

Education Horizon-Scanning
Bulletin – May 2015

Compiled by John Gale

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General Healthcare Education

Improving care of older people electronically

Source: BMC Health Services Research

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: As the population ages more and more of us will end up getting looked after by healthcare staff in our dotage. However, the people that look after older people aren't always that well trained – a lack of training which can lead to increased stress, worse sleep and a higher workload for the staff themselves and worse care for those they are looking after. Swedish researchers developed an e-assessment and e-training programme for 41 people who looked after older people and found that staff who completed the assessments and the training programme experienced improvements in their working life and overall well-being.

You can download the full text of this article [here](#).

Distress, ethics and moral dilemmas – what happens when students hit the wards?

Source: BMJ Open

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: When healthcare students go out onto the wards they don't enter a perfect world. Lynn V. Monrouxe, from the Institute of Medical Education at Cardiff University, led a team of researchers who surveyed 3796 medical and healthcare students about their experience of professional dilemmas and whether they had experienced something they considered unethical during their placements. The most commonly encountered professional dilemmas were student abuse and issues concerning patients' dignity and safety. Men were less likely to say they had been distressed by these dilemmas than women. The students felt less distress, as time went on, about dilemmas that they considered 'justified,' as part of their learning although they felt more distress, over time, about dilemmas that they thought couldn't be justified.

You can see the full text of this article [here](#).

Medical Education

Health Education England produces new guide for foreign doctors and dentists

Source: Health Education England web site

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Health Education England have produced a new guide for foreign medical and dental graduates wanting to come and work in the UK.

You can download a copy of the guide [here](#).

Gaming + Audience Response = Happy medical students

Source: BMC Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: At some point – quite possibly in the 1960s when lots of other ridiculous ideas were being bandied about – the powers that be decided that learning should be fun. One of the ways lecturers try and achieve this is by using audience participation in their classes. However, even this palls for today's jaded students so Robin K. Pettit from A.T. Still University in Arizona looked into how 'gamification,' could be introduced as well to liven things up a bit. He used the TurningPoint audience-response system and introduced a competitive-game element to proceedings in 22 medical-microbiology lectures. 91 students were asked about the lectures and most agreed, or strongly agreed, that the games were engaging and an effective learning tool. The students particularly enjoyed competing with one another and focusing on the activity and felt they learnt most from applying theoretical knowledge to clinical scenarios.

You can download the full text of this article [here](#).

Argumentation – helping doctors to persuade patients

Source: BMC Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Doctors often have to spend time persuading patients to do things – take their medicines, do their exercises or stop eating sixteen cream cakes a day, for example. One of the ways of doing this is by using argumentation – a communication process in which the speaker, through the use of reason(s) aims to convince the person they're talking to of the acceptability of a particular point of view. In this study Claudia Zanini, from the University of Lucerne in Switzerland, trained 17 doctors in argumentation in an eight-hour course. The doctors said that the training session helped them to give a structure to the type of communication they used to interact with patients and provided tools to deal with challenges such as patients' unrealistic expectations about treatments and their medically-inaccurate beliefs.

You can download the full text of this article [here](#).

What makes a student use an app?

Source: BMC Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: It's hard to avoid apps these days and lots of universities are starting to use them to teach students. But what makes students more, or less, likely to use an app? Maximilian Sandholzer, from the University of Leipzig, looked into this issue in a study of 305 medical students who were asked about how they'd used an app designed to teach them about general practice. The researchers found that four factors predicted more frequent usage of the app:

- Being a woman
- A high perceived benefit of the app itself

- High personal interest in new technologies
- Feeling one had got lots of benefits from smartphones in the past

You can see the full text of this article [here](#).

Electives. What do host countries think about them?

Source: Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Most medical students in the wealthier parts of the world go on an elective at some point during their studies working in a less-wealthy country to broaden their horizons and – in theory at least – lend a hand to local clinics and hospitals. But what do the countries they go to make of them? Ben Kumwenda from Dundee University set out to find out by interviewing 14 hosts at seven elective sites in Malawi, Zambia and Tanzania. The hosts were all committed to providing elective experiences but their reasons for doing so varied considerably, particularly between urban teaching hospitals and less well-equipped rural ones. The main reasons for providing an elective were to nurture a group of health professionals who would understand healthcare from a global perspective. The hosts weren't worried about medical students carrying out clinical work, patient safety or ethics although in areas which were short of money training local staff was seen as a more important priority. The hosts thought that the electives could be improved by preparing students better and having some contributions from the institutions which sent students to support teaching, supervision and patient care.

You can see the full text of this article [here](#).

Self-regulated learning. What makes for success?

Source: Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: However much input they get from lecturers and senior doctors medical students need to do some learning by themselves – 'self-regulated learning,' in the jargon. Joris J. Berkhout, from the University of Amsterdam, led a team of researchers who interviewed 17 medical students from two universities who had been out on placements in hospitals. They found that four factors influenced how the students went about learning things off their own bat. These were:

- The specific goals of the learning as perceived by the students
- How much autonomy they experienced
- The learning opportunities they were given, or created, for themselves
- The anticipated outcomes of each self-regulated learning activity

How often do medical students lie about their publications?

Source: Medical Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Junior doctors often have to apply for posts in other hospitals and one of the things which is taken into account is how much (or little) they have published in the way of research. Given the high stakes it's tempting for students to claim to have written papers they haven't; claim papers they have written have been published when they haven't and overstate their importance in producing papers. Lara Sater, from the University of Ottawa, looked at application forms to ENT residency programmes over a 3-year period comparing what candidates claimed to have published with what the researchers found out about papers using PubMed, Google Scholar and e-journals. 12% of the articles were mis-represented by 23% of the applicants. People's age, sex and where they had trained did not seem to influence how likely they were to fib about their publications.

You can read the full text of this paper [here](#).

Medical students, personality and depression

Source: Personality and individual differences

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Medical students often suffer from depression and this study – led by Meng Shi from China Medical University in Liaoning – looked into the links between personality factors and depression in 1738 undergraduate medical students. The more agreeable and open students were the less likely they were to become depressed whereas the more neurotic they were the more likely they were to become depressed. The links between agreeableness, openness and neuroticism were all affected by the students' self-esteem.

You can see an abstract of this article [here](#).

Nurse Education

Using poetry in nurse education

Source: Nurse Education Today

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Arts-based approaches have been used in health education to develop emotional awareness, reduce anxiety and stress and assess students' communication skills. In this study Kirsten Jack looked at the effectiveness of poetry writing. 42 first-year undergraduate nursing students were asked to write a poem which focussed on an important issue in nursing such as compassion, communication or the therapeutic role of the nurse. They were then asked to read the poem aloud to a small group and discuss its meaning. 60% of the students said that the exercise had increased their understanding of their chosen subject; 70% said that they had learned something about themselves and two-thirds said that they had enjoyed the exercise. The students' comments suggested that the use of poetry had enabled greater understanding of others' experiences; promoted open and honest reflection on their feelings and supported the development of their confidence.

You can see the abstract of this article [here](#).

Nurse education – does experience always equal success?

Source: Journal of Nursing Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: This study, by researchers from the George Washington University in Washington D.C., looked into whether there was a link between prior clinical experience as a registered nurse and academic success in graduate nurse-practitioner programmes. The researchers looked at the applications of 106 students between 2008 and 2010 comparing their experience before they started the course and their success on it. They found that there was no relationship between how long people's work experience was before they started the course and their course marks or how likely they were to fail any courses. However, the students with the most prior clinical experience as registered nurses were *less* likely graduate within four years than those with less experience.

You can see an abstract of this article [here](#).

Do nurses know what to do when patients won't get better?

Source: Journal of Nursing Education

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Despite the medical miracles one often sees being produced on TV dramas such as *Casualty* and *Holby City* patients don't always respond to the first treatments they are given. Teaching nurses to cope with this was the subject of this study, led by Marian Lucktar-Flude from Queen's University School of Nursing in Kingston, Ontario. 239 second-, third- and fourth-year nursing students were tested on their abilities to cope with unresponsive patients. Overall the students' knowledge, confidence and performance skills of second-, third- and fourth-year students were similar with performance times for many critical assessments and interventions being poor. However, students who took a newly-developed simulation module made up of four scenarios featuring unresponsive patients did improve significantly in these skills.

You can see the abstract of this article [here](#).

Teaching nurses blood transfusions

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: People sometimes react badly to blood transfusions and when they do it's important that nurses know what to do about it. Students don't often – thank goodness, perhaps – to witness adverse reactions to blood transfusions so patient simulation can be a useful way of teaching them how to deal with this situation. Researchers from Northern Michigan University studied 86 nursing students. Half of them had a lecture followed by a simulation of a patient having an adverse reaction to a blood transfusion while the other half just took part in the simulation. The simulation included blood-administration procedures, patient monitoring, management of transfusion reactions and practice communicating with doctors. The group who had had the lecture first scored significantly higher on a test after their teaching than the other group.

You can see the abstract of this article [here](#).

[Nurses and maths – where does it all go wrong?](#)

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: People who want to have a career looking after others aren't always the same kind of people who find equilateral triangles and quadratic equations fascinating and nurses are just as likely to find maths difficult and tedious as the rest of us. This can be a problem as they are often called on to work out drug doses for patients. In this study Kari Røykenes, from Betanien University College in Norway, looked at 11 essays written by nursing students about their experiences of maths. Most of the students had enjoyed maths at primary school where they found it fun and were able to get to grips with it. However, problems started when they moved to secondary school and found that maths began to get more difficult; teachers changed from one year to the next; there were too many pupils and it was too easy to keep shtum at the back of the class and not ask teachers to explain things. For those students who had enjoyed maths at secondary school the key thing was to have a good teacher.

You can see an abstract of this article [here](#).

[Which is better, pretend patients or high-fidelity simulators?](#)

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: It's not always possible – or advisable – to let nursing students loose on real patients, particularly when those patients are going downhill. Dealing with deteriorating patients is an essential skill for nurses to have though and they are often taught to do this using either 'standardised patients,' (actors given pre-prepared scripts pretending to be ill) or high-fidelity simulators (manikins that react in a realistic way to different treatments). But which is the better method? In this study – led by Jeanette Ignacio from the National University of Singapore – 57 student nurses were taught how to deal with deteriorating patients either by 'treating,' a standardised patient or through using a high-fidelity simulator. There was no significant difference between the two groups in their performance after the training and the nurses' stress levels (measured by their levels of the stress-related hormone amylose) were the same for both methods. A smaller number of nurses took part in a focus group afterwards and these nurses said that using a standardised patient was better at helping them deal with deteriorating patients in a clinical situation.

You can see an abstract of this article [here](#).

[Using social media for CPD](#)

Source: Nurse Education Today

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: Social media has been used in healthcare education for a while now but it hasn't been used as much for people's continuing professional development (CPD). Fiona Kitching, from Monash University in Australia, interviewed 12 nursing-home managers to find out what they thought about the use of social media for CPD. Some of the benefits people mentioned included:

- Up-to-date information
- Rapid delivery of information
- Variety of formats

Drawbacks included:

- Lack of credibility of the information
- People misinterpreting information
- Sector demographics
- People not having enough time to make the most of social media

International placements for nursing students

Source: Nurse Education Today

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: The tradition of having an elective – working abroad for a while to broaden one's horizons and/or enjoy some tropical beaches – is well established for medical students but some nursing students also get to go on an international placement. Caroline A. Browne, from Murdoch University in Australia, led a team of researchers reviewing studies into nursing students' placements abroad. The researchers found five main themes emerged from the literature

- Developing cultural awareness and competence
- Providing a global perspective on healthcare
- Putting theoretical understanding into practice
- Growing personally through reflection
- Overcoming apprehension

You can see the abstract of this article [here](#).

New nurses getting to grips with medical equipment – or not ...

Source: Nurse Education Today

Date of Publication: May 2015

In a nutshell: When nurses start out on the wards they need to get to grips with gadgets as well as patients. In this study Mona Ewertsson from Örebro University in Sweden asked 113 newly-qualified nurses about their experiences using technical skills and handling gadgets. Three-quarters of them considered themselves in need of continued practical training although only 48% had access to this. The nurses rated their technical ability highly but 43% of them had been involved in incidents related to technical skills or medical devices and these incidents were not always reported. Nearly a third of the nurses did not use the existing guidelines in connection with the performance of technical skills and reflection on their performance was not common in every workplace.

You can see an abstract of this article [here](#).