Skill Instruction for Corpsman and Army Learners (SICAL): Curriculum Development for Enlisted Military Healthcare Providers

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Introduction

In the operational environment, hospital corpsmen fill extensive and vital roles in the administration of medical care, management of healthcare administration, running of occupational health and safety programs, and conducting medical training programs for non-medical service members. Despite this huge range of responsibilities, training for these roles after corpsmen "A" school for general duty corpsmen and "C" school for specialty Navy Enlisted Classifications (NECs) is composed entirely of on-the-job training. This presents opportunities for significant knowledge gaps, with the onus of training falling on the medical providers who are balancing many other responsibilities. The aim of this project is to create a curriculum and organized framework to teach corpsmen a broad range of topics and essential skills in the operational environment, with the goal of significantly reducing the burden of implementation on medical providers.



Figure 1. Hospital corpsmen training under the original SICAL program at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center

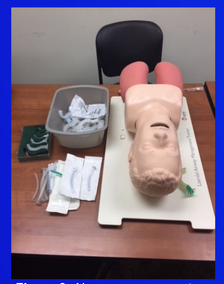


Figure 2. Airway management simulation set up



Figure 3. Fracture splinting simulation set up

Methods

A multi-module curriculum is progressively being developed that integrates the standards set forth by the Naval Education and Training Command's Personnel Qualification Standards for Hospital Corpsman [NAVEDTRA 43699-2A] and modified using feedback from subject matter experts. The curriculum is designed to seamlessly integrate into weekly departmental training for operational units and covers a wide range of topics such as common Sick Call complaints, procedural skills, healthcare administration, occupational health and safety programs, preventative medicine, medical equipment, as well as pharmacology and laboratory fundamentals. This curriculum is based on a similar training program currently being used for enlisted medical assets at military treatment facilities. Participants are given pre- and post-tests before and after each session to assess the effectiveness of the training.



Figure 4. Sailors aboard USS ARLINGTON (LPD 24) performing trauma and resuscitating training

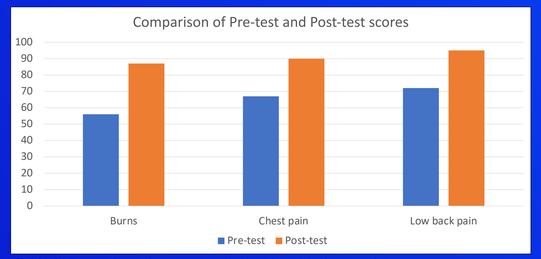


Table 1. Comparison of average pre-test and post-test scores in corpsmen.

Curriculum Topics

PQS Topics:

- Healthcare Administration
- Operational Risk Management
- Occupational Health Programs
- Safety Programs
- Preventative Medicine
- Medical Equipment
- Pharmacology
- Laboratory Fundamentals

Procedures:

- Laceration Repair
- Chest Tube Placement
- Urinary Catheter Insertion
- EKGs
- Injections: IM, Sub Q, and ID
- Splinting Fractures
- Airway Management

Sick Call Topics:

- Burn Care
- Chest Pain
- Low Back Pain
- Abdominal Pain
- Shoulder Pain
- Anxiety
- Pharyngitis/Viral URI
- Acute Diarrhea
- Headache
- Painful Red Eye
- Anorectal Disease
- Pilonidal Disease
- Lipoma and EICs
- Infected Bursitis
- Ear Cysts



Figure 5. Stretcher-bearer training.

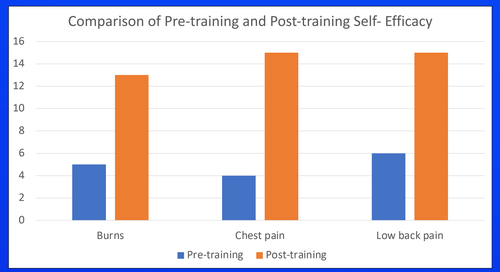


Table 2. Comparison of pre-training and post-training self-efficacy (comfort level) scores in corpsmen.

Results

Modules for this curriculum are continuing to be developed and distributed to various ships on the Norfolk waterfront. Currently, modules for burn care, chest pain, and low back pain have been presented to the corpsmen on the USS Mesa Verde (LPD 19), and the results are described in Table 1 and 2. While data analysis is still ongoing, the data already shows trends in improvement in medical knowledge about the subjects as well as self-efficacy or comfortable level relating to each topic.

Conclusion

Data and feedback from this curriculum is continuing to be collected and developed. Current trends in the data support that this curriculum provides a valuable training tool for corpsmen in the operational environment. We will continue to develop modules based on feedback and input about common Sick Call complaints. Overall, the curriculum has been a well-received solution to address a distinct and thus far unaddressed need for operational medical training. The intent of this curriculum is to be self-sustainable for operational forces and to eventually utilize the organic medical assets of the operational unit, such as Independent Duty Corpsmen and corpsmen with specialty NECs, to conduct the training independent of location. This curriculum will fulfill corpsmen training requirements and empower operational medical providers to conduct effective and ongoing training to develop their hospital corpsmen.

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