Lebanese International University Date: 07/03/2019

School of Pharmacy

**Focus Groups with Students for Preparation of DIGIHEALTH Surveys for WP1**

**Facilitators:** Prof. Mohamad Rahal and Dr. Dalal Hammoudi

**Attendees:** Group of pharmacy students from third academic year and another from fourth academic year

**Date:** 07/03/2019 at 13:00-14:00

**Location:** School of Pharmacy, LIU Bekaa Campus

**Summary of discussion:**

* Awareness about DIGIHEALTH project was raised among the two groups of students, regarding project objectives, outputs, partners, and timeline. Benefits of partnership to the University, the School, the pharmacy program, and the students were highlighted.
* Students were asked about their opinion regarding case-based and problem-based learning, and also about how they think digital technology can improve their student experience.
* Students shared their experience about case-based learning they had in some pharmacy courses:
* Cases were given to teams of 5 to 8 students by instructors.
* The team was asked to review the case during 15 min.
* A team representative was asked to present the case before the class in 5 minutes and then discussion of the case was done, facilitated by the course instructor.
* Students’ feedback was to request:
* More frequent case discussions.
* More time for data analysis to improve their analytical capacities.
* More cases with real data.
* Smaller number of students in each team.
* Higher weight for case discussions in course assessment and exams.
* Students felt that the spirit of learning together as a team and sharing knowledge was beneficial to their overall learning. They felt also that case discussion was a way for the more intelligent and high-achieving students to help their fellows who are weaker.
* Students were concerned that some team members do not have spirit for teamwork, and that some leaders used to have conflicts with other members as they do not really have leadership skills.
* Students also mentioned that shy or low-profile team members do not participate in the case-based discussion, so these need encouragement. Social, personal, and presentation skills in these students need re-enforcement.
* Students asked for journal databases to be able to use peer-reviewed literature in solving cases.
* Students asked to apply practical exams and exams with real presentation of patients like use of photos and laboratory values to justify diagnosis and treatment.

Overall, the experience of students with case-based learning was moderate but promising. Students showed interest in further case-based learning and additional time to perform this type of learning in class. They were also eager to know if digital technology can help them to be better achievers in case-based learning.

Focus groups with students were later discussed with stakeholders at the School and the University to get their feedback and share thoughts about learning methods and digital technology.

Results of the focus groups were shared with Arab International University (leader of WP1) and were used for preparation of needs assessment and then for drafting of teacher and student surveys used in the first phase of the project.