

ABSTRACT FOR ASUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020

TITLE: A Survey of Medical Students' Attitudes after attending a Point of Care Ultrasound Workshop

BACKGROUND:

60% of USA medical schools have point of care ultrasound (POCUS) teaching in their curriculum. POCUS improves the safety, success and speed of performing many invasive procedures, which is key to it gaining traction in overseas institutions. Australasian institutions will follow the increasing use of POCUS, especially in the setting of affordable, high-quality hand-held POCUS devices.

OBJECTIVES:

Should POCUS training begin in medical school, during prevocational training, or in College-specific training programs? We believed we should ask medical students who had attended our extra-curricular POCUS workshops.

METHODS:

Due to demand from medical students, we conducted POCUS half-day workshops on eleven Saturdays from September 2017 to October 2019. The workshops were limited to 15 or 20 learners, depending on availability of volunteer instructors. The workshops were oversubscribed. Learners performed an ultrasound-guided cannulation on a phantom, an extended Focused Assessment with Sonography in Trauma (eFAST) and then a cardiorespiratory limited ultrasound examination (CLUE). Attendees then completed a qualitative evaluation form consisting of questions relating to the usefulness of the workshop to clinical practice, and at what point in the medical curriculum should POCUS teaching be provided.

RESULTS:

The results show an overall positive response with majority of students preferring POCUS teaching during medical school, especially in final year. The study also demonstrated that students found POCUS useful in appreciating anatomy and enhancing their clinical practice.

CONCLUSION:

There is high demand for POCUS teaching from medical students. Those surveyed believe that it should be provided towards the end of their course. In the USA, prospective students choose medical schools offering POCUS as they believe that it will provide them with a competitive advantage in applying for postgraduate training. POCUS is a valuable tool in both pre-clinical (e.g. appreciating normal anatomy) and clinical years (diagnostic and procedural skills). These basic skills can then be consolidated and expanded upon in prevocational training, with acquisition of advanced ultrasound skills during College-specific training programs.