

Distance Learning for Medical Student Teaching

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(Abstract)

Clinical attachment of medical students to District General Hospitals (DGHs) can present problems for the integration into the didactic lecture course held at the Medical College. We have studied whether the use of videoed or audio conferenced lectures delivered directly to the DGH can provide the same information accrual as by didactic lectures.

One year prior to the commencement of the present study, one third of the first clinical year lectures were videoed. The following year, the lecture course was divided into three sections. In section one, students received their didactic lectures in the Medical College. Section two (videoed lectures) and section three (audio

conferences) were provided to the DGHs. The pattern was repeated every three weeks.

At the end of the course, students took an MCQ examination, identical to the previous year. It contained stem questions related to specific items covered in the three sections. Overall there was no change in the scores achieved.

This study has identified specific problems in the use of distance learning techniques. The dissemination of information may not be suited to all forms of distance communication, and careful choice of subject and lecturer is paramount.

Development of a National Workshop on Undergraduate Teaching in Obstetrics and Gynaecology (OB-GYN)

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(Abstract)

The content and design of an undergraduate course in a particular discipline naturally varies widely between a nation's medical schools, although the strategic aims of the teaching will usually be laid down by a national regulatory board.

Although academics, as clinical researchers, frequently meet to discuss mutual problems and to hear original scientific data, those same academics as teachers rarely, if ever, meet to discuss mutual problems and to hear original educational data.

In an effort to promote, in education, the same intellectual rigour that academics must display in science, three national workshops have now been held in the UK in 1986-1988 on the subject of art and science of undergraduate OB-Gyn course design and management. The meetings were held in workshop format and were attended by a representative from over 90% of the medical

schools of the UK and Ireland. Representation was limited to one delegate per medical school at the Professorial or Senior Lecturer level. In addition to the clinical staff, expert delegates were invited from the fields of educational psychology, the basic science disciplines and computer assisted learning. The meeting addressed the issues of: place of OB-Gyn within the curriculum; identification of core data; liaison with neonatal paediatrics; liaison with basic science disciplines; policing of course content and examination practice.

The workshops have now been attended by 50% of all OB-Gyn staff in the UK and are firmly established. The practical problems of setting up and operating such a meeting will be discussed together with the educational advantages of such inter-university meetings with respect to the dissemination of innovatory practice, and the renewal of enthusiasm among academic teachers.