



Foundational orientation program for medical students

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Context

Medical students are selected as recommended by the MCI based on their merit at the qualifying exam and at a competitive entrance exam (EAMCET) which is composed of multiple choice questions. The selection criteria of medical students usually do not take into consideration the non-scholastic abilities and aptitude of the students. Many students find it difficult to cope with the different educational environment of the medical college.

Reason for the idea

In the past, the Task Force on Medical Education for the NHRM (National Rural Health Mission) of the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, G.O.I has suggested conducting a Foundation Course from the first year which can be reinforced later on during the course. The Medical Council of India is planning to have a three month Foundation Course for entrants into medical colleges (1). In this context, the ME Unit of our institution conducted a three day I MBBS Orientation Program for the batch of students to be admitted in August 2012.

Methods

All the 150 first year medical students of our institution were participants of the program. It was coordinated by the Medical Education Unit.

The topics dealt with were: study skills, history of medicine, ethics and values, radiant thinking and mind mapping, time management, first aid and CPR, community health and communication skills. They were also given an orientation of the entire MBBS course. The faculty of the institution who were members of the Medical Education Unit core committee facilitated the sessions. The sessions were interactive and responsive.

Evaluation

The students were given a pre and post program test which was of objective type. There was an improvement of 37.3% in the post test average over the pre-test one. The best performance in the pre-test was 75% while that in the post test was 100 %. The overall feedback was predominantly encouraging with many students planning to internalize skills learnt through the program. The sessions on communication skills and CPR were highly rated by most students.

Reference

1. Shankar P, Karki B, Thapa T, Singh N. Orientation Program for first year undergraduate medical students: knowledge, attitudes and perceptions, *Education in Medicine Journal*, 2012; 4(1): e57-63. DOI:10.5959/eimj.v4i1.1

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