3.3. Stimulating Interest in Pathology and Laboratory Medicine amongst Medical Students: A Novel Initiative

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ABSTRACT
Exposure to pathology and laboratory medicine (PALM) is limited in the curriculum of medical schools worldwide with most students having minimal knowledge of the integral role of PALM in healthcare and possible careers in PALM throughout their academic journey. This limited exposure and knowledge to PALM is further compounded by the absence of any avenue of exposure for medical students to PALM in the extra-curricular realm. The Pathology Club of UWI (University of the West Indies) was established at the St. Augustine Campus of Trinidad and Tobago as the first club of its kind in the history of the UWI that sought to address this. The club aims to foster the interest of Caribbean medical students in PALM and provide mentorship to those aspiring to specialize in PALM across the medical faculties of the three campuses of the UWI in Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

Virtual activities and events highlighting various pathologies and subspecialties of pathology are held weekly and monthly, respectively, via the club's various social media platforms and common myths associated with pathology are addressed monthly. The Caribbean Pathology and Laboratory Medicine Student initiative was also established to stimulate interest in PALM among medical students with sixteen sessions held thus far featuring local, regional, and international experts in the various subspecialties of pathology. The establishment of similar clubs and initiatives in international medical schools is one way of addressing the shortage in the pathology workforce.

TALK OBJECTIVES
1. Describe the formation of the first pathology club in a medical school and the establishment of an initiative that increases exposure to the sub-specialties of pathology.
2. Explain the impact of a pathology club, and pathology and laboratory medicine based initiative and potential methods of expanding its reach to international medical schools and organizations.
3. Discuss the benefits of establishing similar initiatives in international medical schools and various pathology-based organizations.