

COORG INSTITUTE OF DENTAL SCIENCES, VIRAJPET

Best Practices- 1

1. Title of the Practice: *Early Clinical Contact*
2. Objectives of this practice:
 - a. Integration of basic sciences curriculum with clinical experience.
 - b. Appreciation of the basic knowledge being provided and its utilization in a clinical setting.
 - c. Learning of patient management skills (soft skills)
 - d. Clinical confidence building

3. The Context:

One of the basic problems in health education in the world has been that students are subjected to an increased cognitive load because of the separation of pre-university education and professional health education and disconnect between the basic sciences training (1 and 2 year) and the clinical training (3 and 4 year). It has been an observation at CIDS that students in the basic sciences training do not have an appreciation of the skills that they are being trained in because of a lack of clinical exposure, in addition it was also perceived that the retention of basic skills in clinical students was also inadequate. Hence this program was initiated with the aforementioned objectives.

4. The Practice:

The practice of a formal early clinical contact program is still in its infancy world – wide. This particular concept is followed only by a handful of medical and dental schools in India probably because of the lack of appreciation of the benefits or the lack of inclusion of such a program in the curriculum by the governing bodies, hence in the universal context this should be considered a unique initiative.

The early clinical contact program is integrated into the curriculum at CIDS and is held in two cycles for a period of 9 weeks each. During this program students of first and second year BDS are posted in all the clinical departments. During these postings they are exposed to case discussions, treatment planning various treatment modalities possible etc.

The First BDS students are accompanied by their basic science teachers who bring about a practical understanding of the theoretical knowledge provided. Understanding of basic anatomical structures and landmarks, physiological processes and appreciation of the complexity of the oral microenvironment is given paramount importance.

The second BDS students are taught about the operations of a clinical department with emphasis on armamentarium, sterilization, disinfection and barrier protocols, the proper use and dosages of commonly encountered drugs etc. towards the latter part of their postings they are encouraged to record case histories of patients, this enhances their communication and patient management skills and gives them confidence while interacting with patients.

Though we would like this program to be provide with more time, however the tightly packed prescribed curriculum as prescribed by the governing bodies is a major constrain in terms of the time available for conduct of these programs.

5. Evidence of success:

The early clinical contact program has been on at CIDS for the last two academic years and has shown success in the following.

- a. Better academic results at university exams
- b. Decreased clinical orientation time at the beginning of their clinical postings
- c. Increased patient turnover time

6. Problems encountered and resources required

The most valuable resource required for such a program is enough time in the curriculum.

Space to accommodate a sudden increase in the number of students in the clinical areas is another constraint which we overcame with staggered postings

Dedicated faculty for this program meant that the faculty availability for other activities such as research decreased

Such a program also requires a huge change and acceptance in the minds of both faculty and students who are more comfortable with the traditional methods of the curriculum

Other best practices:

1. Fire safety setup and codes
2. Comprehensive practice clinic
3. Quest
4. PBL and EBD modules
5. ICE

Best Practices- 2

1. Title of the Practice: *Undergraduate research policy*
2. Objectives of this practice:
 - a. Integration of research into the curriculum
 - b. Appreciation of the skillsets of critical thinking and data interpretation
 - c. Learning of designing and conducting research projects
 - d. Public speaking skillset

3. The Context:

Research in dentistry has largely remained a domain of the postgraduates with faculty research also being a minor contributor. The Undergraduate curriculum largely focuses on skillsets needed to practice dentistry and pass examinations. Thus the spirit of enquiry is non-existent in the undergraduate curriculum and the undergraduates have a wide schism to cover when they become post graduates.

Thus the institution has implemented a undergraduate research policy which ensures every student graduating out of the institution has at least one research project .

4. The Practice:

There is a formal Undergraduate research policy document generated by the Institution and to give an opportunity for undergraduate students to present their research the institution began an exclusive graduate symposium called quest.

All students of the institution are encouraged to design and present one research paper every year these can be under the categories of original research, Technical Note, Review these are done under the guidance of faculty from any department which the student chooses. There is also an innovative dentistry competition which encourages

the young dentists to innovate in the field of dentistry. There is a faculty designated for each project to help the students carry out research. The research Idea is essentially generated by the students themselves and faculty only act as facilitators. Prizes are given to the best papers in each category.

The institution also facilitates the publication of such research in peer reviewed indexed journals

5. Evidence of success:

The Undergraduate research symposium has achieved success along the following lines.

- a. Quest from being an internal event initially has now become a pan-global events
- b. Undergraduate research projects of our students have consistently won prizes at the event
- c. One of our Undergraduate students has filed for patent arising out of her research project

6. Problems encountered and resources required

The Major problem encountered is resistance both at the student and faculty level to do something which is not part of the syllabus.

Finding enough resources to fund the undergraduate research is another issue faced

These types of programs which are a paradigm shift have to face resistance at multiple levels, however the fact that the program has been running successfully for the past 5 years is encouraging to say the least

Such a program also requires a huge change and acceptance in the minds of both faculty and students who are more comfortable with the traditional methods of the curriculum