

Poster 1

UBC CPD's Pivot to Virtual Conferences

Author: Lindsay Callan, Michelle Baysan, Stephanie Ameyaw, Jennie Barrows, Bob Bluman, Brenna Lynn

Presenter: Lindsay Callan

Background: UBC's Division of Continuing Professional Development (UBC CPD) delivers approximately 30 in-person continuing medical education (CME) conferences each year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and in response to social distancing requirements, we needed to rapidly transition our face-to-face CME events to a virtual delivery method.

Purpose: To pivot large group in-person CME to a virtual delivery method while preserving the networking and fellowship elements of a traditional in-person conference.

Methods: We used our past experiences delivering webinars and translated that knowledge to longer and more complex conference formats and agendas. We investigated videoconferencing platforms that could quickly meet our needs and worked with UBC MedIT to achieve a solution. We chose Zoom as our delivery tool and focused our energies on training our moderators and faculty who are subject matter expert panelists on how to use it (technical introduction), as well as reviewed best practices to keep the audience engaged.

Results: Seven virtual conferences were delivered between April 3 and June 30. The virtual platform enabled broader participation and attracted record attendance numbers by providing low barrier options (cost and travel) for learners while retaining high-value education. Early lessons learned included the importance of staff and faculty training as well as incorporating best practices for enhancing engagement and interaction within the virtual learning space.

Conclusion: As virtual CPD continues for the foreseeable future, our audience and stakeholders will continue to expect relevant high-quality education from our unit. As we move into the fall season, we look forward to innovating our programming to meet the needs of our learners.

Key words: virtual, conference, education

Poster 2

UBC CPD's Approach to Virtual and Responsive COVID-19 Education

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Presenter: Stephanie Ameyaw

Co-Presenter: Bob Bluman

Background: UBC's Division of Continuing Professional Development (UBC CPD) is a trusted source of relevant, high-quality education for BC health care providers (HCPs). When faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, UBC CPD was challenged to address urgent and emerging learning needs created by the pandemic whilst simultaneously pivoting education, from predominantly face-to-face to virtual delivery.

Purpose: To provide BC HCPs with current, reliable virtual education to address needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methods: UBC CPD swiftly mobilized to deliver a comprehensive COVID-19 education strategy that supported HCPs. Leadership at UBC CPD, the Faculty of Medicine, an advisory committee and key informants provided input on HCP learning needs. A webinar series was developed to allow for responsive programming and enable human connection whilst reaching a wide audience. A panel-led 'Q&A' format was utilized to incorporate evolving information and reduce faculty load. Due to high demand and evolving needs, the series was delivered at an unprecedented frequency of two sessions per week.

Results: Between March 26 and June 30, twenty-one webinars supported 10,928 urban and rural HCPs during the COVID-19 pandemic. This process identified success factors for HCP education during a pandemic: webinar evaluation surveys as a responsive and iterative needs assessment; responsive diverse faculty engagement; and Q&A format versus didactic presentations enables knowledge transfer and encourages participant engagement.

Conclusion: For the foreseeable future, physical distancing measures will limit opportunities for in-person interaction. Our strategy exemplifies a successful example of rapid mobilization to provide engaging virtual education that addresses emerging educational needs.

Key words: mobilization, pandemic, CPD/CME

Poster 3

From Mini-sabbatical to Interprofessional Virtual Gaming Simulation: Research Team Development

Author: Suzanne Campbell

Presenter: Suzanne Campbell

Health professional education requires opportunities for interprofessional education often in the form of experiential learning in simulation labs or clinical environments. Principles of interprofessional communication, including provider and patient, are foundational aspects of health care professional development. There is a lack of high-quality, cost-effective, flexible means for teaching these principles and allowing students practice opportunities. Building on research done provincially, nationally, and internationally, the presenter had an opportunity to plan a mini-sabbatical within CHES and get input to network on her foundational work developing and testing a Global Interprofessional Therapeutic Communication Scale© (GITCS©). Brining her BC nursing team members together with national experts in Virtual Gaming Simulation and many colleagues met through her CHES mini-sabbatical, a research project to develop open education research modules for interprofessional use was begun including: team formation, grant submission, and outlining a timeline and plan for delivery. This presentation will provide the authors perception of barriers and facilitators to the process, opportunities for further research development, and lessons learned.

Objectives:

- Participants will identify steps to positive mini-sabbatical experience
- Participants will recognize benefits to an interprofessional lens on their research
- Participants will analyze steps to research team creation

Poster 4

Personal Learning Plans: Supporting IMG Integration through a Concierge CPD Model

Author: Rachel Ho, Kathryn Young, Bruce Hobson, Brenna Lynn

Presenter: Rachel Ho

Background: International Medical Graduates (IMGs) represent ~30% of practicing physicians in B.C. As IMGs become oriented in the B.C. medical context, they quickly identify learning needs to close gaps in training and cultural differences. However, it is difficult for physicians to navigate the continuing professional development landscape in an unfamiliar medical system.

Innovation: Personal Learning Plan (PLP) is a personalized concierge service that equips IMGs in BC to achieve practice goals, foster personal and professional success, and promote lifelong learning. Participants collaborate with a physician advisor and concierge to identify needs, formulate a learning plan, and receive customized supports in education and upskilling for quality improvement. The linkage to a physician advisor builds in a supportive relationship within the program, while access to the concierge provides connections to resources and local, regional, or specialty networks.

Findings: Participants report that PLP has helped in navigating the B.C. medical system. Receiving enhanced connections to CPD programming positively impacts experiences of integration, practice management skills, and patient communication. Partnerships with local support staff aid in identifying community-specific opportunities, facilitate implementation of learning plans, and allow IMGs to feel more connected within their community.

Implications: The concierge CPD model supports IMGs with enhanced knowledge and connections, raising confidence to practice in their community. Such contributions to the transition process can support success in obtaining full licensure and community retention. Trends of identified needs may be analyzed and shared with stakeholders, who could potentially address systems gaps and better support the integration of new-to-practice physicians.

Keywords: International Medical Graduates (IMGs), Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Concierge

Poster 5

Improving Oncology Education for Family Medicine Residents: How does BC compare?

Author: Alanna Janz, Lisa Wang, Svetlana Bortnik, Jaspreet Garcha, Vincent Tam, Steven Yip, Paris Ann Ingledew

Presenter: Alanna Janz

Co-Presenter: Paris Ann Ingledew

Problem: Despite a rising incidence and prevalence of cancer in Canada, there are gaps in postgraduate medical curriculum related to oncology. Family medicine (FM) physicians provide a key role at all stages of the cancer journey and as such FM training programs should include relevant education. The purpose of our study was to assess the current state of oncology education in the University of British Columbia (UBC) FM residency program. Results were compared to the same recently completed national Canadian FM residency program survey (CFMRSPS) that did not include UBC.

Methods: A web-based survey, utilizing the previously conducted CFMRSPS, was distributed to 348 UBC FM residents (FMR) and 20 site directors (SD). The survey assessed presence of an oncology curriculum, current teaching methods and perceived gaps. Results were compared to CFMRSPS data (non-UBC) and interpreted with descriptive statistics.

Findings: 54/348 UBC FMR and 10/20 SD completed the survey. 3% of UBC and 7% of non-UBC FMR felt their program adequately prepared them to care for oncology patients. Between UBC FMR/SD and non-UBC FMR/SD there was uniformity in perceived importance of a list of oncology topics to be covered in training. There was discordance in the perceived frequency of topics taught between all FMR residents and SD. This discordance was more prominent in the BC data, than nationwide.

Implications: This study can inform further development of oncology specific curriculum in FM residency programs. Further study is required to understand areas of discordance between FMR and SD and across the country.

Keywords: oncology, medical education, family medicine

Poster 6

What Inspires Medical Students to Pursue Radiation Oncology?

Author: Timothy Kong, Meredith Giuliani, Joanna Alfieri, Stella Kang, Maryam Dosani, Dan Golden, Paris-Ann Ingledew

Presenter: Timothy Kong

Purpose: Radiation oncology (RO) has experienced significant fluctuation in applications to Canadian postgraduate residency programs leading to an unstable number of trainees. Understanding what motivates medical students to pursue RO may improve workforce stability, which is essential to adequate cancer care. By analyzing application essays for a RO studentship, this study aims to identify themes describing why Canadian medical students were interested in RO.

Methods: Application essays for the CARO-CROF studentship (2014 - 2019) were anonymized prior to analysis (n = 66). Thematic data was collected using a grounded theory approach based on a priori conceptual frameworks. The primary coder analyzed essays to identify themes and sub-themes through constant comparative analysis. A random subset of essays was analyzed by a second coder. Coding was enhanced by discussion amongst the coders. Essays were iteratively re-evaluated to ensure consistency.

Results: Three major themes, with multiple sub-themes, described what interested medical students in RO. (1) Students perceived an alignment of RO with their construct of a fulfilling career. (2) Students were inspired by medical school and pre-medical exposures to RO. (3) Students described how personal events with cancer deeply impacted their values affecting career choice.

Conclusion: Medical students demonstrated compelling interest in RO, with perceived alignment of the specialty with their interests, past inspirational exposures, and impactful personal events. The themes identified by this analysis map well onto previous conceptual frameworks describing medical student decision making in other specialties. Educators can apply these findings to create purposeful curricula and educational opportunities to better promote RO as a career choice.

Key words: oncology, career, undergraduate

Poster 7

The Hidden Curriculum in Clinical Case Studies: an Analysis of Character Representations

Authors: Meaghan MacNutt, Maï Yasué, Ahalya Satkunaratnam

Presenter: Meaghan MacNutt

Case-based learning is widely used throughout pre-professional and professional health education. It is heralded as an effective pedagogical method for connecting theory to practice and for motivating learning by engaging students in “real-life” clinical scenarios. Clinical cases can also be considered a source of hidden curriculum - conveying values, norms, and beliefs through the stories they tell about people. In this way, clinical case studies provide a rich opportunity to tell stories that celebrate diversity and help students develop cultural, gender, and LGBTQIA+ competencies. This exploratory work will analyze character representations in health-related cases ($n = 432$) published in a large, peer-reviewed database (the National Centre for Case Study Teaching in Science). Each character’s role (i.e. patient, care provider, family member, friend) and identity (i.e. age, sex, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, religion) will be defined to the extent possible using implied and explicit descriptions from the case. Methods are currently under development to identify cases and characters where common stereotypes are disrupted or reinforced. By analyzing over 1000 characters across hundreds of cases, we will 1) describe and quantify the character identities that students encounter in health-related case studies; and 2) determine whether character representations signal equity and inclusivity as being key values of health educators.

Key words: diversity, inclusion, case-based learning

Poster 8

Healthcare Student Rural Recruitment: Lifestyle and Professional Factors

Author: Corin Macphail, Sean Maurice

Presenter: Sean Maurice

Co-Presenter: Corin Macphail

Introduction: The Healthcare Travelling Roadshow (HCTRS) aims to increase recruitment of healthcare providers (HCP) to rural BC communities by introducing healthcare students (HCS) to rural areas. In this study, HCS' interests, or attracting factors, and perceived barriers on rural practice were sought and compared to existing literature on practicing HCP' views. Understanding similarities and differences between these two groups will allow for targeted recruitment strategies.

Methods: Ninety-five HCS from BC applied to the 2019 HCTRS; the top 36 were selected and 30 participated. Eleven HCTRS participants responded to the survey. Participants were invited to complete an online survey after their HCTRS trip. Qualitative responses to open-ended questions were coded thematically to categories, which were then grouped to larger themes.

Results: HCS' interests and perceived barriers of rural practice were categorized into two main themes: lifestyle factors and professional factors. In terms of being attracted to rural practice, participants reported lifestyle factors more frequently than professional factors; with respect to barriers, lifestyle and professional factors were reported with approximately equal frequency. Participants reported that the HCTRS increased the accuracy of their perceptions and increased their awareness of rural healthcare needs.

Conclusions: Rural recruitment initiatives must consider the career stage and discipline of HCP. This study supports fostering interest in rural practice through exposure to rural communities, and that community engagement beyond clinical involvement should also be considered.

Key words: health workforce, allied health, rural exposure

Poster 9

Implementing an Academic Electronic Health Record in a Large Class Setting

Author: Jason Min, Angela Dong

Presenter: Jason Min

Abstract (word count: 241): Electronic health records (EHR) are a critically important tool for health professionals in the provision of optimal patient care. Despite this, students are predominantly exposed to paperbased cases as most available EHR products that support teaching and learning do not conform to Canadian standards, are expensive, or lack multidisciplinary functions that are present in practicing EHRs. A newly developed academic EHR (aEHR) prototype was developed in BC. We implemented the aEHR in a first year, large classroom (n=173), pharmacy informatics course. A paper-based dermatological case was modified to align with current therapeutic topics and data was inputted in to the aEHR. Students were not aware of the aEHR prior to the activity. The activity had three steps: (1) pre-ambule explaining the context of the fictional case, (2) chart review, and (3) document recommendations/orders in the aEHR. Students found the activity to be effective for learning case-based activities (78% agree or strongly agree) despite this being the first time for many (63%) using any EHR. Students predominantly self-rated their digital literacy as fair (37%) or good (45%). Students noted that the ease of use was the aspect they liked the most about the aEHR. As greater emphasis on online modalities challenges both practice and education, the aEHR has great potential for future pedagogical use. As a prototype software, further development is necessary. Future scholarly inquiry includes the utilization across different teaching settings, and best-practices for implementation across various longitudinal and institutional contexts.

Learning objective:

1. Describe the implementation and student evaluation of a prototype academic electronic health record system in a large class setting.

Keywords: Electronic health records, Health informatics, Case-based learning

Poster 10

Utilizing Learning Analytics to Support Teaching in an Online Course

Author: Robert Pammett, Patricia Gerber, Morgan Garvin, Craig Thompson, Kerry Wilbur

Presenter: Robert Pammett

Background: Online course discussions can foster collaboration, connection, and a sense of community between learners. Ensuring that discussions are engaging, productive and effective at achieving learning objectives can be challenging, especially within large classes. Threadz is learning analytics software available at our institution, capable of measuring, collecting, analysing and reporting data about learners and their contributions and interactions within online discussion boards on Canvas.

Objective: To explore the use of Threadz for the purpose of understanding and optimizing learning within online course discussions in the fourth-year distance-based Advanced Topics in Pharmacy Practice seminar course of the UBC Entry-to-Practice Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD) Program.

Implementation: Ninety-eight learners configured in groups of 6-7 participated in online course discussions pertaining to four topics related to current events and issues for pharmacies and pharmacists. Threadz learning analytics software was activated within the course learning management system and an iterative approach was used to retrospectively generate visualizations and analyze the data.

Reflection: We identified components of learning analytics software that may be acted upon in real-time course delivery to support teaching and learning within online discussions prospectively. Quick identification of “orphan” discussion posts and indicators of low learner engagement (timing, quantity and connectedness of contributions) permit instructors to efficiently and purposefully intercede to assess content and concept understanding and offer guidance to specific learners. The presentation will share visualizations of the identified components and provide guidance in interpreting meaningful analysis from the visualizations.

Poster 11

An Examination of Solutions to Mitigate Mental Health Responses Among Those At Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19 Infection: An Integrated Scoping and Rapid Realist Review

Author: Vidhi Thakkar, Simon Carroll, Benjamin Collins, Esme Fuller-Thomson, Brandon Hey, Marya Jaleel, Shen (Lamson) Lin, Laura Mullaly, Maura MacPhee, Angela Paric, Arun Ravindran, Ron Remick, Vicki Smye, Karen Davison

Presenter: Vidhi Thakkar

Co-Presenter: Karen Davison

Problem: The “echo” pandemic of COVID-19 has been the varied mental health responses related to quarantine, physical distancing, altered health care access, unexpected unemployment, and complicated grief. Currently, there is limited knowledge about how to mitigate mental health responses to the COVID-19 pandemic among high-risk populations.

Approach: A CIHR-funded integrated scoping and rapid realist review is underway to address knowledge gaps related to the prevention or mitigation of mental health responses for those at risk of severe COVID-19 infection. Using systematic approaches, an interdisciplinary team is synthesizing the literature from English-language academic (Ovid Medline, CINAHL, PsycInfo, Sociological Abstracts, EMBASE) and grey literature sources (conference proceedings, international, national, and provincial health non-profit organizations and governments, health provider organizations), as well as Chinese-language academic sources (CNKI, Airiti, Wan Fang). Keywords include COVID-19 combined with physical health conditions (e.g., cardiovascular, respiratory, endocrine, immune, neurocognitive) that present risk for COVID-19 infection, and mental health effects (e.g., anxiety, depression, schizophrenia). The literature focusing on interventions will be summarized using rapid realist methods and guided by a COVID-19 mental health promotion framework.

Anticipated Outcomes: Results to date will be presented for discussion and feedback. The findings will provide evidence for health care providers, policymakers, and researchers to develop, adapt, and examine approaches aimed at mitigating mental health responses among those at risk of severe illness from COVID-19 infection. The framework can be evaluated for applicability among programs that serve diverse populations at risk of severe infection from COVID-19 that aim to mitigate mental health impacts.

Learner Objectives:

1. Participants will review the current status of a knowledge synthesis about individuals at risk of Covid-19 and mental health responses.
2. Participants will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the Covid-19 mental health promotion framework.

3. Participants will learn how a mental health promotion framework may be applied to COVID-19 related health practice, policy, and research.

Keywords: COVID-19, Mental Health, Rapid Realist

Poster 12

Perception of Resident Feedback Among Medical Students

Author: Shannon Wong, John Luo, Rose Hatala

Presenter: Shannon Wong

Co-Presenter: John Luo

Studies demonstrate that effective feedback has a powerful influence on student development¹. Residents play a pivotal role in medical student education due to the face-to-face time spent with students and are responsible for their clinical skills education². Our primary interest was to illuminate a rich description of the ways medical students experience resident feedback as a starting point into this underexplored area of research.

We used a qualitative design in this pilot study informed by phenomenology, which aimed to capture how learners experience resident feedback. We conducted five semi-structured interviews with fourth year medical students at U.B.C. Interviews were transcribed, anonymized, and read by each co-author. We developed codes using an open coding approach applied to all transcripts. We then organised codes into themes and examined them in detail to elucidate the experiences and perspectives described by participants.

Our analysis identified several themes and here we focus on relationships and outcomes, as they provide novel insight into student-resident feedback interactions. Students value and seek resident feedback opportunities and view supportive relationships with residents as positive influencers. Direct observation helped students feel well-supported. Furthermore, a strong interpersonal relationship positively impacted the student's learning plan. Resident feedback was perceived as growth focused, in contrast to assessment-focused feedback from faculty.

Our study elicited rich narratives and key themes related to effective resident feedback. Preliminary exploration elucidated insights into how and why students value resident feedback. With these insights, residents-as-teacher programs can be developed to facilitate meaningful feedback conversations between residents and students.

References

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2. Karani et al. 2014. How medical students learn from residents in the workplace: a qualitative study. *Acad Med* . 89(3): 490-6. Bing-You et al. Medical students' perceptions of themselves and residents as teachers. *Med Teacher* 1 4(2/3): 133-138.

Keywords: Resident, Feedback, Education

Poster 13

A Video-Based Gross Anatomy Dissection Guide

Author: Nicole Ng, Farnaz Javadian, Shirley Tse, Andy Jiang, Majid Doroudi

Presenter: Majid Doroudi

Co-Presenter: Farnaz Javadian

Introduction: Learning materials provided to students prior to anatomy dissection labs have classically been in the form of written instructions and images from prosections. However, these materials can be difficult to interpret, especially for beginner students. With the advancement of technology, educational curricula are exploring the integration of digital platforms to supplement more traditional teaching methods.

Goal: To investigate the utility of a video-based guide for approaching dissection.

Methods: A video dissection guide was created demonstrating the dissection of the superficial back. The video outlines the anatomy, technique, procedure, and includes review questions. The video was made available online through YouTube, along with a feedback survey. A secondary video dissection guide highlighting the dissection of the deep back was subsequently produced and made available in the same avenue.

Results: Feedback after two months from when the superficial back dissection video was published was received from 68 respondents; a majority of whom were female (63.2%) and aged 20-24 (60.3%). The majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that the video presented the anatomy in a clear and organized fashion (95.6%), enhanced their learning of the anatomy (100%), familiarized them with dissection tools and how to use them (89.7%), familiarized them with methods and techniques for dissection (92.6%), was more effective than a dissection guide (97.1%), and was more effective for learning anatomy than a textbook (88.2%). A poll of 54 respondents found that most agree or strongly agree that the video is a valuable resource for review/test preparation (88.9%).

Preliminary survey results two months after the deep back dissection video was published indicate that, of 15 respondents, the majority agree or strongly agree that the video presented the anatomy in a clear and organized fashion (100%), enhanced their learning of the anatomy (93.3%), was more effective than a dissection guide (93.3%), and is a valuable resource for initial learning of dissection/anatomy (100%) and review/test preparation (86.7%).

Conclusion: In summary, digital media in the form of video-based dissection guides may be a useful tool to incorporate into educational curricula for teaching gross anatomy of both superficial and deep structures. Future goals include the incorporation of clinically relevant information to dissected anatomical structures.

Poster 14

Exploring Factors that Influence Student Engagement in Community-Engaged Learning Activities within a Pharmacy Context (UBC ExCEL-Rx)

Author: Kayla M Fang, Gilly C Lau, Jamie Y Park, Paulo Tchen

Presenter: Gilly Lau

Co-Presenter: Paulo Tchen

Objectives: To investigate and identify factors that enhance and restrict student engagement in mandatory and voluntary community engaged learning (CEL) activities.

Methods: A phenomenological study utilizing semi-structured interviews was conducted with students participating in mandatory and voluntary CEL. Eligible participants were University of British Columbia (UBC) students in the Entry-to-Practice (E2P) PharmD Program currently enrolled in or having previously taken a mandatory 20-hour Community Service Learning (CSL) course in their second year. Of 16 pharmacy students expressing interest in participating in interviews, 15 were randomly selected to participate in interviews exploring students' involvement, experiences, motivations, and challenges faced in their mandatory CSL course and/or voluntary CEL activities (e.g. community outreach).

Interviews were audio recorded and conducted via phone or in-person interviews. Student responses were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative thematic analysis.

Results: Primary factors that motivated student engagement in mandatory CEL included imparting a positive impact on the community and gaining a broader perspective and understanding of the diverse populations in their community. Students participating in voluntary CEL indicated improved resume qualifications, advocacy for pharmacy profession, and application of classroom knowledge as motivating factors. Common barriers identified were time commitment, activity scheduling as well as the limited scope of a student's role, in particular with CSL placements.

Conclusions: Findings of this study suggests that both mandatory and voluntary CEL activities are crucial for the personal and professional development of pharmacy students; however, opportunities exist for addressing barriers identified to further enhance student engagement in CEL within a pharmacy program.

Keywords: student engagement, community engaged learning, motivation

Poster 15

Interprofessional Education Program Evaluation of Pharmacy Students Using Mixed-method Approach

Author: Brittany King, Larry Leung, Jason Min

Presenter: Larry Leung

Co-Presenter: Brittany King

Background: Interprofessional education (IPE) is a core component of health education, as it enables students to become interprofessional collaborative ready in the delivery of patientcentered care. This study has is a mixed-method approach to evaluating the effectiveness of the Entry-to-Practice PharmD's (E2P PharmD) IPE program at the University of British Columbia (UBC).

Methods: The mixed-method approach to IPE evaluation included four components: 1) a gap analysis of the Canadian Interprofessional Health Collaborative competencies, 2) longitudinal evaluation of IPE activities, 3) modified pre/post/cross-sectional analysis of student self-reported skills and beliefs regarding interprofessional collaboration in a health care setting between UBC E2P PharmD cohorts using the interprofessional education perspective survey (IEPS), 4) thematic analysis of focus group data exploring student perspectives towards the UBC E2P PharmD IPE program. IEPS survey data was analyzed with Mann-Whitney U-test.

Results: This study identified strong components and areas of improvement within the UBC E2P PharmD IPE program. Areas of strength included successful coverage of the CIHC domains within the IPE activities as well as high student satisfaction of activities. Areas of improvement highlighted various issues such as incongruent student IPE knowledge levels, experiential educator effectiveness, as well as practical complications.

Conclusions: Our study presents a novel process for a comprehensive evaluation of an IPE program. Further research is necessary to understand the factors influencing student perceptions of IPE more specifically and impact on future practice.

Key Words: Interprofessional education, Interprofessional education perspective scale (IEPS), Pharmacy students, Interprofessional training, Health care professionals

Poster 16

Measuring Student Impact of Using the Final Exam as a Pre-course Assessment

Author: Sunny Y. Yang, Jason Min

Presenter: Sunny Yang

Abstract (word count: 248): Pre-course assessment is a well-known technique that can offer enticing benefits. Despite existing evidence, it is not clear how these benefits translate to improved exit competencies for students and overall performance on assessments. We administered a surprise, 1-hour, pre-course final exam in a first-year pharmacy informatics course (n=219) and followed student performance across midterm and final exams. All assessments were coded to lecture-based learning objectives, National Informatics competencies, and National accredited Educational Outcomes. Each student received a report of their own performance (without releasing exam questions) for each course topic and exit competency to aid in identifying areas of additional focus. We compared performance of new and identical questions, and conducted sub-group analyses including discrimination index, point biserial, and benchmarked scores from previous years. We observed a small but significant improvement in midterm scores (88.5% vs 84.5%), but no difference in final exam scores (87% vs 88%). There were no differences in our sub-group analyses. When precourse assessment data was binned into quartiles, students with higher pre-course scores had both a wider distribution and more outliers with lower scores on the final exam. Majority (85%) of students supported future pre-course assessments. Our study was confounded by the unexpected change to online teaching due to COVID-19. Future inquiry includes: (1) whether a decay in benefit exists for pre-course assessments; (2) whether a saturation point was reached near the end of term; and (3) whether an inverse relationship exists between students who perform well on pre-course assessments and final grades.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the use of a pre-course final exam assessment and impact on student performance in a first-year health informatics course. The design, lessons learned, and future areas of inquiry will be covered.

Keywords: Assessment, Health informatics, Exit competencies