SUBSTANCE ABUSE SCREENING

Implementation of SBIRT in Physician Assistant Didactic Curriculum

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BACKGROUND

AY 2013-14: Four MEDEX PA students in Anchorage took part in an Interprofessional Education (IPE) study examining IPE and simulation and its effect on student knowledge, attitude, and behavior. The study was designed to:

- Reduce the prevalence of illness, and mitigate the effects of substance use/misuse on human health.

AY 2014-15: With the knowledge gained the previous year, the MEDEX Anchorage site piloted an on-line SBIRT training for each of the didactic students.

Research Question: Will formally adding SBIRT training to the didactic year of PA training influence students’ behavior in a simulated clinical practice exercise?

METHODS

The Anchorage site secured funding from University of Washington and University of Alaska Anchorage for each of the 22 didactic students (AY 2014-15) to complete a 4-hour on-line training focused on screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment (SBIRT) as part of routine practice in the health care setting.

RESULTS

Qualitative data was collected following the initial encounter:

- Students who completed the training prior to the standardized patient interaction overwhelmingly felt more confident during their interview.

Quantitative data was collected following the second simulated clinical experience.

- 91% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that the online SBIRT training prepared them for the standardized patient interaction.
- 91% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the online SBIRT training was applicable to future clinical practice.
- 88% of students agreed or strongly agreed that SBIRT training could be applicable to areas of practice other than substance use/misuse disorders.
- 91% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the training was appropriate for their level of clinical knowledge.

DISCUSSION

Based on our focused pilot at the Anchorage site, we found the addition of this training to the didactic curriculum for Physician Assistant (PA) student was of benefit when dealing with patients with substance use/misuse issues.

Potential future implications:

1. Widespread integration of SBIRT training into PA didactic curriculum has the potential to improve the ability of PA graduates to intervene with patients dealing with substance use/misuse conditions.

2. The concepts and tools learned in this process can be applied to help patients make successful behavioral changes critical to managing chronic disease conditions.

REFERENCES


