LETTERS

Positive Educational Impact of Mandatory Student Teaching Sessions

To the Editor. In their recent publication, Gilligan and colleagues describe the positive learning benefits from students teaching about drug interactions.¹ As a recent graduate, my experience supports the authors' conclusions, and I wanted to share my perspective regarding teaching drug interactions. Interventions, such as the one presented in this article, demonstrate the value of students-as-teachers and the impact this method has on learning. Mandatory student teaching sessions could improve the student teacher's own knowledge of drug interactions.

Some of my most valuable learning experiences regarding drug interactions occurred on clinical rotations that required me to conduct education sessions with students and residents. For example, I gave several presentations on warfarin drug interactions that helped me identify interacting medications and the typical management strategies for those cases. My experience supports the authors' findings, and I feel that student educational presentations could have positive measurable results if made mandatory in the curriculum.

The theory of teaching as an effective learning retention strategy gained prominence in the 1960s when Edgar Dale described his cone of learning concept.² An example

of this strategy was published in a study in *Academic Medicine* in which teachers' perceptions of their clinical skills were improved by teaching physical examination skills to first- and second-year medical students.³ Although hard to quantify, a perception in skills improvement shows the positive impact of teaching. Clinicians who teach may ultimately become more capable in all aspects of their practice.

I commend Gilligan and colleagues' efforts to inform others about the need for improved education techniques regarding drug interactions. Knowledge of drug interactions is relevant due to the complexities of many medication regimens. Educational sessions involving students as teachers are critical to improve both learning retention and the management of drug interactions in clinical practice.

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REFERENCES

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