

Presentation skills teaching in anaesthesia

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SUMMARY

Presentation is a communication method to convey information within a specific time, involving judgment, decision-making and critical thinking. Incorporation of teaching- learning-assessment of presentation skills is essential in medical curriculum because medical education involves presentations such as case reports, seminar, and conferences. The presentation skills equip 'the future doctors' to be at par with the ever-advancing world of technology, artificial intelligence and globalisation. The presentations should involve effective constructive feedback to enhance the effectiveness of presentation skills in medical curriculum.

The 2nd edition of Malaysian Qualification framework (MQF) incorporates communication skills as an essential functional work skill included in the five clusters of learning outcomes for the undergraduate medical programme (Malaysian medical council). As per the 'standards for undergraduate medical education', communication skills refer to the ability to convey information/ideas/reports cogently and professionally in appropriate language. In addition, the curriculum framework for core skills in communication includes a. Effective doctor-patient relationship, b. communication about the patient, c. communication about medicine and science.¹

A. Communication Skills for Effective Doctor-Patient Relationship

The New Integrated Curriculum (NIC), followed in Malaysia aims at producing a competent doctor with a holistic approach to the practice of medicine² for which effective communication skills leading to effective doctor-patient relationship are pivotal. The communication skills essential for the effective doctor-patient relationship have been well researched and emphasised, evidenced from the teaching-learning-assessment methods incorporated in the medical curriculum.^{3,4}

Presentation skills

Presentation is a communication method to convey information within a specific time, involving judgment, decision-making and critical thinking.⁵ As evidenced from the literature, the emphasis on communication from the perspective of presentation skills in medical education is scanty as compared to patient-doctor communication skills.⁶

Presentation skills are an important educational content because medical education incorporates presentations such as case reports, seminars, and conferences.⁵

B. Communication About the Patient

Effective case reports' presentations convey and transfer information about the patient among the medical fraternity essential for effective learning, interprofessional patient management and ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes. The oral case presentation is one of the primary avenues for physician-to-physician communication.⁷ A well-done case presentation has the potential to facilitate patient care, improve efficiency on rounds, serve as a stimulus for individual and group learning, and allow for student and resident evaluation. Medical students present mostly clinical case presentations.

C. Communication about Medicine and Science

Seminars and conferences presentations convey and disseminate information about medicine and science essential for continuing medical education and practicing evidence-based medicine (EBM) concept.

Inculcating and encouraging research from undergraduate level, medical students are involved in paper presentation at seminars and conferences from an early stage of their career preparing them for future. Park and Park⁵ suggested development of a robust program for medical students to improve presentation skills.

Teaching and incorporating the presentation skills at undergraduate level equips the medical students for the internet era of information and technology as well because the presentations involve not only the oral presentation skills but also the use of information technology.

The authors suggest an example of incorporating presentation skills at undergraduate level in Anaesthesia teaching.

Example of incorporating presentation skills in anaesthesia teaching: presentation by students using PowerPoint slides

The students in anaesthesia posting are asked to prepare and present a preassigned topic using PowerPoint slides. The topic chosen can be the, 'must know component' for undergraduate anaesthesia teaching like Mendelson

syndrome. The students receive guidance on the resource materials and basic PowerPoint slides preparation by the respective lecturer. The time required for the preparation of PowerPoint slides is part of the non-face to face student learning time.

The goal of student presentation is to focus on presentation skills including – a. Clarity of presentation, b. confidence of the presenter, c. content of the presentation, d. creative and innovative skills to make the slides interesting, e. use of information technology (IT) skills, e. appropriate referencing of the resources. The aim and objectives of the student's presentation are communicated well in advance to the students.

The presentation must be followed by feedback from the facilitator and the peers. As evidenced from the literature, effective feedback improves the quality of presentations and enhances students' performance.⁵

In addition to improve the presentation skills this exercise exposes the students to opportunities to enhance and practice the literacy skills which are the essential 21st century skills.⁸ The literacy skills include: (1) Information, (2) media, (3) technology referred as IMTs. The IMTs equip to discern the facts, the sources of the information, and the technology involved. A study by Nurjahan et al. suggests that in order to increase the level of computer literacy among medical students, positive steps need to be taken, involving the formal inclusion in the teaching of undergraduate medical students. Thereby, enhancing the medical students' ability to acquire, appraise and use information technology in the course of their studies, and more importantly after graduation.⁹

Additionally, by emphasising the importance of citing the resources appropriately, the students learn and practice the concept of intellectual property rights (IPR). IPR refers to legal protection available in relation to certain property that is intangible (intellectual) and created by individuals.¹⁰

For the assessment of presentation skills, the authors suggest relevant preassigned subject topic students' PowerPoint presentation as part of clinical assessment at the end of the clinical posting.

To conclude, student presentations must be incorporated into the undergraduate medical education curriculum to improve the presentation skills which are essential skills for future doctors to be at par with the ever-advancing world of technology, artificial intelligence, and globalisation. The presentations should involve effective constructive feedback to enhance the effectiveness of presentation skills in medical curriculum.

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