Introduction of a Comprehensive Mini Emergency Medicine Curriculum

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Introduction

First-year Graduate Entry Medicine (GEM) students were introduced to a one-week Student Choice Module in April 2024. The module topic was based on feedback from student-led projects carried out during the year, which focused on quality improvement to the GEM programme. For these projects, students designed curricular improvements based on their learning needs. Emergency Medicine was one of the most requested modules, with nearly one-quarter of the class signing up for it. This trend continued in 2025, when 19 out of 82 students chose the EM module (23.2%)

Initiative

A module was developed to introduce learners to Emergency Medicine (EM) in a safe and engaging learning environment. Grounded in experiential learning theory, the module emphasized hands-on experiences, collaborative discussions, and observation of the EM setting—allowing students to learn through doing and reflecting. Students were actively involved in co-designing the module content.
To offer an authentic representation of EM and illustrate the patient journey into and through the Emergency Department (ED), the teaching team included diverse professionals:

- **advanced paramedics (AP) from Dublin Fire Brigade**
- **EM registrars**
- **surgical registrar (2025)**
- **a medical social worker (MSW)**
- **an advanced nurse practitioner in minor injuries (ANP)**
- **a clinical nurse specialist (CNS) in frailty**

Following consultations with the EM team and stakeholders from the GEM1 and GEM2 programmes, a comprehensive mini-EM module was developed. Teaching activities included lectures, case-based learning, skills workshops with task trainers and manikins, point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS) training, interactive Kahoot quizzes, and a serious game (FullCode). Dublin Fire Brigade provided an ambulance and advanced paramedics, allowing students to explore prehospital equipment and life-saving interventions. Students were introduced to the ED environment, from the triage area to the resuscitation room. The module began with an introduction to simulation in the mock resuscitation room at York Street in 2024, followed by lectures on EM care in Ireland, triage systems, and human factors in patient safety, which were reinforced through group discussions. In 2025, students were introduced to the simulation environment at the ERC in Connolly Hospital.

On day 2, students participated in a paramedic-led First Aid course (2024) or a POCUS workshop (2025).
Day 3 featured a minor injuries workshop, including skills stations on back slab application, airway assessment, cervical spine immobilisation, pelvic binder use, IV access and phlebotomy (2024), and suturing (2025). In between stations, students engaged with FullCode, a virtual simulation tool aligned with their learning level. Afternoon sessions included a paramedic-led demonstration in the ambulance and a registrar-led ED tour.
Day 4 focused on case-based learning addressing life-threatening and life-altering conditions, as well as talks from the medical social worker and frailty nurse specialist on the care of vulnerable ED patients. Students also participated in Kahoot quiz competitions, with small prizes for winners.
The final day addressed common ED presentations—selected based on student input—and focused on consolidating knowledge through simulation.
The module concluded with a summative assessment comprising a multiple-choice quiz followed by a simulation-based scenario, designed to reinforce and evaluate key learning outcomes.

Outcome

This pilot module demonstrated strong student interest in Emergency Medicine (EM) and highlighted its previously unmet role within the GEM curriculum. Despite EM not being formally taught in the programme until now, post-module survey results showed an 80% response rate in 2024 and 95% in 2025. All respondents agreed that EM should be included in the curriculum and that the module increased their confidence in managing undifferentiated patients. The module received high overall ratings—4.6 in 2024 and 4.52 in 2025 (on a 5-point Likert scale).
The findings suggest that even a short, focused module can address a clear curricular gap, and foster growing student engagement. Simulation-based education was well-received and appears to be an effective strategy for delivering EM content. The module's successful delivery over two years demonstrates feasibility and potential for wider implementation. The module will run again next year with the addition of an introduction to toxicology, and further integration of EM into the formal curriculum is being considered.
The module was presented at:

- **International Education Forum (IEF), RCSI, June 2024 (moderated oral and poster presentations),**
- **Academy of Medical Educators (AoME) Conference, Birmingham, November 2024 (poster),**
- **PHECC (Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Council) Research Conference, Maynooth, November 2024 (poster).**