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Citation: Kakkar, Rosie and Nawrocki, Philip (2011) The Surgery Club- A Model for Development of Graduate Entrepreneurial Skills. In: Northumbria Research Conference, 5-6 May 2011, Northumbria University, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

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The Surgery Club- A Model for Development of Graduate Entrepreneurial Skills

Kakkar, R, University of Northumbria, Newcastle & Nawrocki, P, St Georges University, Grenada

INTRODUCTION- The 'Surgery Club' is a reflective journey through the process of development of an extra- curricular project. A group of medical students on the St Georges Programme in their first year of medicine were keen to specialise in surgery in their clinical years yet to come. Specific activities of the Club involving currently practising physicians and surgeons was and I was approached because of my medical background.

METHODS- Paperwork was submitted to ensure recognition of the Club by the Institution, setting the bylaws, the constitution and a mission statement along with budgeting projections for the Term to come. An action plan was designed, which



included recruitment of consultant and trainee surgeons in the region who were interested in contributing as instructors; the frequency & type of activities the students might be interested in; funds & resources for instruments required; remuneration for the instructors etc. At the end of the sessions, whether suturing or surgical case presentations, feedback was collected from both the students and the instructors. Feedback in the form of an report was also sent forwards to the Board of Trustees at the St Georges University, Grenada.

DISCUSSION- The entire process of development of the Club, organising its various activities and working in close communication with the students turned out to be an extremely rewarding experience, for it allowed valuable skills in the students to be unmasked and also allowed the realisation of the immense potential and resource in the youth of today, redefining the concept of graduate entrepreneurship. Graduate employability is a topical theme [to be discussed at '[Improving Graduate Employability: Ensuring students have the skills, contacts & opportunities to find work \(London\)](#)' Forthcoming Policy and Practice Westminster Briefing, hosted by the House Magazine on 14th Sept 2011] with universities being encouraged by both employers and higher education organisations to develop 'key', 'generic' or 'transferable' skills amongst their graduates (Mason, 2006). A framework for such employability And enterprise skills has been developed by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) (UKCES, 2009) and includes, among others, functional skills, personal attributes and a positive approach to work and employment (Butcher et al, 2011).



The Club is now looking towards the future, beyond the medical students and beyond Northumbria, for opportunities which may allow it to evolve and develop further. The next step is to assess the actual impact the project has had in terms of what it proposed to do in the first instance. Further work will be looking at reflective accounts from student members about their involvement with Club activities and organising focus groups consisting of students and consultant surgeons around the region on their perspective of the Club's value in enhancing employability/ suitability of the students as future surgical trainees. Analysis of data obtained will provide an objective assessment of the impact of the project and whether the model could be adapted to other specialisms and subject areas.

References-

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