Meeting Students Where They Are: Educating Students with Varying Life Experiences About the Health Care Needs of Persons with Disabilities

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Working with People with Disabilities in the Clinical Setting: Learning Objectives

This interclerkship will enable students to:

• Approach people with physical and cognitive disabilities in a manner that builds trust and confidence.
• Understand the challenges that people with disabilities and their families experience when they seek medical care.
• Anticipate potential secondary medical conditions related to a disability and work as partners with patients to optimize their health.
• Modify the clinical encounter when necessary to work with a person with a disability, relevant resources in the community.

Methodology:

Small group dialogues with individuals, students, individuals, families, two sessions.

Lunch: Movie on access to medical care.

The following is a list of some of the key concepts and activities covered:

1. Welcome; Caring for people with disabilities.
2. Small group dialogues with individuals, students, families, two sessions.
3. Lunch: Movie on access to medical care.
4. Student-selected small group workshops: two sessions.

Workshop Interclerkship Workshops: Students select two

Workshop: Childbirth and Childrearing for People with Physical Disabilities

Description: This session considers the joys and challenges of childbearing and parenthood for people with physical disabilities. The primary goal is to help medical students inform future families about the possible assistance that may be available to them.

Workshop: Bladder Management in Disabilities

Description: This workshop discusses the long-term physical and psychosocial effects of incontinence and the importance of early intervention and management. Students will learn about the use of effective interventions such as physical examination and counseling.

Workshop: Finding Community Resources

Description: This workshop focuses on understanding the community resources available for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health issues. Participants will learn how to identify and access these resources through the eyes of people with disabilities.

Workshop: Accessible Technology

Description: This workshop introduces students to the concept of accessibility in technology and its importance for individuals with disabilities. Participants will learn about assistive technologies and how they can improve the lives of people with disabilities.

Workshop: Ethics and End of Life Care

Description: This workshop explores the ethical and moral issues surrounding end-of-life care. Participants will learn about the principles and practices that guide decision-making in end-of-life situations.

Workshop: Bladder Management in Disabilities

Description: This workshop focuses on the management of bladder issues in people with disabilities. Participants will learn about the prevalence of bladder issues, the different treatments available, and the importance of early intervention.

Workshop: The Physician's Role in Special Education Decisions

Description: This workshop discusses the role of physicians in special education decisions and how they can support children with disabilities and their families.

Results:

Significant Pre- to Post- Improvement in self-assessed attitudes, knowledge and skills, stratified by level of experience with cognitive or physical disabilities in friends or family.

Significant Pre- to Post- Improvement in self-assessed attitudes, knowledge, and skills, stratified by level of experience with individuals with cognitive or physical disabilities in K-12 or college.

Conclusion: Students self-assessment of their attitudes, knowledge and skills changed significantly (p < 0.05) from post to post test regardless of their prior level of disability experience or type.

Figure 1: Results of the Pre- to Post- Improvement

Significant Pre- to Post- Improvement in self-assessed attitudes, knowledge and skills, stratified by level of experience with individuals with cognitive or physical disabilities in K-12 or college.

Positive Outcomes and Strong Student Feedback

The results of the pre- and post-test showed significant improvement in attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to working with people with disabilities.

Conclusion: Students self-assessment of their attitudes, knowledge and skills changed significantly (p < 0.05) from post to post test regardless of their prior level of disability experience type.

Appreciated highlights included:

- A comprehensive approach to understanding the needs and experiences of people with disabilities.
- Effective strategies for working with individuals with different levels of disability experience.
- The importance of early intervention and management in preventing secondary medical conditions.

Overall, the interclerkship was well-received by the students, with positive feedback regarding the practical and theoretical learning experiences.