

7th OsEAN Open Forum for Osteopathic Education

– Teaching the working principles of osteopathy –

24th & 25th September 2020 – Antwerp, Belgium

ACTIVE COMMUNICATION AND SHARED DECISION MAKING IN OSTEOPATHIC EDUCATION

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Background

Evidence informed practice has shifted the responsibility of decision making from practitioners to patients. Treatment and management can thereby account for patient's preferences, values and personal conditions. Osteopaths, as primary care providers, are therefore expected to acquire communication and health management skills to act as advisors, educators and facilitators. To achieve this goal, we developed and tested an open-access educational package, called ActCom, designed to help healthcare students acquire applied skills in active communication and shared decision making.

Methods

Key components of person-centred approaches of care were identified through a literature review. Three half-day workshops structured concept to define teaching objectives and focus on two key concepts; active communication and shared decision making. The module was separated in two 6h lessons. Specific teaching objectives and lesson material was prepared during two two-days workshops in Switzerland. The chosen teaching approach was inversed classroom and simulated encounters with actors using prespecified clinical vignettes. Lessons were given simultaneously at distance in Switzerland and Russia during winter and spring 2019. This made it possible to also test the integration of communication technologies such as Slack, Google.docs, and Skype. Qualitative approaches, using semi-structured interviews, evaluated students' perceptions of the module. Before-after changes in perception of empathy in care was tested using the Jefferson Scale of Empathy. Transferability of principles to practice was tested using a questionnaire 3 months after the end of the lessons. Students and educators applied a SWAT approach to evaluate the added value of the module.

Results

Inversed classroom approach was well accepted; students were able to summarise all teaching objectives. Interviewing actors was challenging for students. They found Slack live discussion threads useful to direct their interview. Google.docs made it possible for students to share their work at distance. The project identified difficulties in coordinating lessons between two institutions and in using Skype. These were related to managing different time zones, overcoming language barriers, accessing to internet, and engaging in structured conversation with unknown students. Students correctly identified and reported their interest for the main skills that were clinically relevant. They were able to transpose them to their practice. The lessons had no impact on their perception of empathy in clinical encounters but provided the needed tools to put into practice the principles they already adhered to.

Conclusion

The ActCom package provides an efficient way to teach active communication and shared decision approaches but requires important resources for planning lessons. The education material might require adaptations to meet language barriers. The module

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could be improved by focusing on local classes and providing more time to students for preparing their teaching material in inversed classroom.

Link to material

The education package, including instructions and material, is made available at the following link: <https://zenodo.org/communities/actcom>