

## Interactive Medical Education: Anaesthesia, Critical Care and Emergency Medicine Teaching at Peradeniya

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To the editor,

Medical education has advanced many folds over the recent past. As a result, novel teaching learning activities have been incorporated into the medical curricula. An important aspect of the learning process is the integration between the theoretical knowledge and the clinical practice. This integration occurs the best when the teaching becomes interactive.

Anaesthesiology, Critical Care and Emergency Medicine are clinical specialities with essential knowledge and skills. There lies the teaching pearl, creation of interest among the learners regarding the speciality. Thus, perhaps these are the easiest to teach.

Simulation based teaching is one of the most interactive teaching strategies. Patient simulator (SimMan™) is used effectively for this purpose at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya. Students work in groups, assume team roles of an emergency response team, and manage a simulated clinical scenario. As the management progresses, the patient simulator exhibits dynamic parameters. The students are challenged to recognize the changes and modify their treatment strategy. Students must integrate the theory with clinical practice for successful

management. The students are exposed to the concept of the Medical Emergency Team (MET) within the same activity. Further, this provides an opportunity to practice non-technical skills.

Non-technical skills are an area less addressed during medical education. The impact of these soft skills is more pronounced today than ever. These must be self-mastered, thus is an excellent topic for student generated learning. The creation of a poster along with a 3–5-minute oral presentation based on the above study topic is done as a teaching/ learning activity. Review of the posters created shows that all students have grasped the core concepts with remarkable creativity of presentation.

Gamification is a novel and interactive teaching method. There are many software programmes available to facilitate this concept (E.g.: Kahoot!™). The students participate as groups to an online quiz delivered as a game. Multiple question types are used along with time limitations. The scoring and competition create a stress free and fun environment for the students to learn in a very interactive way. In my experience this is the most engaging teaching method and is also an effective formative assessment.

Creative student presentations are yet another interactive teaching method. This is a good technique to teach small theory components such as transport checklist for a critically ill patient, assessment of Glasgow Coma Scale (GCS) and Early Warning Score (EWS). The students work in small groups on the given topic and formulate creative presentations such as short dramas and simulated ward rounds. This not only delivers the theory but also boost presentation skills and self-confidence in students.

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Integrated, interactive teaching is the way forward in medical education. Incorporation of novel teaching techniques creates a stress-free learning environment for students to thrive in.

These are the guiding principles of Anaesthesia, Critical Care and Emergency Medicine teaching at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Peradeniya.