



Joint Education and Training Library



Education Horizon- Scanning Bulletin – November 2019

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General Healthcare Education

ActNow to get people homeward bound

Source: NHS England

In a nutshell: For many people a stay in hospital is more like Hotel California by the Eagles – “you can check out any time you like, but you can never leave,” – than Homeward Bound by Simon and Garfunkel. Nearly 350,000 patients currently spend over three weeks in acute hospitals each year and staying too long can leave them vulnerable to infections or deconditioning. NHS England have now launched a new tool called ActNow – an e-learning package to help staff reduce hospital delays for patients. The new resource will help staff to take prompt practical action and use every opportunity to ensure patients are cared for in the best place for them. It covers the use of new technology, effective early-discharge planning and caring for people at home.

You can find out about ActNow [here](#).

Self-regulated learning and MOOCs

Source: Computers & Education

In a nutshell: Completing a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) is a bit like auditioning for *The X-Factor*. Lots of people start out full of hope but only a handful make it through to the final stages. In this study Renée S. Jansen, from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, led a team of researchers looking into the effectiveness of an intervention designed to increase people’s self-regulated learning (SRL) before they started out on a MOOC. The intervention consisted of three short videos containing SRL instruction and study suggestions to improve learners’ SRL. The study showed that the intervention improved people’s chances of finishing a MOOC on child development, clinical epidemiology and human rights. The learners who took the intervention did more SRL activities than those who hadn’t: they exhibited more metacognitive activities before learning; were more likely to seek help and displayed greater persistence. However not many people complied with the intervention.

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

Interprofessional Education

Is peer assessment really worth it?

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: Once upon a time people used to be able to walk into a grocer’s shop with a shopping list, have someone fetch it for them while exchanging a few light pleasantries about the weather and then go home again. Now people have to collect their own food and, in many cases, scan it through the checkout themselves the

logical endpoint of this process being middle-aged housewives in Kettering roaming the aisles of Lidl with a sawn-off shotgun and a machete attempting to slaughter and butcher a cow for a roast-beef dinner on a Sunday. Despite the advent of tuition fees similar forces are at work in higher education and peer learning and near-peer mentoring have become increasingly popular. But what about peer assessment? In this study Reime Marit Hegg, from Western Norway University of Applied Science, led a team of researchers comparing students' assessments of an interprofessional simulation-based team-training programme with facilitators' assessments. The researchers found that the students were actually *less* lenient than the lecturers and that "the inter-rater reliability varied considerably when comparing scores from peer observers from the three different professions with those of the facilitators." The researchers concluded that "peer assessment may support, but not replace, faculty assessment."

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

Medical Education

What do patients think makes a good doctor?

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Harold Shipman had passed all his medical exams yet not many people seriously argue he was a good doctor. So what qualities *do* patients look for in medics? Mabel Aoun, from Saint-Joseph University in Beirut, led a team of researchers attempting to find out in a study of 133 Lebanese patients. When the patients were asked to classify 'competencies,' 73.6% opted for medical expertise as first choice and 48% put communication as their second choice. In open-ended questions patients defined the good doctor in 325 answers: 64.3% mentioned medical expertise; 34.1% high ethics and 26.2% communication.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

What motivates medical specialists?

Source: International Journal of Medical Education

In a nutshell: "Where it all comes from is a mystery, It's like the changing of the seasons and the tides of the sea," was Del Boy's explanation for the origin of his merchandise in *Only Fools and Horses*. Many managers, psychologists and employees feel the same about motivation at work. Trying to shed light on this topic were a team of researchers led by Stéphanie M.E. van der Burgt, from VUmc School of Medical Sciences in Amsterdam. They shadowed six medical specialists to record what built up or sapped their motivation for a day each. IT issues was a demotivating factor. Working with colleagues both motivated and demotivated people although filling in for one another through feelings of relatedness was motivating as was being

in control of one's planning through feelings of autonomy. Patient care and teaching, especially when done simultaneously, also motivated specialists.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

[Pidgin English and medical education](#)

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: To a greater or lesser extent English has become the common language of medicine across the world, albeit leavened with a large amount of words derived from Latin and Greek. This can cause problems for people whose first language isn't English. Too much English and students can both fail to understand and lose their ability to communicate with patients. Too little and they might not understand enough to read and write research for themselves. In this study Tamim Alsuliman, from the Sorbonne in Paris, led a team of researchers investigating this issue further. 1,546 Arabic-speaking medical students from different countries took a test which assessed their comprehension of three written paragraphs. One paragraph was written in Arabic, the second combined English terminology and simplified Arabic and the third was in English. The researchers found the students' scored more highly on the hybrid paragraph than the Arabic or English one and 50% of the students preferred the hybrid paragraph over the other two paragraphs.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

[Near-peer mentoring in Minnesota](#)

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Back in the Middle Ages when I went to university there was a system of college parents where second- or third-year undergraduates took first years under their wing to help them settle in before – in my case at least – wisely putting them up for adoption. Educationalists call this near-peer mentoring and at the University of Minnesota students have been mentoring students from American Indian and Alaska Natives. Six near-peer mentors took part in interviews which found that the mentors drew on their own experiences to transmit information that supported the socialisation of matriculating students into medical school. Direct benefits to the mentors included solidifying their own understanding of medical knowledge and execution of procedural skills. “Mentors provided examples of benefits related to their own development of interpersonal communication and professionalism skills. Operating in the context of the programme provided opportunities to engage mentors in practice-based improvement and system-based practice.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Thumbs up for virtual patients?

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Virtual patients are – in the pithy phraseology beloved of educational researchers – “specific types of computer-based programmes that simulate real-life clinical scenarios where learners emulate the role of health-care providers to obtain a history, conduct a physical exam, and make diagnostic and therapeutic decisions.” Computerised patients medical students can practise on in other words. In this study Eleni Dafli, from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, led a team of researchers looking into virtual patients. They found that there was a ‘high acceptance,’ of VPs by both medical teachers and students. They fulfilled most needs as set by course directors, while satisfying student needs and creating “perceptions of improved knowledge and clinical skills reasoning.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Searching for the struggling students

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Those people familiar with wildlife documentaries will know that while some antelopes sail serenely past prides of lions, others only succeed after a life-and-death struggle while a third group comes to a sticky end having failed, so to speak, to make the cut. Medical students have a similar relationship to exams – albeit with less jeopardy – and in this study James Li, from the University of New South Wales in Sydney, led a team of researchers looking into ‘struggling,’ students who passed eventually but only after failing at least one set of exams. 700 students took part in the study which found that lower pre-admission academic achievement was the best positive predictor of whether a student was likely to struggle. Lower undergraduate medicine admission test (UMAT) and interview scores had a comparatively much smaller predictive effect.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Medical humanities – getting beneath the surface

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Medical humanities works on the basis that a nodding acquaintance with Proust, Bach and Vermeer will make the doctors of tomorrow more inclined to be nice to Doreen when she comes in on a Friday afternoon and wants them to have a look at her piles. In this study a team of researchers led by Yu-Chun Chiu, from National Taiwan University Hospital, looked at the way 275 first-year medical students got to grips with medical humanities. Those who adopted surface strategies to learning were more likely to have unsatisfactory learning outcomes, whilst the basic level conception of ‘preparing for testing,’ was negatively associated with deep strategies of learning, and positively associated with surface strategies of learning.

The basic-level conception of ‘skills acquisition,’ was positively associated with deep strategies of learning.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Does mentoring do any good?

Source: Academic Psychiatry

In a nutshell: In Homer’s Odyssey (the ancient Greek one, not The Simpsons) Mentor was left in charge of Odysseus’s son Telemachus while Odysseus left for the Trojan War. Mentor gave his name to mentoring, a process popular today, albeit with more clothes and fewer strategically-positioned fig leaves, which must come as a relief to most of us, not least Lord Sugar. In this study Bechara Secchin, from the Faculdade de Ciências Médicas de Juiz de Fora, in Brazil, led a team of researchers looking into the effectiveness of a mentoring programme for medical students. The students were second years and the researchers compared one group who had been mentored since they started medical school with another group who hadn’t. The researchers concluded that “mentoring promoted no significant change in the students.”

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

When distance makes the mind grow sharper

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Many healthcare professionals spend some time abroad during their careers but – apart from the suntan, duty free, holiday snaps and tropical diseases - does it make any difference when they get home? In this study Tingjiao Liu, from Harbin Medical University in China, led a team of researchers investigating what effect their teachers having worked abroad had on the teachers’ students. The researchers studied 514 students half of whose teachers had studied overseas and half of whose teachers hadn’t. The researchers concluded that the students whose teachers had worked abroad published more articles than those whose teachers had stayed at home and that the articles they did publish had more of an impact.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Depression, study skills and junior doctors

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Depression can take its toll among junior doctors – hardly surprising perhaps as they grapple with huge workloads, long shifts and studying for exams. In this study Eiad AlFaris, from King Saud University in Saudi Arabia, led a team of researchers looking into the links between study skills (or lack thereof) and

depression in 240 junior doctors. The researchers found that poor study skills were correlated with higher depression symptoms.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

[Apps and the tooth fairy in Iran](#)

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: From finding a plumber to researching one's family history it seems as though there is an app to solve every human problem or wish for information. Medical education is no exception and in this study M. Bonabi, from Tehran University of Medical Sciences led a team of researchers looking into the effectiveness of an app designed to teach public health service physicians about paediatric oral health care. 107 public-health physicians took part in the study and they were divided into two groups. One group used the app while the other got a booklet, had a seminar and were given a pamphlet to read. In both groups mean knowledge scores were significantly higher at the end of the study and similar results were found for "attitude and practice scores." The researchers concluded that "smart phone applications could improve knowledge, attitude and practice in physicians although this method was not superior to ... conventional method[s]."

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

[Nurse Education](#)

[Teaching treating trauma](#)

Source: Nurse Education Today

In a nutshell: In the soap opera of medicine trauma provides most of the drama – very few of the storylines on *Casualty*, for instance, feature in-growing toenails, irritable bowels or waxy ears. Trauma-informed care (TIC) provides a safe and supportive healthcare environment for patients who have experienced trauma but not all nursing courses systematically integrate it into their curriculums. In this study Lindsay M. Cannon, from the University of Wisconsin, led a team of researchers studying the effect of incorporating nursing content on TIC into graduate and undergraduate study. The researchers found the new content improved the students' knowledge and skills related to providing TIC. "Further, content on TIC is acceptable to both undergraduate and graduate students and is transferrable to non-nursing students."

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

Swapping pressure sores for Powerpoints

Source: Nurse Education Today

In a nutshell: Much ink and many pixels have been used to discuss nursing students' transition from university to the wards but rather less attention is paid to nurses moving in the opposite direction and becoming teachers in higher education. In this study Lyn Ebert, from the University of Newcastle in New South Wales, led a team of researchers interviewing seven academics teaching final-year nursing and midwifery students. Three themes were identified: feeling valued, feeling safe, and having connections. The researchers concluded that “nursing and midwifery academics would benefit from organisational support in their role transition from clinician to academic.”

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

Peer learning and preceptors

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: Sending nursing students on clinical placements is a bit like teaching children how to swim. Some people advocate shoving them in, seeing who floats and fishing the rest out with a net while others prefer them to inch in slowly from the shallow end with a pair of armbands on. On this analogy peer learning might be likened to getting them to form into groups rather like those [sea otters](#) that float around in giant circles. In this study Marie Stenberg, from Malmö University in Sweden, led a team of researchers exploring precepting nurses' experience of using structured learning activities as part of a peer-learning model during clinical placement. 62 preceptors took part in the study and four themes emerged from their responses which were:

- An opportunity for collaboration
- An occasion for reflection
- A new educational structure
- Recommendations for development

The preceptors perceived the structured learning activities as beneficial for increased collaboration and reflection among students and they felt that using the structured learning activities saved them time.

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

Psychological empowerment and assertiveness

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: Assertiveness is the middle ground of getting 10% knocked off your bill rather than punching a waiter or mumbling ‘everything was fine,’ before posting a sniffy review on TripAdvisor. It’s a good skill to have in life and nursery and midwifery are no exception. In this study Seyyed Mohsen Azizi, from Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences in Iran, looked into the links between psychological empowerment and assertiveness in a sample of 200 Iranian nursing and midwifery students. The researchers found a positive and significant correlation between psychological empowerment and assertiveness. Within psychological empowerment meaning and self-determination had a positive and significant correlation with assertiveness.

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

Helping nurses helping veterans

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: In this study Alan P. Finnegan, from the University of Chester, led a team of researchers studying the effectiveness of an educational programme aimed at preparing “the future nursing workforce to provide optimum care for the Armed Forces Community.” The programme included a flipped approach, didactic classroom teaching, blended learning, and ‘information technology.’ 468 students took part in the study. 93% agreed that the training was useful, 95% felt that nurses should be aware of the healthcare needs of the Armed Forces Community and 89% said that it should be included in the undergraduate curriculum.

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

Clinical placements and nurses’ transition to work

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: It’s hard to imagine what educational researchers in the field of nursing would talk about if students found the transition to the workplace painless, successful and stress free. This state of affairs has proved elusive hitherto though, sustaining many academic journals and keeping lots of researchers out of mischief and gainfully employed. The latest to throw their hats into the ring, so to speak, is a team of researchers led by Anu-Marja Kaihlanen, from the National Institute for Health and Welfare, in Helsinki. They looked into the links between the quality of nursing students’ final clinical placement and the success – or otherwise – of their transition into the workforce. They found that having a well-organised placement, having involved teachers, preparing for the demands of nursing work and being part of the professional team were all linked to a good transition experience but that the quality of supervision wasn’t.

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

Does debating do any good?

Source: Nurse Education in Practice

In a nutshell: Latterly political debating has proved about as conducive to public wellbeing as an introduction agency for arsonists and firelighter salesmen. Much heat but little light is generated and Hitler and Stalin usually get dragged into proceedings after the first ten minutes. Nothing daunted Daniel Rodger and Adele Stewart-Lord from London South Bank University decided to study whether debating could have beneficial effects on the development of nursing students. They got 13 students to debate the pros and cons of opt-out organ donation and then held a focus group with them afterwards. Three themes emerged from the focus groups which were:

- Openness to diverse viewpoints
- Developing non-technical skills
- Encouraging deep learning

The students saw debating as a valuable educational method that enhanced their learning and engaging in debate encouraged them to critically reflect on their beliefs. “The findings from this study suggest that debate can be a valuable pedagogical tool to incorporate into healthcare education.”

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

Occupational Therapy Education

Trust and the occupational-therapy student

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: Life is full of balancing acts; the desire to watch Match of the Day on Saturday and Sunday and one’s marital happiness, for instance, or the last vestiges of one’s sanity against one more episode of *Peppa Pig* on a wet Saturday afternoon. When they’re supervising students clinical supervisors have to balance not trusting their students enough and them not learning anything or trusting them too much and risking them causing harm to patients. In this study Pernilla Lundh, from Karolinska University Hospital in Sweden, led a team of researchers looking into this problem. They interviewed 12 clinical supervisors and found three different ways of thinking about trust: i) trust is about the student and is rather static ii) trust is a dynamic process based on student performance and iii) trust is something mutual and inter-related.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Physiotherapy Education

Knowing and not knowing in physiotherapy

Source: BMC Medical Education

In a nutshell: “There are known knowns. These are things we know that we know. There are known unknowns. That is to say, there are things that we know we don't know. But there are also unknown unknowns. There are things we don't know we don't know.” This quote by Donald Rumsfeld was widely mocked at the time but is, in fact, a rather good summation of epistemology – the study of the theoretical understanding and underpinnings of knowledge. In this study a team of researchers, led by Martina Bientzle, from the Knowledge Construction Lab (maybe they build bungalows out of back issues of the Encyclopaedia Britannica) in Tübingen, Germany examined the epistemological beliefs of physiotherapists. 41 people filled out forms during the course of their physiotherapy training and three years later after they had qualified. The researchers found that the participants epistemological beliefs became more sophisticated as they finished their training and entered the working world. They concluded “the development of epistemological beliefs is not completed at the end of vocational training; it appears to be a development that continues even after the transition to professional life.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

Radiography Education

Simulation, motivation, inspiration

Source: Radiography

In a nutshell: Role play used to be the preserve of pimply boys pretending to be warlocks but it's more or less compulsory for everyone to have at least one go at it now, particularly healthcare professionals. Radiographers are no exception and in this study C. Zorn, from the Centre for Training and Research in Health Sciences Education in Strasbourg, led a team of researchers studying what motivated radiography students as they took part in simulations. The researchers found that defining motivation was not easy. Trainers used a variety of strategies to motivate students, not all of which were verbalised in interviews. The students said that they were stressed before taking part in the simulations but the sessions were effective in developing “high motivational dynamics for students.” The study identified three main areas for improvement: exploring students' expectations; briefing 'patients,' properly so they can fully perform their role, and improving the authenticity of the environment.

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