

**“Enhancing Interprofessional
Collaboration and Learning for
Strengthening Primary Health Care”**

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TUFH 2021 ABSTRACTS

Title	FAR FROM HOME - THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM FOR EDUCATION AND MEDICAL STUDENTS OF RURAL BACKGROUND AT AN URBAN UNIVERSITY IN SOUTH AFRICA
Type	Oral Presentation <i>Innovative Ways for Community Mobilization and Engagement of Stakeholders</i>
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Abstract N ^o	TUFH672
Content	<p>Background Many universities aim to redress past inequalities by recruiting students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds including from rural backgrounds to university. However, the literature notes poorer outcomes among students from disadvantaged backgrounds, which is often ascribed to poorer quality of schooling. This research explored the experiences of undergraduate students from rural backgrounds in professional degrees in education and medicine during their first year at university. Methods First year students entering into education and medical training were recruited to participate in exploring their experience of university. A range of visual participatory methods such as photovoice, drawing and letter-writing were used to engage the students to reflect on their experience of moving from their rural homes to studying at the urban-based university. The engagements and discussions with the students were audiotaped and transcribed. Results Significant tension between the elation and expectations the students had when entering the university and the difficulties they faced was noted linked to a sense of being unprepared for the changes that the students were facing. The students shared a sense of feeling lost and being alienated in the urban environment and struggling to connect with other students. The challenge to learn some of the basics of navigating the new environment, like the online platform, further compounded the sense of being overwhelmed by both the unfamiliar expectations and the volume of the workload. Attention needs to be paid in adequate preparation and support for students from rural backgrounds to manage the transition to university life.</p>