

Students' Perceptions Towards a Family Medicine

Attachment Experience

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To explore the students' perceptions about their experience in a family medicine (FM) preceptorship in order to provide a sound basis for offering guidance to family medicine undergraduate education.

Methods: During one full academic year at King Saud University, College of Medicine, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, a self-administered questionnaire was distributed to all students ($n = 177$) at the end of each 6 weeks family practice attachment course. Students were asked to rate their attachment by responding to a five-points, Likert type scale questionnaire and other Yes/No questions reflecting different important points in teaching and training.

Results: The teaching quality and the ability of the General Practitioners (GPs) preceptors to relate to students are rated very highly. Despite that, the majority of students (59.3%) feel their aims were not met during the attachment. Students indicate that there should be more teaching of practical procedure skills, more time allocated for discussion and a greater student involvement in the consultation.

Conclusion: There is much to be retained in FM preceptorships that involves the caring and communications aspects of learning patient care. The study showed that practical procedure skills are desirable features of a preceptorship programme and that an emphasis on doing vs. observing is preferred by students. Some conditions designed to improve preceptorships are outlined and basic practicalities of adding a preceptorship to a practice are considered.

KEYWORDS

Family Medicine, preceptorship, evaluation, undergraduate, curriculum, Saudi Arabia.

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Education for Health, Vol. 0, No. 0, 2003, 00 – 00

Education for Health ISSN 1357-6283 print/ISSN 1469-5804 online # 2003 Taylor & Francis Ltd
<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals>
DOI: 10.1080/13576280310001607622