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Surgical Ethics Online Needs Assessment and Pilot Curriculum

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Surgical Ethics Online
Needs Assessment and Pilot Curriculum

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Outline

• Background/Need for Innovation
• Purpose/Goals
• Predicted Project Flow
• Needs Assessments
• Early Results
• Project Updates
• Future Directions
• Conclusions
Background

- The American Association of Medical Colleges
  - "knowledge of the theories and principles that govern ethical decision making, and of the major ethical dilemmas in medicine" (AAMC, 2013)

- National undergraduate medical ethics curriculums
  - limited dedicated ethical educational programs (DuBois and Burkemper, 2002)
  - majority are presented in a traditional face to face manner

- Limited instructors and arrangement in the undergraduate medical curriculum at large (Lehmann et. al., 2004).
Need for Innovation

• Paola and Barten in 1995 examined leading journals in medicine and surgery with key word search for “ethics” and “bioethics.”

• Total of three hundred and thirty-four articles

• Five percent were from the surgical literature

• Fewer “bioethical” issues in surgical practice?

• “Surgical personality” equates to paternalism with less likely motives to express alternative diverse points of view.

• This potential bias against surgeons and their involvement in ethical issues and subsequent medical curriculums
Need for Innovation

- Surgical ethics distinct field of study (Angelos, 2013).
- unique practice type and dynamic
- informed consent for surgical/invasive procedures
- ultimate responsibility
- surge of device and procedural innovation
Purpose

We propose a Surgical Ethics Online (SEO) course.

SEO will be an online collaborative educational program centered around clearly defined objectives that focus on the principles of clinical ethics as it applies to surgical practice.

SEO will be undertaken during third year medical school surgical clerkships at Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine (VCU-SOM).
The goals of SEO are ...

... to increase VCU-SOM undergraduate medical students’ exposure to clinical ethics as it applies to surgical practice.

... to inform, enlightened and encourage undergraduate medical students about potential career paths in surgery and surgical subspecialties.
Predicted Project Flow

- Interviews
- General Needs Assessment
- Targeted Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment

Pilot Curriculum

- Two Modules
- Spring 2018

Full Implementation

- Six Modules
- Fall 2018
- Pending VCU-SOM
Needs Assessments

Informal Interviews
- fourth year VCU-SOM medical students completed their surgical clerkship rotation
- assess general attitudes toward their informal clinical ethics education

General Needs Assessment
- all pre-clinical VCU-SOM medical students
- attitudes toward the whole field of surgery and clinical ethics

Target Needs Assessment
- clerkship medical students who had completed their dedicated surgical clerkship (60 days)
- recent clerkship exposure to clinical ethics and in particular, as it applies to surgical ethical issues
Informal Interviews

• Initial Online Survey
• 4th year medical students (n=29)
• Elective in Surgery
• Part of a lecture on the Ethics of Surgical Practice
• Voluntary Responses
Results

What is your previous exposure to clinical ethics? (29 responses)

- 1 (3.4%)
- 9 (31%)
- 15 (51.7%)
- 3 (10.3%)
- 1 (3.4%)
Results

Who do you think should teach clinical ethics? (29 responses)

- 55.2% ethicist - non-medical/non-clinical
- 27.6% internal medicine faculty
- 13.8% surgeons
- 0% administration
- 0% administration
Results

Do you think you need more training in clinical ethics? (29 responses)

- 55.2%: yes, that is why I am here
- 41.4%: some additional training
- 3.1%: I am good, no more please
- 0%: too much is being done
During my third year of medical student the percentage of the time that I observed unethical behavior in my fellow students was:
(29 responses)
During my third year of medical student the percentage of the time that I observed unethical behavior in the residents that I worked with was:

(29 responses)

- 82.8% never
- 17.2% about 25% of the time
During my third year of medical student the percentage of the time that I observed unethical behavior in the fellows that I worked with was:

(29 responses)
Results

During my third year of medical student the percentage of the time that I observed unethical behavior in the nurses that I worked with was:
(29 responses)

- 69% never
- 27.6% about 25% of the time
- Other percentages for about 50%, 75%, and 100% of the time are not shown in the pie chart.
Results

I think surgeons should teach ethics (29 responses)

- True: 96.6%
- False: 3.4%
As a student I feel ...

(29 responses)

- 51.7% powerless to speak up when I see unethical behavior
- 37.9% some ability to speak up when I see unethical behavior
- 10.3% moderate ability to speak up when I see unethical behavior
- ... very able to speak up when I see unethical behavior
Project Updates

• VCU IRB
• JHU IRB
• Needs Assessment Development
• Pilot Curriculum Development
Future Directions

• Export curriculum to other medical colleges
• Online surgical ethical collaborative
• Program based outcomes of graduates
• Expanded program to 4th year of medical school
Conclusions

• Current efforts at undergraduate medical education is lacking in addressing clinical ethics

• There is a distinct need to conduct curriculum that is focused on clinical ethics as it applies to surgical practice

• SEO program has the potential to be an innovative method to deliver clinical ethics content that focuses on surgical practice to third year medical students at VCU-SOM.

• Potential to increase awareness of surgical practice among undergraduate medical students.
References


THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

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