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**Sent:** Fri 5/15/2020 6:40:07 AM  
**Subject:** Reminder: Invitation to review a manuscript for BMC Medical Education - MEED-D-20-00335 - [EMID:95f45132e2291c17]  
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MEED-D-20-00335

Outbreak measures taken by medical schools during the coronavirus pandemic in London, United Kingdom: A Qualitative Study

5.1.2e | 5.1.2e | 5.1.2e

BMC Medical Education

Dear 5.1.2e ,

Recently I contacted you to ask if you could review the above manuscript that was submitted to BMC Medical Education.

As we have not yet heard from you but are aiming for a fast peer review process, I would be grateful if you could let me know whether or not you are able to review this manuscript by accessing the system using the following link and choosing either accept or decline.

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I look forward to hearing from you within the next few days.

Please note that this is an automatic email, so if you have recently contacted us regarding your review then please ignore this reminder.

Best wishes,

5.1.2e

**Abstract: Background:**

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), was first reported in Wuhan, China in December 2019. On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 to be a pandemic. As of mid-March 2020, more than a total of 150,000 cases have been reported in 122 countries, including 1,543 in the United Kingdom. Within London, there are five universities with medical schools each faced with difficult decisions on how to respond to this unprecedented situation, having to balance the education of future doctors who will soon be joining the front lines and their safety. In this paper, the responses and timeliness of medical schools are collated and compared. This will help guide medical schools' responses in the future.

**Methods:**

Information was gathered from the official university websites and social media platforms as well as from personal interviews with current medical students attending the respective universities. Thematic analysis was performed to obtain overarching categories of responses by the medical schools.

**Results:**

All five medical schools displayed similar responses to COVID-19, following guidance provided by Public Health England (PHE), Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Medical Schools Council (MSC). Eight broad themes of responses were identified to have been undertaken by most London medical schools. Responses such as suspending clinical placements, keeping university facilities open and not banning on-campus events were universally adopted by all five medical schools. Other responses such as specific exam rearrangements and elective travel advice were more heterogeneous amongst the medical schools.

**Conclusion:**

Medical schools must take extraordinary measures in response to a pandemic. The experience gained from the COVID-19 pandemic will help future administrations be more confident in providing a more rapid response to similar health crises.

As a result of the significant disruption that is being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic we are very aware that many researchers will have difficulty in meeting the timelines associated with our peer review process during normal times. Please do let us know if you need additional time. Our systems will continue to remind you of the original timelines but we intend to be highly flexible at this time.

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