

WORKSHOP REPORT

Experience and outcome of a PBL trigger material development workshop

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Context

Problem based learning (PBL) is a range of educational approach that encourages students to learn by an active, task oriented and self directed learning through the exploration of a problem/trigger. Creating an appropriate problem/trigger for problem based learning is a critical and challenging task and it determines whether the desired learning objectives could be achieved or not. This article is based on the experience of a workshop that was organized to come up with new trigger materials for respiratory block in phase 2 MD programme of the School Medical Sciences, USM

Reason for the idea

PBL is one of the main teaching strategies in phase 2 MD programme of the Medical School. In PBL session the trigger materials are the key that generate the learning issues pertaining to the learning objectives of a particular problem. All the members and coordinator of the block expressed their concern about the trigger materials those are being used for PBL for long time. There was a felt need by all to come up with new trigger materials and agreed to work together in a workshop for the purpose. Based on the felt need a workshop was organised by the block coordinator with the help of academic office and department of medical education. The objectives of the workshop were to reinforce the understanding of the participants about the principles and guidelines of developing trigger materials, to work on the existing trigger materials and come up with new PBL trigger materials for the block, and to endorse the new materials by PBL trigger vetting committee of the school.

Methods

A day long workshop was organised for developing the trigger materials for the block. The participants were the block members from the department of Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Chemical Pathology, Community Medicine, Surgery, Orthopedic, Emergency

Medicine, Skills lab and Medical Education. A multidisciplinary approach was used for the purpose. The PBL trigger vetting committee chairperson and members were also attended the workshop to facilitate the group work as well as for vetting and endorsement of the developed materials. The respiratory block is of four weeks duration and each week has a problem. The participants were divided into 4 small groups as the block has 4 weeks with a problem in each week. Each group was assigned to work on a particular problem of a particular week. They were asked to identify the learning objectives for the particular PBL problem from the overall objectives of the block and based on the identified objectives develop the trigger materials, discussion points and the tutor guide.

Outcomes

A total of 16 block and 3 vetting committee members were participated in the workshop and they were varied from preclinical, para-clinical, clinical discipline. It was a multidisciplinary approach to come up with the trigger materials which is very important for developing effective triggers as PBL is a process of integrated, multidisciplinary and holistic learning. The outcomes of the workshop were very encouraging and were as follows; the objectives of each week PBL problem were identified from the overall block objectives, new trigger materials were developed for all weeks, the discussion points for the developed triggers were identified, the tutor guides were developed for the new triggers, and finally the new triggers were vetted and endorsed by the PBL trigger vetting committee. It was the first such kind of workshop organized for developing triggers and showed us a unique and dynamic way of developing effective PBL trigger materials within a short period of time.

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