Abstract

Methods

How much the articles improved is concurrently being performed, most students have received understanding for the importance of such free-access knowledge. While empirical evaluation for more knowledge about the research and writing process for such articles, while developing an understanding for the importance of such free-access knowledge. While empirical evaluation for how much the articles improved is concurrently being performed, most students have received positive feedback from both the staff and the audience of Wikipedia.

Key Message

Medical school students possess the ability to greatly contribute to the medical knowledge available in the public domain, and the act of contributing to a database like Wikipedia provides them with a valuable learning experience regarding writing and research that is otherwise not generally focused upon in clinical rotations and the like.

Conclusion

Students have the capacity to both contribute greatly to their chosen article while gaining more knowledge about the research and writing process for such articles, and while developing an understanding for the importance of such free-access knowledge. While empirical evaluation for how much the articles improved is concurrently being performed, most students have received positive feedback from both the staff and the audience of Wikipedia.

Results

Impact on Wikipedia Readers

Impact on Students

“Simplifying the lead is really challenging.”

“I wrote for a lay audience.”

“Contributing to the digital space is now part of my identity as a future physician.”

“It’s hard to delete other people’s work.”

“I feel good giving back to Wikipedia.”

“It’s challenging to edit live instead of in my sandbox.”

“I’ve drunk the Kool Aid.”

Discussion/Dissemination

Translators Without Borders have translated 581 English Wikipedia health-related articles to 53 other language Wikipedias. Provides Wikipedia access to 400 million people for free in 46 developing countries through 54 mobile phone operators.

Reflective Critique/Limitations

Wide variability in baseline student aptitude and effort.

UCSF MD & college student "scale" is entirely subjective and not validated.

Students have not continued editing Wikipedia after the rotation ended.

Appreciations & References

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For more information about our elective: