Learning from the Expert Radiation Therapy Patient

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Introduction

• Pre-Clinical seminar introduced
• Developed to improve student interpersonal skills
• Many components to pre-clinical seminar but the focus of this talk is the real patient experience and evaluation of the seminar
Presentation Overview

• Rationale and outline
• Methods
• Results
• Discussion
• Conclusion
Rationale

• Feedback indicated students could be better prepared for patient interactions

• Net generations technology focussed

• Some RTs more focussed on technology

• Evidence suggests that using patients is beneficial to learning
Pre-Clinical Seminar Format

• Introduction, assessment, goal setting emotional intelligence, questions
• Communication lecture
• Communication scenarios
• **Expert patient**
• Questions/ Discussion
• Departmental Expectations/ Student Experiences
Methods

• Anonymous questionnaire to evaluate students’ perceptions of seminar

• 4 Likert style prompts
  - Definitely, Mostly, Neutral, Not really, Not at all

• 4 open questions –
  - The things I learned from this session are:
  - The things I would change in this session are:
  - What, if any, emotional impact did the session have on you?
  - What, if any, emotional impact do you think the session may have had on the patient?
## Results

I enjoyed the session

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I found the session useful

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The session should be repeated at a similar point in the course

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I think there should be additional patient led sessions

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Results – Themes

• Engaging guest speaker
• Helped prepare us for placement
• Unique insight on patient experience
• Highly valuable and useful
Hearing from a patient’s point of view keeps us aware of what we do or say makes them feel

Insightful to hear about another person’s cancer journey and it makes it easier to know what to say to other patients and how to interact with them
Emotional Impact on Student

- Touching – great to see how even an RT has a tough experience let alone a patient who has no background knowledge.
- Reminded me to never become too clinical – you need to show empathy.
- Made me more aware of the emotional impact on the patient’s support network – found it quite emotional.
- The guest speaker gave us a personal side to the situation, which made me feel her pain emotionally because it was so sad. Then she gave us the professional side, which helped me understand how to empathise with patients.
Students’ Perceptions of Emotional Impact on Patient

It may have made her revisit her experience and those negative emotions at first. But perhaps after she may feel relieved/lucky that she overcame it. A mixed emotional experience
Students’ Suggestions for Future Development

• Repeat the session
• Patient with no RT background
• Patients with different types of cancer
Discussion

• Students see value even if not enjoyable
• Interacting with patients not easy
• Formal teaching required
Conclusions

• Repeat the session at same point in course
• Introduce further sessions later in course
• Identify patients with no RT background
• Compare and evaluate differences in experiences between patient and expert patient
References


• McKimm