



Joint Education and Training Library



# Education Horizon- Scanning Bulletin – March 2020

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## Allied Health Education

### What do students need to know about pain?

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Before teachers teach and students learn there needs to be some consensus about the content teachers are attempting to inculcate into students and what they expect students to be able to do. Getting academics to agree on anything makes sorting out Brexit look like trying to decide whether to watch *The Chase* or *Pointless* but nothing daunted a team of researchers led by W. van Lankveld, from the University of Applied Sciences in Arnhem, asked 22 experts and educators in pain education to rate items from the International Association for the Study of Pain (IASP) interprofessional curriculum. There was more than 70% agreement on 62% of the items on the IASP curriculum. The experts decided to include all 12 items relating to the “multidimensional nature of pain,” but only one item on ethics. Pain assessment and measurement (78%) and management of pain (74%) were popular choices for inclusion but “clinical conditions,” (41%) was less popular. For most items the median required skills and competency level was either “knowledge and understanding,” or “applying knowledge and understanding.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

## Dental Education

### Teaching dental students career skills

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Once someone has demonstrated they are ready, willing, and able to wield a drill inside someone’s mouth one would have thought they’d got it made. Dentists – at least in the UK – have long waiting lists, opportunities for two-way communication are at a premium and a captive audience might be thought to facilitate either endless disquisitions on stamp collecting or stony silence, according to taste. However, we all need – have to some might say – to get to grips with soft skills these days and in this article Réka Magdolna Szabó, from the University of Szeged in Hungary, led a team of researchers investigating introducing a “student-centred career skills course.” The course, for final-year dental students, ran for two semesters and was conducted in Hungarian and English. General satisfaction with the course was high and practical skills training – such as writing a CV – got the highest scores. The students “were ... least comfortable with having to deal with their personal values and preferences.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

## General Healthcare Education

### Proof at last, reading really is good for you

**Source:** Journal of American College Health

**In a nutshell:** Getting lost in a good book feels like something that ought to be good for your mental health but the research on this topic is limited. S.L. Levine, from McGill University in Montreal, led a team of researchers looking more closely into this in a study of 231 university students. Recreational reading was associated with reduced psychological distress over the school year. It seemed to buffer people against the frustration of their basic psychological needs which led to improved mental health and the students who were more autonomously motivated (i.e. who wanted to study for its own sake not to please other people or gain money) read more books for pleasure.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

## Medical Education

### When teams who go out together work together

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Going out for a few drinks after work used to be commonplace, *de rigueur* even, in some workplaces. Nowadays people rush home eager to avoid lawsuits and coronavirus and wary of drinking more than their allocated units for the week. In this study Maria B. Rasmussen, from Roskilde Hospital in Denmark, led a team of researchers studying the effect of social ties on teams' performance. The researchers found that social ties influenced teamwork by affecting the teams' ability to co-construct knowledge, coordinate tasks, the need for hierarchy, the degree to which they relied on explicit or implicit communication and the ability to promote adaptive behaviour.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### Getting medical students to collaborate – is CLed-EX the answer?

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** “All solitude is selfish,” wrote Philip Larkin, who despite accepting [Warlock-Williams' invitation](#) spent much time on his own writing some of the best poetry of the twentieth century. Nowadays everyone is expected to collaborate and work as part of a team and medical students are no exception. In this study Maha Pervaz Iqbal, from the University of New South Wales in Sydney, led a team of researchers assessing the effectiveness of a “novel educational instrument, the Collaborative Learning Development Exercise (CLed-EX), which aims to foster the development of key collaborative learning competencies in medical students.” After using CLed-EX the students showed a significant improvement in critical thinking and “group process as measured by a previously validated instrument.” Both

students and tutors thought the new approach was effective, especially as a structured basis for giving and receiving feedback and for completing the feedback loop. CLed-EX was also found to be feasible, practical, and focused, “while promoting learning and effective interactions in small group learning.”

### Can medical students get information out of patients?

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Unfortunately not all patients are good at communicating. For every latter-day Martin Luther King, Barack Obama or Tony Blair there’s a Rab C. Nesbitt, Benny from *Crossroads* or Manuel from *Fawlty Towers*. Finding out what’s wrong with them can be something of a challenge and rates of error, patients’ complaints and poor clinician job satisfaction show that there is plenty of room for improvement. In this study Conor Gilligan, from the University of Newcastle in New South Wales, led a team of researchers interviewing 19 experienced doctors and 20 medical students about this topic. Four key themes emerged from the interviews: the importance of experience; the value of role models; the structure of a consultation; and confidence. The researchers concluded that their findings reinforced “the need for improvement in teaching and learning communication skills in medicine with particular opportunity to target approaches to teaching foundational skills.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### Helping junior doctors go through the keyhole

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** ‘Through the keyhole,’ conjures up different images for different people. Those of us of a certain age can’t help thinking of Lloyd Grossman giving people a conducted tour of minor celebrities’ living rooms but for junior doctors it usually means making a small incision in people’s abdomens and having a good rummage around, seeing what’s going on, and putting right the odd bit of plumbing. In this article Benjie Tang, from the University of Dundee, led a team of researchers looking into the ins and outs of teaching laparoscopic suturing skills – sewing people up as part of keyhole surgery. The researchers found that the total scores of 57 senior surgical trainees improved significantly after a training course. There was no relationship between proficiency in basic laparoscopic skills and laparoscopic suturing skills either before or after the course and 91% of senior trainees and 94% of junior trainees said that intracorporeal suturing should be introduced at an early stage of the training curriculum.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### Virtual patients and clinical reasoning

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Clinical reasoning is a doctors' ability to look at a patient, decide what is up with them and work out what to do. Various methods have been examined to see which is best at teaching medical students clinical reasoning and in this study Jan Kiesewetter, from Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, led a team of researchers studying the use of virtual patients. 142 medical students took part in the study. Half used a "whole case," format and half used a "serial cue case," format. The researchers found no difference between the two formats but students with low knowledge beforehand did not benefit from the virtual cases whereas students with higher knowledge beforehand did. The students who knew more beforehand were more accurate at diagnosing what was wrong and experienced less "cognitive load," than students with less prior knowledge.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### Students and uninsured migrants

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** The world's population has changed from stained glass – fixed immovably in place for generations – to a kaleidoscope, moving around at dizzying speed in the last few decades. In this study Zohar Mor, from Ahskelon Medical College in Israel, led a team of researchers investigating Israeli medical students' attitudes towards uninsured migrants. 891 medical students took part in the study. Students in their pre-clinical years were more likely to be sympathetic towards uninsured migrants than those in clinical training although there were no significant differences in their views on "expensive medical services." The students became less sympathetic towards migrants as they moved through their medical training although students who were from a non-Jewish or migrant background themselves were more sympathetic.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### How ready are medical students for difficult conversations?

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Doctor: "You've got ten..." Patient: "Oh no, months, weeks?" Doctor: "Nine, Eight..." The late Bob Monkhouse's joke about his prostate-cancer – which eventually killed him – brings to mind some of the more difficult conversations doctors are called upon to have with their patients. In this study Anna R. Kahkoska, from the University of North Carolina School of Medicine, surveyed 120 medical students on this very topic. The students were most comfortable with sexual orientation/identity and religion-related interactions and were least comfortable with gender-, race/ethnicity-, and disability-related interactions. Men were more likely than women to say they would feel comfortable in the 24 scenarios asked about in the survey.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

## The flipped classroom in China

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** The flipped classroom has – like many other, less desirable, things lately has spread all around the world. It's reached China and in this article Su Wu, from Shengjing Hospital of China Medical University, examines its effectiveness in a Chinese context. 55 undergraduates took part in a flipped classroom about bone tumours. After they'd been to the flipped classroom the students' case-solving skills, knowledge of basic features, ability to compare cases and overall knowledge all improved. They had more discussion time with their teachers and their questions were solved satisfactorily, although their clinical reasoning did not improve. However the time spent preparing for their classes by watching videos and reading increased significantly.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

## Midwifery Education

**When there's a face behind the case**

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Many universities now use case-based learning. Rather than going to a series of theoretical lectures on anatomy, physiology and healthcare students take a fictional case and work out what its causes were and how to approach it. This has traditionally been a paper-based exercise but in this study Kana Nunohara, from Gifu University in Japan, led a team of researchers looking to see what effect video-based cases would have on students' learning. 45 midwifery students took part in the study which found that those students who had had the video case paid more attention to its psychosocial aspects than its biomedical ones and were more likely to discuss tailored care for the patient and their family members. The students using a paper-based approach were more likely to pay attention to the biomedical aspects of the case rather than its psychosocial ones and – unlike the video group – discussed when to perform vaginal examinations and electric foetal heart monitoring.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

## Nurse Education

**Is going digital the way to crack the maths problem?**

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** Periodically some smart alec pops up in the media to say that people should be more ashamed of their lack of maths ability, in the same way as they might feel embarrassment about not being able to read and write. To which the answer is that nobody sends their wife a card full of equations on their birthday. Getting nursing students to get to grips with maths is a perennial struggle and in this study Diana P. CZwart [sic] from Windesheim University of Applied Sciences in the

Netherlands, led a team of researchers looking into whether digital learning materials made any difference. Nursing students learning maths either used digital learning materials or had face-to-face tuition. They completed the same assignments and discussed them with their peers and an online teacher via a discussion board or in the classroom. The study found that the maths learning of the students in the digital materials group and the face-to-face group was similar although the face-to-face group had a smaller fall in their self-efficacy as a result of this exercise.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

### Using ultrasound to measure wrong-way traffic

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** For most of us food going down the wrong way brings nothing more than a red face and a certain degree of embarrassment. For people in more precarious health it can prove deadly though as food can get into the lungs, go bad ways, and cause pneumonia. In this study Mikako Yoshida, from Tohoku University Graduate School of Medicine in Japan, led a team of researchers investigating the effectiveness of an education programme for nurses in the use of point-of-care ultrasound to monitor for “aspiration and pharyngeal post-swallow residue.” There were four elements in the programme: e-learning; a practical seminar; self-learning; and an objective structured clinical examination (OSCE). 22 general nurses and nine specialist dysphagia (trouble swallowing) nurses took part in the study. The dysphagia nurses had a higher proportion of participants evaluated as “excellent,” and a significantly higher ability to maintain adequate ultrasound images during the swallowing process. However, there was no difference between the two groups regarding monitoring for post-swallowing residue and over 70% of the nurses gave a positive evaluation of the user-friendliness of the e-learning and practical seminar.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

### Turning nursing students into health promoters

**Source:** Nurse Education Today

**In a nutshell:** Persuading people to behave in a more healthy fashion can keep them well for longer and save the health service money. In this study Angel Romero-Collado, from the University of Girona, in Spain, led a team of researchers looking into the effectiveness of using a standardised patient simulation and electronic health records to teach 137 third-year nursing students about health promotion. The students went to three seminars on health promotion and prevention activities in adults, involving standardised patient simulation and using electronic health records. The most frequent activities the students engaged in were greeting and introducing themselves, checking vaccination status, assessing physical exercise and eating

habits, and calculating body-mass index. The least frequent activities were questions about high-risk sexual behaviour, drug use, bowel-cancer screening and sun-protection recommendations. “When writing the nursing report, students found it hardest to plan future patient interventions.”

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### The washing of hands

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** Hand washing is in the news at the moment, assuming any of us can spare time from swilling our paws to sit down in front of the TV (having carefully disinfected the sofa beforehand of course). In this study Peta-Anne P. Zimmerman from Griffith University in Queensland, led a team of researchers investigating the hand-washing behaviour of nursing students. The students demonstrated satisfactory knowledge of infection prevention and control in their second and third year but clinical facilitators perceived that they lacked awareness of the importance of these practices. Five themes emerged from interviews with the students which were:

- Understanding workplace culture
- Students modelling local behaviour
- Enhancing and consolidating knowledge for practice
- Adjusting to practice reality
- Accessing additional hand-hygiene resources

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

### The Total Client Care assessment tool – is this the new best way to assess nurses?

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** Despite the fact that most of them would greet the prospect of putting up a set of shelves with abject terror there’s nothing academics like more than a good tool; by which they mean a questionnaire rather than a drill, hammer or screwdriver. The only thing that comes even close is assessing things, so imagine the excitement when a team of researchers, led by John Unsworth from the University of Sunderland, developed the Total Client Care (TCC) assessment tool. The tool is designed to measure the competence of nursing students to provide holistic care to a client over a specified period of time. It measures the student’s performance around four ‘constructs,’\*: Communication, Planning and Responding, Care Delivery and Assessing and Evaluating. After trialling the new tool the researchers concluded that it was “useful as it provides data about the student’s performance when providing actual care. When used as a part of a wider system of assessment involving

triangulation of evidence from a number of sources the tool can support mentor judgements about the achievement of competence.”

\*The use of this word - along with ‘workshops,’ - confirming the view that these were people who were bullied for being no good at metalwork

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

### [Mental-health first aid – are nurses able to give it?](#)

**Source:** BMC Medical Education

**In a nutshell:** Statistically speaking nursing students are more likely to develop mental health problems than other students. In lots of organisations people are now being trained as mental-health first-aiders (MHFAs) and in this study Gemma Crawford and Sharyn Burns, from Curtin University in Perth, Australia, looked at nursing students who had volunteered to become MHFAs. 140 undergraduate nursing students took part in the study. 55% said they had been in contact with people experiencing mental-health problems; around a third (35.8%) reported ‘limited confidence,’ to assist. Those nurses who had had prior contact with someone with a mental-health problem were significantly more likely to feel confident in helping. Mental-health literacy, helping others, career and experiences were all described as motivators for training as an MHFA.

You can read the whole of this article [here](#).

### [What do students make of their community placements?](#)

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** Health-service reform is a bit like a game of pass-the-parcel. Hospitals and community service pass patients back and forth until the music – played by the Health Secretary of the day – stops. At the moment community services are winning (or losing, depending on your point of view) with the expectation that they will look after patients previously dealt with in hospitals. To make this happen there needs to be more community nurses. However, student nurses do not always value or learn from their community placements and this could make them less likely to go into community nursing in the future. In this study Graham R. Williamson, from the University of Plymouth, carried out a survey and held some focus groups to get students’ views about their community placements. The students enjoyed their community placements as learning environments, had excellent relationships with their clinical facilitators and said that they “would welcome a more structured information package as an approach to preparation and placement learning.”

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

## Getting nursing students to help the aged

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** A cursory look round most hospital car parks is enough to reveal that most of their users learned to drive, if not in the days of men with red flags walking in front of cars, then certainly before power-steering and mandatory seat belts. The aging population means nurses need to know how to look after them and in this study Rose McCloskey, from the University of New Brunswick, led a team of researchers tracking students' knowledge of, attitudes to, and interest in working with older people. Their study found a slight improvement in students' overall attitudes towards older adults. Gerontology as a preferred career choice was highest immediately following a clinical placement focusing on caring for older adults. Integrating experiences looking after older adults into nurses' basic education "did not necessarily improve students' learning in the area of caring for older adults."

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

## What gives nursing students mental-health woes?

**Source:** Nurse Education in Practice

**In a nutshell:** On average nursing students have higher levels of stress than those studying English and History, where exposure to suffering and death is usually at several removes. In this study Valerio Salvarani, from the University of Milano-Bicocca in Italy, led a team of researchers studying psychological distress in a sample of 622 undergraduate nursing students. More than 70% of them reported meaningful levels of psychological distress. Those with higher dispositional mindfulness had lower psychological distress whilst those with emotional regulation difficulties and empathic personal distress had higher levels of stress. There was no difference between men and women but senior students showed lower levels of psychological distress than junior ones.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

## The nursing students going through the keyhole

**Source:** Nurse Education Today

**In a nutshell:** Keyhole surgery is a bit like posting a message through a letterbox rather than wrapping it around a brick and throwing it through the front window. People still get the same benefits but the collateral damage is a lot less. In this study Juan-Francisco Ortega-Morán from Jesús Usón Minimally Invasive Surgery Centre in Spain, led a team of researchers of a blended-learning course on laparoscopy for nursing students. 24 students took part in the study which found that the e-learning environment had ease of access, good layout consistency and intuitive navigation. However the chat and forum sections of the web site were not used and the students

missed having a moderator for their discussions. The participants considered blended learning as the most effective training method for its flexibility in time and place.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#).

### Self-efficacy and confidence on the nursing placement

**Source:** Nurse Education Today

**In a nutshell:** Whether it's getting behind the wheel of a car, riding a bicycle or putting up a set of shelves doing anything for the first time can be a bit nerve-racking. As oft documented going out on the wards as a nursing student is no exception and in this study Tracy P. George, from Francis Marion University in South Carolina, led a team of researchers investigating the concerns of nursing students about clinical experiences and factors related to self-efficacy. Interviews with the students elicited the following themes:

- Concerns regarding clinical competence
- Expectations of learning
- Aspects of patient/peer/instructor interactions
- Learning strategies and preferences

The student's level of confidence regarding communication to patients and physicians, assessment of heart and lung sounds, interview skills, documentation, and discussion of nursing procedures increased significantly over the course of their placement.

You can read the abstract of this article [here](#)

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