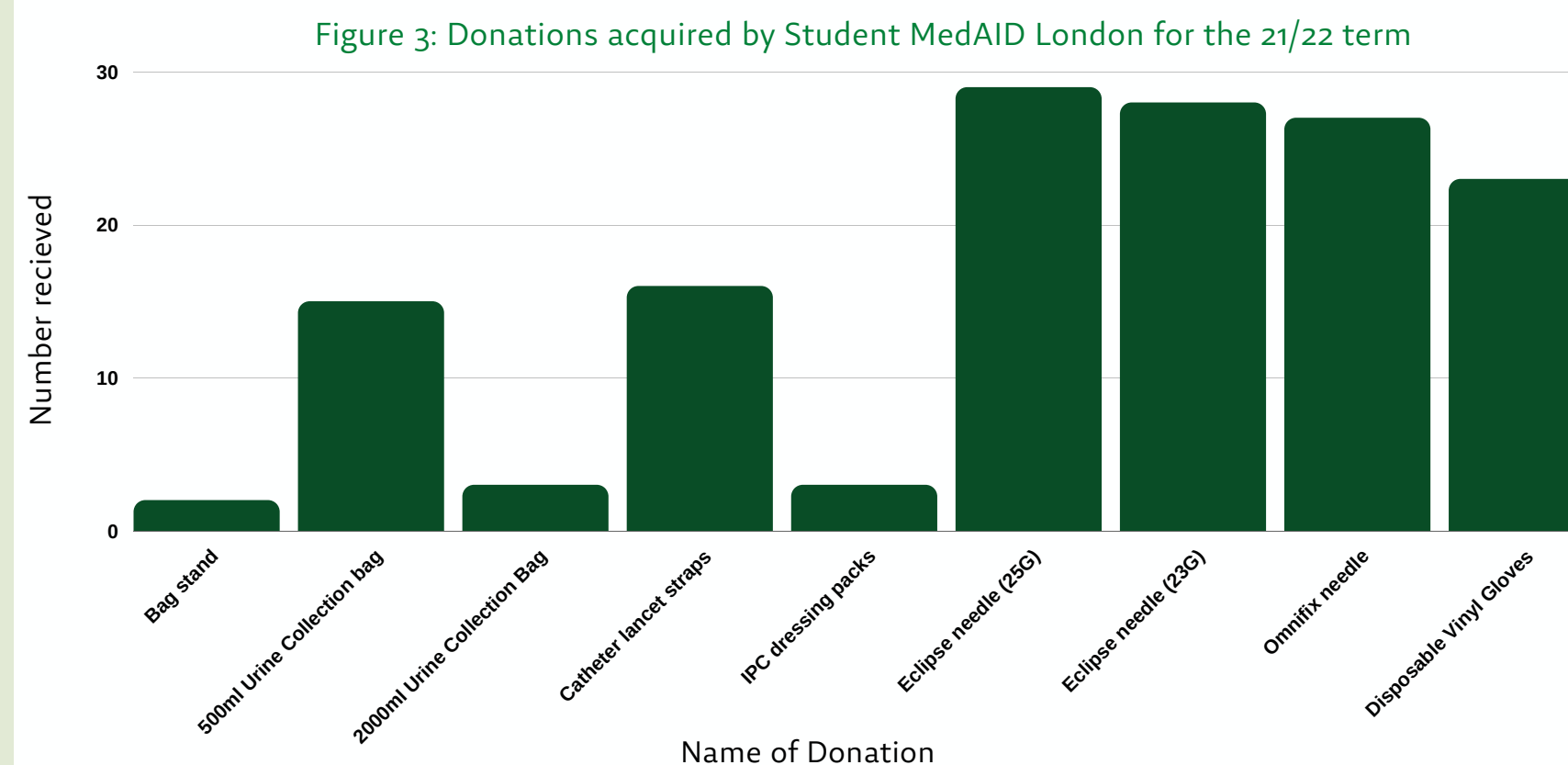
On the educational forefront, the committee used Instagram in designing multiple teaching series titled *Learn with Med-Aid* and *Spotlight*. These were showcased in conjunction with online global health seminars delivered by professionals every few months, diving into topics the MedAID committee brainstormed as not being addressed during their experiences of medical school. A few notable examples include exploring health inequalities amongst migrants and south asian youth, the ethics behind clinical trials and how women rights are integral to sustainable healthcare. Feedback was collected at the end of these sessions, to help the team shape up future content.

RESULTS

As demonstrated in Figure 1, our engagement on social media rose by 57% upon introduction of *Learn with MedAID* until December 2021. There was an increase of 78% observed during the inauguration of *Spotlight*, our second teaching series. Combined, MedAID London was able to reach 520 accounts this year, a 62% increase in growth compared to last season.

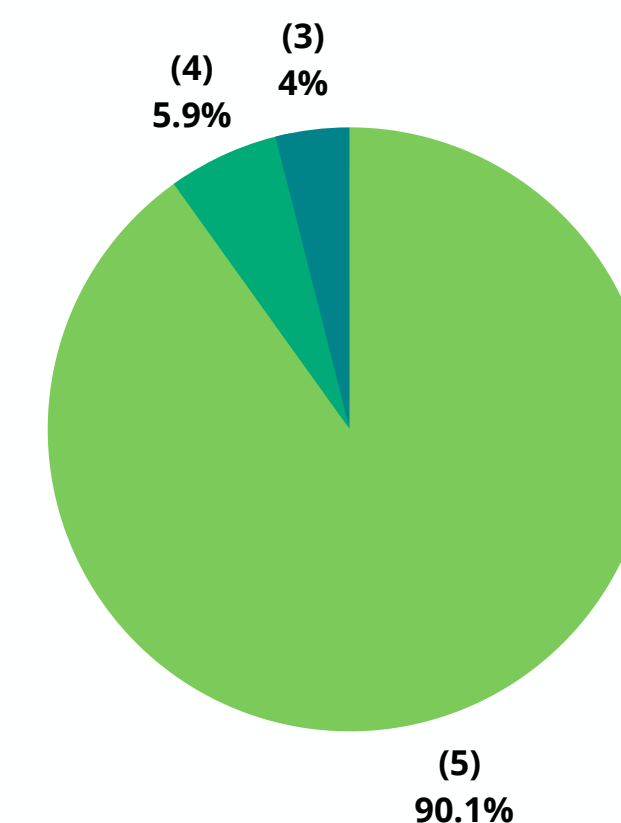


This year, Student MedAID London were able to successfully acquire storage space for a variety of different donations received, seen in Figure 3. We have been currently liaising with Dama Surgery in Sierra Leone alongside Pakistani flood-relief medical camps as potential receiving organisations.



Most notably, around 90% of global health seminar attendees provided the highest mark (5) on feedback forms, with comments such as "further sessions as these, to better help understand the humanitarian crisis". The full set of ratings for our sessions during the year is highlighted in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Ratings out of 5 provided for Student MedAID London teaching series during the 21/22 term



CONCLUSION

The positive demand of our teaching events demonstrates students being able to reflect there is gap in their medical school learning, which opens the key discussion on how the curriculum can be made more sustainable for tomorrow's doctors. Therefore, our upcoming endeavours involve creating an online educational course covering all these areas on platforms such as Future Learn, aimed in increasing one's awareness around global health and sustainability. Furthermore, we hope to create a network of prospective donating and receiving organisations to make the donation process more efficient.

In summary, we view sustainability as a global endeavour. Our committee volunteers come from diverse backgrounds providing their unique perspectives – championing objectives allowing one to appreciate the needs and differences amongst us. It is only then that we can build a world where good healthcare is a right, not a privilege reserved for the few.