Workshops for teaching evidence-based practice

The editors, staff, and publishers are pleased to announce the electronic product will be named Best Evidence and is available from the...
Physicians in February 1997. A core textbook has been published (7), and we hope to explore the use of more imaginative teaching materials (such as video scenarios) in future workshops.

The responses to questionnaires issued before the UCL workshop showed that, for many delegates, implementation of evidence-based medicine at their home institutions was limited as much by lack of time, information technology skills, “political acceptance,” and confidence as by lack of knowledge (8). Post-workshop responses showed that despite these barriers, 40% of the 88 delegates intended to introduce new teaching programmes in clinical schools, health authorities, or National Health Service trusts, and of these delegates, all but one planned to use small-group, problem-based learning in substantial portions of the curriculum.

An important challenge for medical educators in the United Kingdom is to recognise that the competent student (and clinician) is one who excels in recalling the traditional or memorising the ephemeral. The deans of medical and nursing schools must develop an infrastructure that allows problem-based, self-directed learning methods to develop within the didactic, lecture-based curricula, which have seen no fundamental changes for centuries or more. As one delegate asked me without a trace of irony, “Is there any way of having small-group seminars when you haven’t got any seminar rooms?”

The UCL workshop achieved undeniable short-term gains in terms of the number of complex scientific articles read and understood (estimated at around 15 per delegate), new skills acquired (35% of the delegates before the workshop and 85% after were confident in using MEDLINE), altered attitudes (particularly to multidisciplinary learning), and exposure to new educational techniques. Despite these gains, the long-term influence of this type of workshop on the educational strategies used in traditional British medical schools and the behaviour of busy health professionals in the National Health Service has still to be determined.

At our 6-month reunion workshop this October, our first question to delegates will be this: Has the evidence-based medicine you learned in this workshop been incorporated into your daily practice and has its key message been passed on to others in a way that they can understand? Or have your notes, worksheets, and good intentions been placed back on the shelf next to the "Night Before File"?

For further information about the 4th U.K. Workshop on Teaching Evidence-Based Practice, contact us by e-mail at ebp@ucl.ac.uk.

Trisha Greenhalgh, MD

References
8. 2nd U.K. Workshop on Teaching Evidence-Based Health Care: report of the workshop. Available on disc (Word for Windows format) from the Department of Primary Health Care, University College London Medical School, Whittington Hospital, London N19 3NF, England, UK. Price £7.50.

Journals Reviewed for This Issue
Core Journals
Am J Med
Am J Obstet Gynecol
Am J Psychiatry
Am J Surg
Anaesthesia
Anaesth Analg
Anesthesiology
Ann Intern Med
Ann Surg
Arch Dis Child
Arch Gen Psychiatry
Arch Intern Med
Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med
Arch Surg
Arthritis Rheum
BMJ
Br J Gen Pract
Br J Obstet Gynaecol
Br J Surg
Circulation

Journals for Continuing Review
Acta Obstet Gynecol Scand
Age Ageing
Am J Cardiol
Am J Gastroenterol
Am J Public Health
Am J Respir Crit Care Med
Ann Emerg Med
Ann Med
Arch Fam Med
Arch Neurol
Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med
Arch Surg
Arthritis Rheum
BMJ
Br J Gen Pract
Br J Obstet Gynaecol
Br J Surg
Circulation

Fertil Steril
Gastroenterology
Gut
Heart (formerly Br Heart J)
J Am Acad Dermatol
J Am Coll Cardiol
J Am Coll Surg
J Clin Epidemiol
J Fam Pract
J Infect Dis
J Reprod Med
Med Care
Med J Aust
Neurology
Spine
Stroke
Thorax