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Developing an interprofessional student learning collaboration using simulation to teach technical and human factors

Background

Interprofessional collaboration is essential to patient-centred safe clinical practice, with health professionals of all specialties hailing it's importance. Simulation has become an increasingly common mechanism of enhancing performance of technical and non-technical skills. Despite it's virtues being well known it remains a challenge to provide good quality inter-professional learning events during the student curricula.

Summary of Work

A pilot one-day inter-professional education course consisting of pre-license medical and nursing students from two institutions was developed. The faculty consisted of nurses and physicians with formal teaching qualifications from the two institutions. The focus for half the day was on human factors and team building exercise. The students were introduced through interprofessional team meetings through seminar-based instruction. The second half was spent participating in fifteen-minute role-played immersive simulations using standardised patients (actors) of acute medical emergencies where a collaborative approach was essential in managing the deteriorating patient. Each scenario consisted of participation from two nursing student and medical and learning objectives were assigned to respective curriculums. Structured feedback was given during a post event debrief. Student doctors and nurses concurrently discussed their experiences, management plans and their perceived roles in the workplace as well as reflecting on what they had observed in the future workplaces. Qualitative data was collected during structured debrief sessions and post-course focus groups and anonymous questionnaire, utilising a ten-point Likert scale.

Summary of Results

Nine final year nursing students and three final year medical students voluntarily participated in this course. Students demonstrated increased understanding of the role of their inter-professional colleagues (including communication, teamwork and role delineation). The collective students viewed the course as relevant for their future as practitioners. Participants also appreciated early explicit exposure to human factors and crisis resource management as well as clinical skills.

Discussion and Conclusions

We present a highly approved and active method of providing interpersonal collaborative learning, covering technical and non-technical skills. Hopefully these skills will be taken into the postgraduate workplace.

Take Home Messages

Shared inter-professional learning through simulation is a useful method of teaching technical and non-technical factors