Targeted peer teaching of first aid does not result in better long term retention of skills

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Text

Objectives: In Germany first aid and basic life support (BLS) training for 1st and 2nd year students is not delivered by university. Instead students usually attend a basic two day lay course. Naturally these courses do not meet the specific needs of medical students. As a reaction elder students designed a targeted course for their younger fellows using scenario based learning, improved teacher-participant ratio, and an exclusive peer approach. Subjective evaluation and short term results were excellent. But there were no long term data comparing skills and knowledge to students having completed a conventional lay course.

Methods: Evaluation was performed as formative testing 1.7 median after completing the first aid course. A written MCQ and two standardised clinical examinations (SCE) were done by all students who entered the 3rd year of medical school. MCQ and SCEs were rated for the achieved percentage of the maximum.

Results: Of 99 eligible students 24 had completed a conventional first aid course (group 1) and 75 the targeted peer-led course (group 2). In the written test group 1 achieved a mean of 38.0%, whereas group 2 reached 35.0%. In the practical SCEs group 1 achieved a median of 58.9% and 66.5%, while group 2 reached 59.7% and 73.2%. Statistical analysis revealed no significant difference for any of the tests.

Conclusions: Long term retention of skills and knowledge in first aid and BLS is not better after a targeted peer-led first aid course than after a public lay course of equal duration.

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References:

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