

Distance Learning in Postgraduate Medical Education for Family Doctors in Ukraine

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Abstract.

The experience of using distance learning in the process of postgraduate education of family doctors is considered. The implementation of various online resources in the training of health professionals in quarantine activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlights the problem of information literacy and the use of information technology among physicians of all ages and psychotypes, and shows that the latest resources of telecommunications and computers. computer technologies should be widely implemented in all areas of health care. Distance learning demonstrates its flexibility through the skillful combination of various types of distance learning technologies: without the presence of a teacher in the case of mastering the theoretical part of the course, with the partial presence of a teacher during practical and seminars in parallel with traditional teaching methods.

Keywords: Postgraduate Education; Physicians; Primary Care; Distance Learning; Online Resource.

Introduction

Distance learning is a purposeful educational process based on the interactive interaction of teachers and students with each other and with teaching tools, indifferent to their location in space and time, implemented in a specific didactic system [1]. The system of continuing medical education, being a relatively conservative area of human activity, must nevertheless provide for the modern requirements of society in information using distance learning [1, 2].

Currently, distance educational technologies are actively introduced and used by higher education, including in the process of postgraduate continuing education. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and the growing needs for quality education in the regions, we can confidently state that distance learning will take its place in the educational services market, when a significant number of educational institutions can provide an opportunity for any postgraduate student to receive a wide range of educational services, including using distance learning network technologies [3, 4].

However, it is impossible to draw direct parallels between the possibilities of distance learning technologies when studying in humanitarian, technical and medical universities. The restrictions on the use of distance technologies in a medical university are due to the specifics of the future profession and the need for practical training of skills and abilities. It is undeniable that training a doctor in practical skills requires traditional face-to-face contact and the need to implement teacher-student and doctor-patient relationships, but theoretical training and decision-making exercises can take place remotely [4, 5].

Distance learning is a promising form of pedagogical technologies in the field of medical education, as it is more flexible and meets the modern realities of society. Distance education at the postgraduate stage gives doctors the opportunity to independently obtain the necessary knowledge, using modern information technology, as distance learning requires a doctor a high level of professional and cognitive motivation, self-control and self-discipline. He must also strive for continuous development and self-improvement of his professional growth, which will be manifested in knowledge, skills and actions.

Forms and methods of distance education in postgraduate medical training. Theoretical review

Distance educational technologies can and are capable of intensifying the theoretical training of postgraduate medical students. The introduction of innovative approaches based on distance learning technologies in the learning process creates conditions for the interaction of a teacher and a doctor with each other at a distance, reflecting all the components inherent in the educational process (goals, content, methods, organizational forms, teaching aids) and implemented by specific means of Internet technologies or other means providing interactivity [4, 5, 6].

The result of the introduction of distance learning should be the ability to continuously receive significant results for the doctor to achieve professional goals, including in the intervals between certification courses; to intensify the use of scientific, methodological and technical potential [5, 7].

On the one hand, a doctor should be minimally separated from his professional activities; on the other hand, we should offer the most flexible and transparent system for accumulating the required number of credits, and ensure the required level of practical skills. Here the modular principle of the organization of education comes to the fore. It is necessary to revise the basic professional educational programs in specialties, taking into account the procedures and standards for the provision of relevant types of assistance, to present them in a modular format. Educational programs must comply with clinical guidelines, most of which are to be developed jointly by medical universities and professional communities.

In this regard, it becomes necessary to solve problems of various levels: from the regulatory and methodological base to financing the equipment of classrooms and information transmission networks. Undoubtedly, the main burden falls on the teaching staff, which at the first stage must reach the appropriate level of training and competence in the application of distance technologies; develop additional professional educational programs implemented using e-learning; create educational and control materials for them. The complexity of creating a course using distance technologies is much higher than traditional full-time education. At the same time, the urgency of the problems of taking into account the needs of the postgraduate student in accordance with the quality management system and copyright compliance [6, 8].

The possibilities of distance educational technologies can be both technical (lack of a video camera, incompatibility of the computer systems of the teacher and student, etc.), and user restrictions associated with insufficient experience in using technical means of Internet communication.

Our own experience

At the Department of General Practice-Family Medicine of the Kharkiv Medical Academy of Postgraduate Education, individual elements of distance educational technologies are implemented in the system of continuous medical education: at the cycles of thematic improvement and in the process of training future specialists-doctors of family medicine in internship.

We have used the forms of distance education as lectures in text and presentation versions, methodological developments in electronic form, as well as e-books presented to doctors of the professional retraining course, certification courses for advanced training and thematic improvement in the specialty "general practice-family medicine".

When conducting training, the training materials presented in electronic form for self-preparation are actively used by postgraduate students, who note the convenience of studying them, including when it is impossible to take students away from work during the course of training.

On the other hand, distance education individualizes the learning process, which is ensured by the development of topics for independent work in the form of preparing abstracts on given topics for each student (taking into account the wishes and specifics of the work), followed by discussion during the teacher's verification of the presented material via e-mail.

When conducting the full-time part of the advanced training courses for doctors in the specialty "general practice-family medicine", the department uses both interactive synchronous (on-line) and asynchronous (in recording) distance educational technologies in the form of webinars, webinar lectures, remote master classes, online trainings based on professional Internet sites.

Connecting to Internet resources during practical exercises for viewing and discussing a given topic intensifies the educational process and allows you to solve the problems of both the theoretical and practical parts of the training course.

For the purpose of an individual approach to the theoretical training of interns in the specialty "general practice-family medicine", the department also uses certain elements of distance education, namely:

1. Submission of information materials in electronic form on the subject under study in accordance with the approved training program (information material, methodological training manuals, guidelines, legislative and regulatory documents regulating the activities of family doctors).
2. Development by the teacher of topics for independent preparation of abstracts (in the form of text or presentation materials) with subsequent verification and discussion of them at seminars.
3. Individual test variable control tasks for individual modules of the program sent to students' e-mail addresses, followed by their verification and summing up.
4. Interactive synchronous (on-line) lectures on the studied topic based on a professional Internet resource.
5. Asynchronous (recorded) webinars and remote master classes on a professional site.
6. Testing and solving situational problems on topical problems using a professional site.
7. Participation in peer discussion through telemedicine of diagnostic patients presented by doctors for consultation from remote areas.

As our previous practice shows, such an approach to the theoretical training of doctors allows to ensure their high-quality training, individualize the educational process, and also disciplines and organizes the work of postgraduate students during their stay at the medical practice bases.

Conclusions

Thus, the practical experience of using distance learning at the Department of General Practice - Family Medicine testifies to its undoubted advantages and positive opportunities.

Distance learning is the most optimal form in the system of continuing medical education, as it helps to solve a number of problems arising for a certified specialist due to different approaches to work and study, in particular, in case of partial separation from work or the impossibility of separation from work (the difference between workers shifts and duty schedules for trained doctors, etc.).

Distance learning demonstrates its flexibility through the skillful combination of various types of distance learning technologies: without the presence of a teacher in the case of mastering the theoretical part of the course, with the partial presence of a teacher during practical and seminars in parallel with traditional teaching methods.

Postgraduate education of doctors causes a change in approaches to the organization of the educational process, methodological training of teachers to implement innovations, facilitation of adaptation to learning, search and justification of forms, methods and technologies of distance learning.

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