

[P01.014] Implementating a Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Inpatient Neurology Rotation for Medical Students: A Pilot Program

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OBJECTIVE: We hypothesize PBL may be an excellent format for inpatient student education. **BACKGROUND:** The complexities of clinical neurology are often intimidating to medical students. Although a busy inpatient service provides excellent learning opportunities, competition with residents for educational time may reduce its effectiveness. PBL is used extensively for basic science education but not for clinical rotations. **DESIGN/METHODS:** We devised a one-week PBL inpatient rotation as part of a four-week clerkship. Each PBL group consisted of two students. On the first day, students reviewed the neurologic examination with each other and then with faculty. Each day thereafter, the group was assigned an inpatient with a common neurologic problem. One student performed a history and exam and identified learning issues related to localization, differential diagnoses and diagnostic studies. The other student identified issues related to basic mechanisms, pathophysiology, and evidence-based therapy. The following morning students taught each other learning issues. In the afternoon faculty reviewed history and findings and discussed diagnosis and management. At exit, students filled out surveys, which asked them to compare their experience to conventional inpatient rotations (scale 1-5; 1=much worse, 3=about the same, 5=much better) and assess effectiveness of the format (1-5; 1=strongly disagree, 3=neither, 5=strongly agree). **RESULTS:** Students (n=8; 100% response) felt unanimously they had an improved learning experience with respect to variety of cases (4.3); depth of material (4.7); neurologic exam (4.5); clinical signs (4.8); integration of basic science (5.0); and evidence-based therapy (4.3). They were strongly positive about the format enhancing their learning (5.0); and preferred it over standard experiences (5.0). There was little difference in shelf test scores when compared to students in conventional neurology inpatient rotations. **CONCLUSIONS/RELEVANCE:** Our ongoing pilot curriculum suggests PBL enhances inpatient experience, by allowing students to focus on core neurologic disorders. PBL may improve student satisfaction and enthusiasm on neurology clerkships.