GP-Facilitated Teaching in Hospitals: The Way Forward? [Letter]

This article was published in the following Dove Press journal:
Advances in Medical Education and Practice

Supanki Julie Veliah
Aishwarya Dakshinamoorthy
Sharma

University of Leeds, Faculty of Medicine
and Health, Leeds, UK

Dear editor

We read with great interest the article by Bansal et al¹ on incorporating GP-facilitated teaching on clinical placements. We thought it to be a thought-provoking and innovative approach. As medical students, we appreciate that the course being vast means students are simply unable to cover all specialties during their degree² – this intervention exposes students to teaching scenarios and specialties they may otherwise not have had exposure to. However, we believe certain factors need addressing.

With reference to Figure 1 in the study, we wonder whether further analysis has been conducted into the 12% of students that perceived the sessions as having little/no impact on their clinical reasoning abilities. Are these 25 students from across all groups or from specific teaching groups? This would help deduce if it is a matter of certain students not engaging or whether some GPs encouraged the development of clinical reasoning skills more than others. The same can be said for the other less positive results in the study.

Although we realise this study has yielded mostly positive results, bearing in mind that certain groups may be benefitting less than others, we wonder how all teaching sessions could be standardised. Indeed, in Mathers et al's study,³ students reported to find the "lack of a structured syllabus" to be an issue on placement. Thus, ensuring a structured syllabus might avoid this problem, which perhaps could be addressed during the training all GPs received, allowing a degree of flexibility, whilst making teaching standardised. Furthermore, we question whether the learning objectives the study mentions were formulated by GPs, or by the University of Sheffield. GPs liaising with the medical school would allow standardisation of core goals, ensuring that sessions are delivered at the appropriate level and learning objectives are met to maximise student success.

Student views on learning outcomes were evaluated, however, there were no assessments to determine whether the students had successfully met these learning objectives. The importance of evaluating a student's performance is highlighted in a review article by DaRosa et al.⁴ This could have been assessed in the form of observed consultations to appraise whether the intervention translates into better examination scores and quality of care, which is the aim of medical education.

Moreover, small group teaching is usually carried out at the University, where facilities to accommodate the entire year cohort exist, for example,

Correspondence: Supanki Julie Veliah
University of Leeds, Worsley Building,
Clarendon Way, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK
Tel +447435130852
Email um15sjv@leeds.ac.uk

dedicated seminar spaces, and equipment such as projectors and lecture recordings for absentees. This is supported by a study by Hendry et al,⁵ which highlighted that consultant perceptions emphasised that a lack of resources can be a barrier to teaching. If these teaching sessions are conducted in the hospitals as mentioned, we fear the lack of these resources may present a barrier to effective teaching.

The findings of this study are critical, and it is clear to see the positive impact this intervention may have on future clinical practice. However, we feel that by considering these extra aspects the intervention can be made even more impactful.

Disclosure

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in this communication.

References

1. Bansal A, Singh D, Thompson J, Kumra A, Jackson B. Developing medical students' broad clinical diagnostic reasoning through GP-facilitated teaching in hospital placements. *Adv Med Educ Pract.* 2020;11:379–388. doi:10.2147/AMEP.S243538
2. Jackson N, Jamieson A, Khan A, editors. *Assessment in Medical Education and Training: A Practical Guide*. Radcliffe Publishing; 2007. Available from: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=13Ox1LyydvMC&lpg=PR1&pg=PA9#v=onepage&q&f=false>. Accessed May 26, 2020.
3. Mathers J, Parry J, Scully E, Popovic C. A comparison of medical students' perceptions of their initial basic clinical training placements in 'new' and established teaching hospitals. *Med Teach.* 2006;28(3):e80–9. doi:10.1080/01421590600617392
4. DaRosa DA, Skeff K, Friedland JA, et al. Barriers to effective teaching. *Acad Med.* 2011;86(4):453–459. doi:10.1097/ACM.0b013e31820defbe
5. Hendry RG, Kawai GK, Moody WE, et al. Consultant attitudes to undertaking undergraduate teaching duties: perspectives from hospitals serving a large medical school. *Med Educ.* 2005;39(11):1129–1139. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2929.2005.02320.x

Dove Medical Press encourages responsible, free and frank academic debate. The content of the Advances in Medical Education and Practice 'letters to the editor' section does not necessarily represent the views of Dove Medical Press, its officers, agents, employees, related entities or the Advances in Medical Education and Practice editors. While all reasonable steps have been taken to confirm the content of each letter, Dove Medical Press accepts no liability in respect of the content of any letter, nor is it responsible for the content and accuracy of any letter to the editor.

Advances in Medical Education and Practice

Dovepress

Publish your work in this journal

Advances in Medical Education and Practice is an international, peer-reviewed, open access journal that aims to present and publish research on Medical Education covering medical, dental, nursing and allied health care professional education. The journal covers undergraduate education, postgraduate training and continuing medical education

including emerging trends and innovative models linking education, research, and health care services. The manuscript management system is completely online and includes a very quick and fair peer-review system. Visit <http://www.dovepress.com/testimonials.php> to read real quotes from published authors.

Submit your manuscript here: <http://www.dovepress.com/advances-in-medical-education-and-practice-journal>