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Title

Examination of Student Competencies Using the Orthopaedic Assessment Model

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None

Summary

A comprehensive review of developments in Orthopaedic Structured Clinical Examination in the last year is presented. The relevance of applying modified OSCE techniques to the assessment of prosthetist/orthotist clinical skills will be discussed.

Introduction

The Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is an approach that has been used for 3 decades in medical schools across the world. It was devised as a summative assessment of students who would “show how”. The method has been modified and partially adopted in prosthetics and orthotics examination for many years. This presentation will describe the evidence about the most recent developments and use of OSCE in other professions and will reconsider whether other uses of OSCE could be more strongly adopted for prosthetics and orthotics competence assessment.

Methods

A literature search was conducted of all OSCE related Journal articles via the NHS Scotland E-library for Health, which includes the databases Medline, Cinahl, Embase and Psycinfo. The search was undertaken for publications in 2009 to determine the recent evidence on the topic. 240 results were retrieved and their titles were screened for relevance and full text articles sourced and appraised.

Results

The student experience of OSCE is that every student experiences the same examination about clinical competencies by attending a series of consecutive exam stations with simulated clinical situations they must answer questions about and/or perform a particular clinical task. Their competence is assessed by examiners at each station. The examiner experience of OSCE

is that they have controlled explanations or questions for students and that they repeat their focussed examination of each student in a similar way to avoid variability in the examination. Current thinking is that each station should be short and concise because the good student can readily give detailed answers about a particular area of practice, but the weak students will soon tell what they know if their knowledge is limited.

Caution should be exercised when trying to compare OSCE results from different courses because the OSCE is not the only assessment of student competence. There are systematic variations between the teaching and learning experience of students on different courses and this must be taken into account.

Differences in the OSCE examination station set up include one long case versus some intermediate cases versus multiple short cases include. Variations also exist in marking and assessment methods. Examples of the different OSCE approaches will be described.

Conclusion

Although thorough, the OSCE examination relies on a strong team of examiners, recruiting examiners from the field may not be possible in countries with limited resources and expertise. However, the OSCE can be modified to and delivered in such circumstances. OSCE can be modified to reflect individual programme situations and is a useful summative feedback tool, but should be used in association with other methods of formative assessment.

References

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