Evaluating the Use of Social Media to Enhance the Educational Experience of a Medical School Surgery Clerkship

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**Background**

- Online social media has become a widely popular means of interpersonal interaction and communication.
- Numerous scholarly articles have investigated the use of Twitter in medicine, including a recent JAMA article identifying more than 300 physicians with greater than 500 followers.
- Despite increasing social engagement by tech-savvy medical students, no evidence exists to examine the potential for use in medical education.

**Hypothesis**

- Integration of social media into a medical school surgical clerkship will improve knowledge and engagement during the clerkship period.

**Methods**

- Students were assisted with installing Twitter application on their mobile device and demonstrated how to follow MLearnSurgery.
- Pre-Post Surveys were distributed to assess knowledge, motivation, interest and engagement.

**Results**

- Overall, 97 students completed both surveys and were able to be matched for pre-post analysis.

**Student Feedback**

- "I just had my twitter forward as a text message to my phone. It's nice...like a fact of the day thing. Keep's me thinking about how I need to study for the shelf. "
- "I followed the tweets as they came in pretty routinely."
- "I enjoyed the high yield facts and they often prompted me to read more about various topics."
- "The things tweeted were things that I know I've read, but may not have completely memorized. The tweets help solidify that and are a great reminder to tell me that I should study for the shelf. "
- "I don't think it had an affect on my engagement. I was already eager to engage, the twitter was more informational for me"

**Conclusions**

- Integration of Twitter based medical facts has the potential to improve knowledge base and engagement during a surgical clerkship. Further work is needed to determine the optimal distribution patterns.

**Example Tweets**

- Welcome to the University of Michigan Surgery Clerkship Twitter! Stay tuned for frequent updates
- Pearls: in your thepockets: Pens, stethoscope (not around your neck), penlight, a snack, some key dressing supplies, a book to study
- GCS: Eyes (orient.conf.inappr.incomp), Motor (spont.commnd.pain), Verbal (false:conf.inappr.incomp)
- Hallmark of acute limb ischemia are the 5 Ps: Pain, paresthesia, paralys, pulselessness
- Causes of post-operative fever: Wind (atelectasis d2), Water (UTI d3), Wound d5, Walking (DVT, PE d7-9), Wonder Drug
- 50 % of all small bowel cancers are primary adenocarcinoma, older patients in duodenum, poor prognosis
- One way to read vent settings: mode, RR, tidal volume, FiO2, PEEP, PS: Mr Jones is on SIMV, 14, 550, 60%, 5 and 15, ABG is...

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