Gaining Competencies During Early Medical Training: Medical Students as Teaching Assistants in Dissection-Based Anatomy Course

Martin T. Brown, Bruce A. Fenderson, Guiyun Zhang

Department of Pathology, Anatomy and Cell Biology, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107

Introduction and Objectives

- In 2002, ACGME identified six ACGME Core Competencies: patient care; medical knowledge; practice-based learning and improvement; interpersonal and communication skills; professionalism; and systems-based practice.
- AAMC recommended lists of similar competencies for the curricula of medical schools. Competency based curricula have been widely implemented in medical schools.
- Effective shifting in the graduate medical educational programs has been reported in various clinical specialties.
- There is a lack of reported efforts and development on competency training in early pre-clinical years of medical education.

Objectives:

- To explore methods for strengthening medical students’ competency training during preclinical undergraduate medical education.
- To measure improvement in five out of the six ACGME Core Competencies, namely: patient care, medical knowledge, practice-based learning and improvement, interpersonal and communication skills, and professionalism.
- To establish a foundation for implementation of future programs aimed at improving pre-clinical medical student competency training.

Methods

- Summer Anatomy Course for Physician Assistant (PA) Students
- Medical Students Recruited as Teaching Assistants
- TAs' Responsibilities: Preparation; Teaching; Creating assessments; Tutoring; Instructional tool development; Advanced dissection.
- Post-program survey for TAs: 5-point Likert scale opinion questions to solicit feedback and assess the influence of the program. The questionnaire addresses five of the six ACGME core competencies.
- Post course survey for PA students: PA students were required to evaluate the TAs in terms of their teaching effectiveness and professionalism on a 5-point Likert opinion scale. PA students were also asked to reflect anonymously on their experience with the TAs.

Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Neither (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>N/A (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I enjoyed the experience as a TA in the PA dissection laboratory</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a better understanding of human anatomy</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this program to other medical students</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My knowledge of anatomy was strengthened through the program</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Medical students learned key attributes of professionalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Neither (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>N/A (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching promoted TAs' competence related to future patient care.</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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References