Implementation of a pilot curriculum on standardized medical handover – effect on medical students’ practical performance and attitude

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Background... 

- Improperly conducted handovers can lead to:
  - wrong treatment
  - delays in medical diagnosis
  - life-threatening adverse events
  - patient complaints
  - increased health care expenditure
  - increased hospital length of stay
  - etc. (¹)

- There have been initial efforts to overcome this situation, by providing and evaluating handover trainings: We are one of these.

Methods... 

- This controlled pilot study was implemented as part of the PATIENT project in 2014/15 and investigates the influence of a teaching module concerning standardized handover in the field of anesthesiology, intensive care and emergency medicine on the students’ learning progress (knowledge/skills/attitude).
- Participants: Medical students of the RWTH Aachen (4th or 5th year)
- Data acquisition:
  - knowledge and attitude towards handover: pre- and post- evaluation questionnaires
  - practical handover skills: video-based rating of handover performance at the end of the course

Results... 

- First data analysis show that students of the intervention group evaluate themselves more confident performing structured handovers and consider the handover training as useful and important.
- “How confident are you in your ability to...”? (scale: 1= not at all confident to 6=very confident)

  - use standard communication tools (e.g. such as SBAR, ISOBAR, surgical checklist, etc.)?
  - adequately communicate with a patient’s follow-up provider?
  - write a complete and accurate discharge letter?

- The analysis of the video-based assessment is still pending.

Conclusion... 

- This training increases the students’ confidence in handover performance. Students as well as teachers wish to continue trainings of this kind.

Weitere Informationen... 

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