Patient safety education for undergraduate medical students – can they engage?

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Aims and background

- Patient safety education running in parallel with a clinical attachment should allow students to understand the relevance of this topic to their practice
- For students to understand what a safety culture might look like, they need the time and opportunity to discuss and reflect on their clinical experiences
- Students may also be in the ideal position to look at a problem from a different angle and develop new ideas and solutions

Methodology

- Weekly patient safety sessions were developed to encourage students to share and critically reflect on patient safety practices they observed throughout their placement
- Discussions were facilitated to allow students to explore the influences on clinical decision making, safety culture and to analyse and understand errors
- Students had to create innovative solutions or interventions to implement to try to reduce similar practices occurring in the future

Format of a session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction and ground rules</th>
<th>Reflection on cases seen during week</th>
<th>Critical Incident scenario</th>
<th>Analysis of errors and safety culture</th>
<th>Safety intervention or solution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Weekly patient safety discussion sessions

Case and scenario examples

- Prescribing error in acute severe asthma
- Hypoglycaemia in a child fasting for surgery
- Delayed intervention in a child with obstructive sleep apnoea
- Management of seizures in a complex child
- Diagnosis of congenital cyanotic heart disease

Feedback and outcomes

“Really good, never had this type of teaching before”

“Challenging, but format felt open and non-judgemental”

“Thought provoking, very useful for my learning”

“Will remember ABCDE and don’t forget glucose!”

“Loved the step by step analysis”

“Handover is a clue to reduce errors”

Safety ideas and themes

- Prescribing cubicle
- SBAR handover stickers on phones
- Maximum drug dose highlighting

Communication
- Think ahead and call for help
- Keep an open mind

Conclusion

Teaching patient safety in parallel with a clinical attachment can be used as an effective tool to allow critical reflection on observed practice, analysis of errors and encourage students to think of practical safety solutions, thereby creating a safety culture.