

[P01.016] Neurology Clinical Skills in Internal Medicine Interns: The Diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease

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OBJECTIVE: The objective of this evaluation was to determine the clinical neurological skills of internal medicine interns via an Observed Standardized Clinical Examination (OSCE). **BACKGROUND:** The diagnosis of Parkinson's disease depends on being able to perform a detailed neurological examination. Internal Medicine interns may not have received adequate neurology clinical skills training in their medical schools. **DESIGN/METHODS:** Ten Internal Medicine Interns were given a brief clinical history of a 60 year old male with three years of progressive tremor. They were given ten minutes to perform a limited evaluation on a patient with mild Parkinson's disease. **RESULTS:** The interns were rated on a scale of 1-5 on their performance for each of the following categories: tremor evaluation, strength evaluation, tone evaluation, coordination testing, professionalism, and the case summary. Averages for the sections were 76% for tremor, 84% for strength, 50% for tone, 80% for coordination testing, and 50% for tone testing. The average score for professionalism was 94%. When summarizing the patient's findings 40% were able to come up with all of the correct findings of rest tremor, bradykinesia, and cogwheel rigidity, but only 20% were then able to make the correct diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. **CONCLUSIONS/RELEVANCE:** This OSCE evaluation of an early Parkinson's patient by internal medicine interns revealed that they were exceptionally professional with the patient and were well prepared to evaluate strength and coordination. The interns were adequately prepared to evaluate tremor. They were unprepared to evaluate tone and had difficulty with synthesizing information that they had obtained from the cursory neurological examination in formulating their differential diagnosis. This OSCE will provide information for a neurological clinical skills educational series with subsequent retesting anticipated. The OSCE format is a wonderful educational tool as it allows for standardized testing and an opportunity for immediate feedback and teaching.