

A survey validation of generic objectives for community-based education in undergraduate medical training

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Abstract

Introduction: A framework for the definition of generic objectives for community-based education (CBE) was developed for undergraduate medical programmes, particularly for developing countries. To probe the validity of the set of CBE objectives generated by this approach, opinions from a wider audience were sought.

Method: Questionnaires were sent to 72 medical schools in 36 developing countries. Half of the addressees were randomly drawn from the list of institutional members of The Network: Toward Unity For Health (TUFH) and stratified according to developing countries. Another 36 medical schools were randomly drawn from non-Network: TUFH schools from the same country where the selected Network: TUFH addressee was located, or from a neighbouring country.

Results: A total of 43 medical schools responded to the questionnaire (60% response rate), 31 out of the 36 addressed Network: TUFH members (86%) and 12 out of 36 addressed non-Network: TUFH schools (33%). Out of all 43 respondents 39 (91%) had implemented CBE in their curricula. Opinions of Network: TUFH and non-Network: TUFH schools on the framework and the generic objectives were not significantly different. Out of the 21 proposed objectives, 17 were scored as relevant by 75% or over of all responders and one out of the four objectives considered to be less relevant by the responders was deleted.

Conclusion: A framework to develop generic CBE objectives and a derived set of 21 objectives were modified based on input by 43 medical schools residing in developing countries distributed all over the globe. The outcome is a validated set of 20 generic objectives for CBE programmes in developing countries.

Keywords: CBE; objectives; undergraduate; validation