

Reimagining clinical skills teaching amidst and beyond the pandemic

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Background:

The COVID-19 Global Pandemic left more than 1.6 billion learners in more than 190 countries around all continents out of school. For the sake of continuity of education, institutes across the globe transitioned to various distance learning models over a record period. At Ajman University College of Medicine, our biggest challenge was to digitally shift the clinical skills teaching in an engaging and meaningful way, without comprising the expected outcomes all in just three weeks.

Method:

An outcome-based, student-centered, blended virtual learning approach was adopted combining both asynchronous and synchronous strategies underpinned with the Flipped Learning Theory. The asynchronous component included delivering the digital content and curriculum of each clinical skill (videos, checklists, instructor narrations etc.) over Moodle™ for self-paced learning. The synchronous component over BlackBoard Collaborate™ included live, small group sessions including: 1. Individual Skills Readiness Test (iSRT) over Microsoft Forms™ (Assessment of clinical understanding and approach to the skill) 2. Student demonstrations of the skill at the safety of their home using family members as volunteers. 3. Peer Evaluation 4. Debriefing Mid and End term assessments included: 1. Clinical skills video project. 2. Creative Reflective Essays 3. Case Review Projects (Patient Safety, Ethics and Medical Errors) 4. iSRT Scores

Results and Conclusion:

Student course assessment revealed high satisfaction rates. Majority students felt competent in performing the skills on patients with a little to no supervision. Some did feel the need for hands on review sessions once back on the campus. Instructor Course Assessment Report (ICAR) and Curriculum Effectiveness Committee Report also reflected that all course learning outcomes were successfully met. COVID-19 pandemic pushed us out of our comfort zones to re-consider innovative ways to teach clinical skills.

Key words: *COVID-19, Digital Medical Education, E-Teaching, Clinical Skills*

