

COVID19 and junior doctor education: our experience at a tertiary women's and children's hospital

Y H Tan, W C S Lim, J Y S Siew, Koh Y R, Chonkar S P, P P Onn, SQ Tan
KK Woman's and Children's Hospital

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has restricted traditional methods of face-to-face interaction and teachings for junior doctors, and this has necessitated changes in education delivery. There is an increasing shift of teachings and examinations onto virtual platforms with remote access over the past two years which has impacted on the learning satisfaction from the junior staff.

Aim

Post-graduate medical education is essential in equipping junior doctors with essential knowledge and skills when managing patients. A Quality Improvement project was launched to improve junior doctors' satisfaction about their learning platforms at KK Women's and Children's hospital (KKWCH) between 2020 and 2021.

Method

A pre-program survey was done to assess the degree of obstetrics and gynaecology (OBGYN) exposure our junior doctors had prior to their rotation at KKWCH, and their perceived degree of proficiency in handling OBGYN conditions at the start of the program. The survey also aimed to understand what junior doctors want to achieve during their 4-month rotation.

Junior doctors will undergo our program which consists of bi-monthly teaching focused on commonly encountered OBGYN presentations. Our teaching schedule included 4 case-based discussions, 4 obstetric-focused modules and 4 gynaecology-focused modules. We implemented video conferencing arrangements to circumvent COVID19 social distancing restrictions, and to ensure accessibility to these teachings remain high.

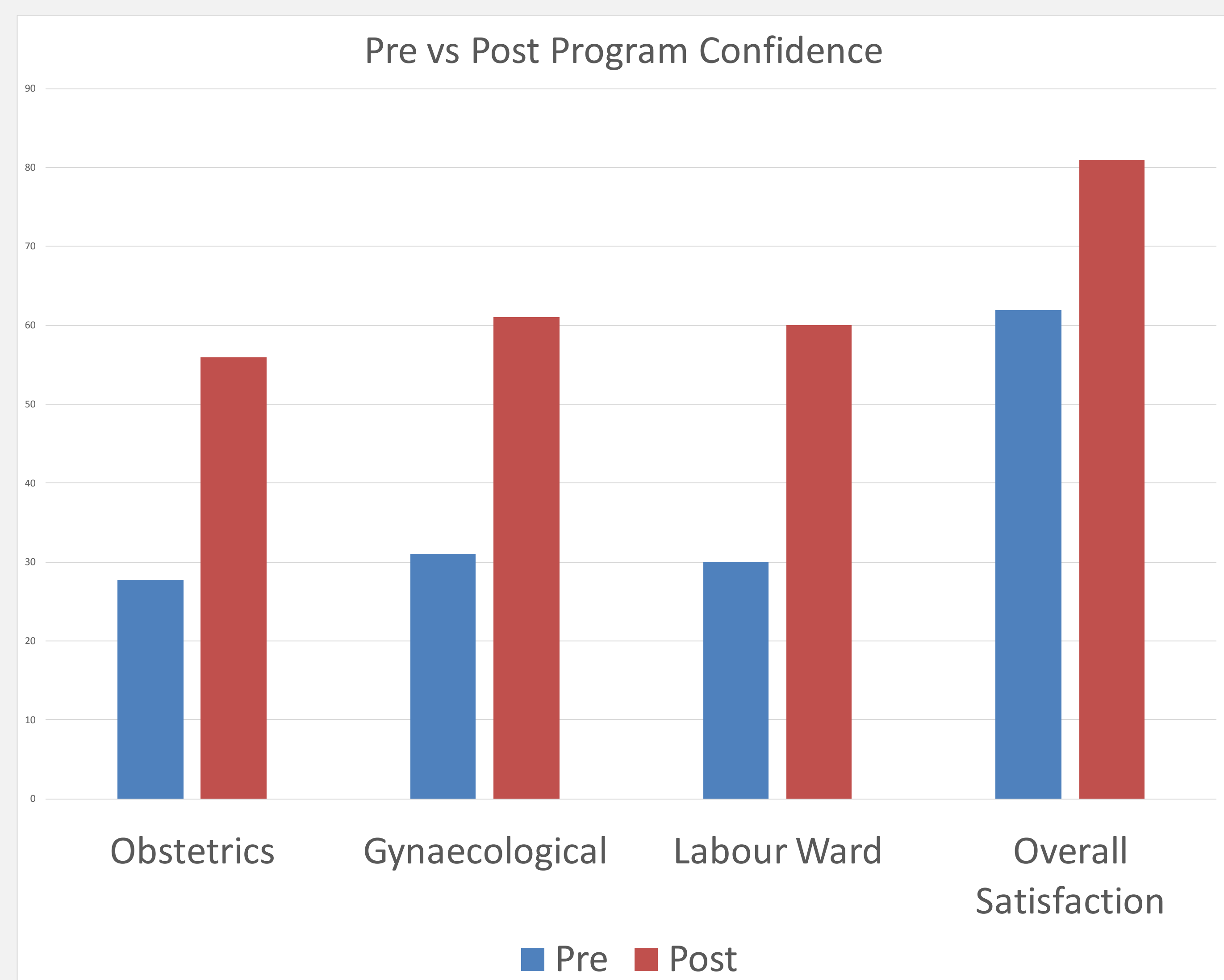
A mid-course survey was done to obtain feedbacks about the program, what topic they are interested to learn and how the subsequent teachings could be better modified for their learning.

At the end of the program, a post-program survey was done to determine their satisfaction with our program and feedbacks gathered from previous batches were integrated into the program for subsequent batches.

Conclusion

COVID19 pandemic has invoked the shift of traditional physical lessons to virtual platforms to overcome contact restriction. As seen in our project, teachings were continued this way with continuous improvement in the structure of the program which also resulted in an increased level of satisfaction in the workplace. Technology has provided an alternate teaching platform and it can be as successful in delivering quality teachings for the junior doctors. We could foresee those virtual teachings would become more popular in the future as it provides convenience and promotes independent learning.

Results



The chart above compares pre vs post program survey confidence in managing OBGYN conditions and overall satisfaction in the workplace. The results shows a global improvement in all aspects assessed.

- Percentage of junior doctors being confident in managing obstetric/gynaecological/labour ward patients doubled to roughly 60% after attending the program.
- Overall workplace satisfaction after going through the program rose from 62% to 81%.

The consensus was that providing teaching on common OBGYN conditions targeted at a non-specialist level would help to improve their confidence in managing these patients and improve overall satisfaction of working as a junior doctor at KKWCH.

Majority of the doctors surveyed felt that the case-based discussions and the didactic teachings were effective to very effective in their postgraduate training at KKWCH.