

Qualitative study of virtual teaching experience during the COVID-19 pandemic

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Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented changes in teaching delivery. Virtual teaching played a pivotal role in providing medical knowledge to every keen learner.

Objective

To obtain qualitative data on virtual teaching experiences of junior doctors and understand the current problems and possible resolutions.

Method

A standardised questionnaire with questions regarding teaching experience was created via Google forms. The questionnaire was distributed to all the medical trainees in Wales.

Results

The questionnaire was completed by 29 doctors from 13 hospitals in Wales. Of the respondents, 33% were IMT1, 10% IMT2, 23% non-training CT3 and the rest ST3 and above. For 73.3% of respondents the teaching experience met the stated objectives fully, 13.3% said partially and for 13.3% the teaching experience did not meet the stated objectives. The comments mentioning success points and improvement scope were received. 66.7% watched teaching sessions live, 26.7% watched asynchronously and 6.6% didn't watch. Communication was okay for 36.7% and 46.7% responded barely possible. 66.7% had an attention span similar to or better than face-to-face sessions, whereas 33.3% had less than face to face. 60% found virtual teaching more convenient to attend than face to face. While watching online, 63.3% had no issues, 20% audio trouble and 16.7% struggled with the internet. 43.3% and 26.7% managed to get enough and a good number of teaching sessions respectively and for 26.7%, not enough. In future, 70% would like to have a mixture of virtual and face to face teaching sessions, 16.7% virtual and 13.3% face to face. Overall, virtual teaching experience has been very good for 43.3%, good 40%, average 10% and not good 6.7%.

Conclusion

The relatively high percentage of people who said the teaching they had received met their objectives fully was quite striking. In contrast, the 'word on the street' consensus is that teaching quality has been poor. Another thing to mention would be that people appear to like a mixture of virtual and face to face which removes some of the impetus to continue to strive to provide face-to-face teaching in an environment where COVID-19 still restrains us. ■

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