

Obstetric skills training during pandemic

Introduction:

Medical education and training in practical skills have been badly affected due to the Covid pandemic. Teaching at bedside has been very challenging. Online mode for conferences and lectures were necessary alternatives due to constraints imposed by the pandemic. However, practical training was difficult. Workshops focusing on practical skills using mannequins and models were not possible. Pandemic related staff shortage with same workload made obstetric training more difficult.

Changes in obstetric skills training:

We at ATNRCOG (The Association of Tamil Nadu members of RCOG, India) used to conduct obstetric skills workshops regularly but halted during the pandemic. We devised online workshops with discrete stations for obstetric anal sphincter injury repair, shoulder dystocia, instrumental delivery, assisted breech delivery and post-partum haemorrhage. During the 38th Annual Conference of the Obstetrics & Gynaecological Society of South India (OGSSI), we conducted an online practical skills workshop. This was attended by 297 participants (both trainees and practicing obstetricians). Focused small video clips were filmed using mannequins. Topics covered were McRoberts manoeuvre, suprapubic pressure, delivery of posterior arm, internal rotational manoeuvres and many other obstetric situations. These clips were incorporated in the workshops and were well received by the participants. We conducted a post workshop survey and received positive feedback.

Advantages:

Attention span is less due to an overload of online activity such as smartphone usage, virtual meetings and digital media. We changed our format to engage with the trainee's attention. This was much appreciated by the trainees. The key aspect was compact small video clips.

Conclusion:

Pandemic has created new norms in workspace and training. While formal slow learning is the gold standard, new ways of imparting training by small 'TikTok' style video clips rather than long didactic lectures might provide an easier step up for the trainee. Such a repository can also act as a readily available aide-memoire while facing challenging clinical situations.

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