SITUATION MANAGEMENT LEARNING APPROACH: AN ALTERNATIVE TO PROBLEM BASED LEARNING

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Introduction

- PBL involves informing the learner that there is a problem in the presented situation.
- Identifying the presence or absence of a problem in a clinical situation is a skill that requires education as well.

History

- Problem-based learning (PBL) has been used in education as a widely accepted modality of active learning[1].
- PBL has been especially useful in medical education to encourage critical thinking in the context of clinical vignettes[2].

Drawbacks of Problem-based Learning

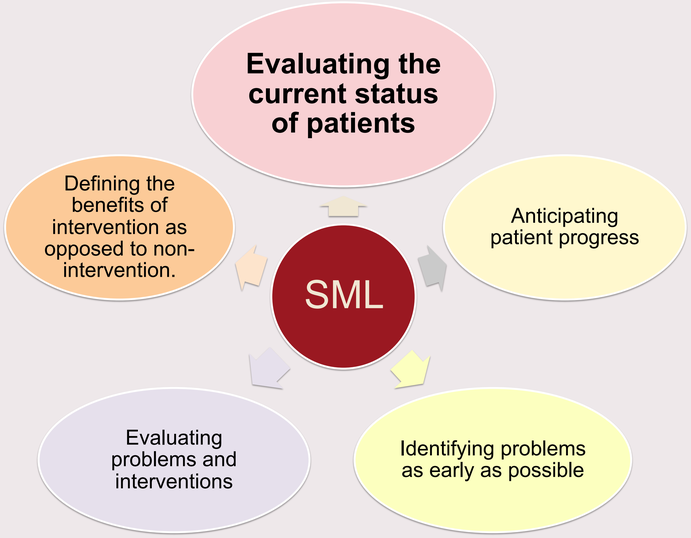
- When a PBL model is used, learners are deprived of the opportunity to evaluate for the presence or absence of a problem.
- A clinician must be able to discern if a problem exists before deciding upon the most suitable intervention.

Situational Management Learning

- Situational Management learning (SML) forces learners to assume a broader, more comprehensive viewpoint compared to PBL.
- Learners may benefit from broadening the existing pedagogy.
- Anticipating, identifying, and preventing problems are crucial skills for learning.

Methods

SML highlights the relevant findings of any patient presentation prior to reaching a clinical decision, enabling a means to make the appropriate treatment recommendations. The SML model contains the following elements:



SML addresses several aspects that are beyond the scope of PBL, including:

1. Using a mixture of situations with and without and underlying problem

2. Contrasting normal from pathological clinical situations to highlight when intervention would be appropriate

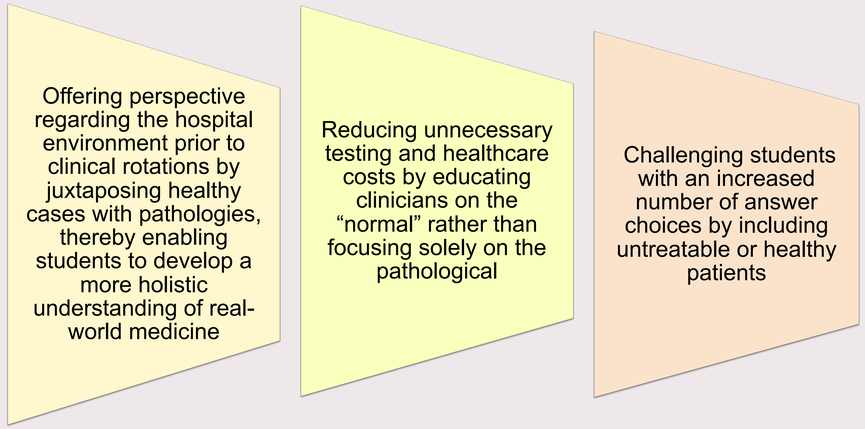
3. Underscoring risk factors for various pathologies, and emphasizing preventative measures

4. Presenting the entire 'day' of clinical cases to allow students to delineate between pathological and normal patient presentations

5. Educating students regarding the relative frequency of pathology.

Results

Learning with SML improves clinical competency by:



Although discussing normal situations/findings may not be as engaging as focusing on patient pathology, SML can improve students' clinical reasoning by simulating real physician experiences.

Conclusions

In comparison to PBL, SML offers a broader spectrum of learning that provides necessary and empirical competencies in clinical practice. Further studies and analyses are necessary to evaluate the approach.

References

1. Yew, E.H., & Goh, K.P. (2016). Problem-Based Learning: An Overview of its Process and Impact on Learning. Health Professions Education, 2, 75-79.
2. Asad, M., Iqbal, K., & Sabir, M. (2015). Effectiveness of Problem Based Learning as a Strategy to Foster Problem Solving and Critical Reasoning Skills among Medical Students. Journal of Ayub Medical College, Abbottabad : JAMC, 27(3), 604–607.