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Sam Ronan Blouri Far

Year of Study

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What has been worked on in the past month?

In the first month of being school rep, myself and the head of school have been looking into ways to improve inclusivity within the school of pharmacy in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement. This is of huge importance to me and other students as we have such a diverse school. During our communications we focused on ways to give that sense of community to all staff and students, as well as enhancing the available support network for all staff and students from ethnic minorities and members of the LGBT+ community.

In addition, regular Microsoft Teams meetings have been held with the module to go over how the school plans to re-open for the new academic year. Particular matters discussed were the number of face to face and online lectures, placements for MPharm students and the CPD (LinCaPP) assessments for the students on the MPharm programme. We also worked on a joint statement to make sure students are aware of the incoming statement ahead of the academic year.

Finally, there have been discussions with the college officer and other school reps within the college of science to hold certain campaigns and events at college levels.

Successes from the past month and any Reps Wins

Following the email communications I have had with the head of school, I have underlined the importance of having a "diversity officer" that staff and students from ethnic minorities and members of the LGBT+ community can contact to report any form of discrimination or antisocial behaviour in confidence. The head of school has now backed this idea has appointed a member of staff as a "Respect Tutor" whom students can contact and raise their issues with. In addition to this, there will also be an inclusion committee which will review inclusivity and diversity within the school pharmacy.

Furthermore, to ensure all new and returning staff and students feel part of the school, there will be an annual "Heritage Day" held at JBL celebrating the successes and diversity of our school. This will hopefully be another step to bring everyone together and strengthen the community spirit at the school.

Last year there was a week-long mental health campaign called "Time to talk" organised and ran by students at JBL and this year myself and the college officer are looking at potentially running this across campus. This is crucial as unfortunately due to the stigma around mental health, many students suffer in silence. This campaign will aim to get students talking about their encounters with mental health and hopefully help those who have been quiet about their trouble with mental health by sign posting them to student support services and listening to them.

Plans for next month

I am hoping to speak to more course reps and module leaders from both the MPharm and the BSc Pharmaceutical Science programmes to look at areas where the school needs to improve.

I am yet to contact the Student Engagement Lead (SEL) since the

previous SEL has left the school and there has not been a new appointment. So as soon as there is a new SEL, contacting them and introducing myself and the fantastic course reps that have been elected will be a top priority.