

Title: Integrating ultrasound training for undergraduate medical education in developing economies

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What problem was addressed: Existing literatures have shown that interest in ultrasound education has increased dramatically in recent years.

Radiology teaching in our institution is done only during the clinical rotation of the medical students. Students spend only four weeks in radiology department at their sixth year with little exposure on ultrasound. Passing summative assessments is required for them to graduate. The radiology curriculum has been reviewed on the content of teaching and learning with little or no emphasis on the ultrasound training. The existing curriculum is neither competency nor outcome based, hence level of competencies in graduating doctors remain low. These inadequacies have resulted in high level of unmet needs in community ultrasound services.

This project aimed at remediating these inadequacies in the curriculum through need assessment, faculty development, online surveys, and consultations at various levels.

What was tried: We conducted several intensive advocacies at various levels in our institution to sensitize stakeholders on the importance of ultrasound training in undergraduate medical education. We gave a presentation to the faculty and constituted a working group at the departmental level to reassess the radiology curriculum with focus on integrating the ultrasound training, outcome, and competency.

We also designed and administered a questionnaire using Survey Monkey to assess medical students' perception of the relevance and adequacy of training in ultrasound for medical practice upon graduation. The preliminary results show that a majority (87.69%) of the students that rotate through the radiology department indicated that the period spent during radiology posting was inadequate. About 73.44% of the students consider ultrasound to be relevant to their future practice as medical doctors. The preferred unit that they rotated through during the clinical posting in the radiology department was the ultrasound unit with 42.19% compared to computed tomography (14.06%), magnetic resonance imaging (6.25), and mammography (1.57%) for other units in radiology.

What lessons were learned: We were able to convince the students, stakeholders, and the faculty members who were reluctant to the idea of adding more to the already loaded curriculum. Team work and allocation of specific assignments among the team members with involvement of students and other supporting staff made our work easier.

The curriculum development has reached advance stage at the committee level after which it will be submitted to the faculty and college boards for deliberation.

The university management has assured us to apply for grants from Tetfunds (Tertiary education trust funds) once the curriculum is approved.

The academic staff union of all the universities in Nigeria went on strike from November 2018 to date; this has affected the progress of our work. We intend to continue this project when faculty resume.

The student survey took a longer time than anticipated due to poor internet connection and their busy schedules.

Reference:

Hoppmann R, Blaivas M, Elbarbary M (2012) Better medical education and healthcare through point-of-care ultrasound. *Acad Med* 87:134.