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Designing Relevant and Authentic Scenarios for Learning Clinical Communication in Dentistry Using the Calgary-Cambridge Approach

PDF (Size: 110KB) PP. 890-895 DOI: 10.4236/ce.2012.326134

Author(s)

Vicki J. Skinner, Dimitra Lekkas, Tracey A. Winning, Grant C. Townsend

ABSTRACT

A clinical communication curriculum based on the principles of the Calgary-Cambridge approach was developed during the revision of the 5-year Bachelor of Dental Surgery program (BDS) at The University of Adelaide, Australia. To provide experiential learning opportunities, a simulated patient (SP) program using clinical scenarios was developed. We aimed to design the scenarios to reflect communication demands that student clinicians commonly encounter, that integrated process and content, and which students would perceive as authentic and relevant. Scenarios were based on data from focus groups with recent graduates and interviews with clinic tutors. The scenarios combined content (e.g. medical history) and process (e.g. questioning and relationship skills) at a level suitable for junior students. Students evaluated scenario-based materials and SP activities in a survey comprising Likert-scale and open-ended questions. Students rated the materials and SP activities positively; open-ended comments supported the ratings. Scenario-based materials and activities based on student-clinicians' experiences, were perceived as relevant, realistic, and useful for learning. A curriculum designed on Calgary-Cambridge principles helped address student learning needs at particular stages of their program.

KEYWORDS

Clinical Communication Skills; Simulated Patients; Dentistry; Calgary-Cambridge

Cite this paper

Skinner, V. , Lekkas, D. , Winning, T. & Townsend, G. (2012). Designing Relevant and Authentic Scenarios for Learning Clinical Communication in Dentistry Using the Calgary-Cambridge Approach. *Creative Education*, 3, 890-895. doi: 10.4236/ce.2012.326134.

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