

Creating, Curating, and Sharing Online Faculty Development Resources: The Medical Education in Cases Series Experience

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Article in *Academic Medicine*, Vol. 90, No.6 2015(June) · May 2015

Abstract

Problem

It is difficult to engage clinicians in continuing medical education that does not focus on clinical expertise. Evolving online technologies (e.g., massive open online courses [MOOCs]) are disrupting and transforming medical education, but few online nonclinical professional development resources exist.

Approach

In August 2013, the Academic Life in Emergency Medicine Web site launched the Medical Education in Cases (MEdIC) series to engage clinicians in an online professional development exercise. Each month, a complex, realistic scenario featuring a nonclinical medical education dilemma is published with accompanying discussion questions. A weeklong discussion is moderated on Twitter and the Web site. This discussion is curated to create a community commentary, which is published alongside presolicited expert responses. Case resources are available for download.

Outcomes

The first six MEdIC cases (published August 2013–January 2014) emphasized different CanMEDS and/or Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education competencies. Median reader engagement metrics (interquartile range 25%–75%) in the first week following publication were 861 (634–1,114) page views, 767 (518–953) unique visitors from 326 (218–405) cities in 45 (32–50) countries, 30 (24–39) comments, 52 (40–56) tweets, 17 (13–30) Facebook Likes, and 5 (5–7) Google Plus +1s.

Next Steps

The MEdIC series is proof of concept that online activities can engage clinicians in nonclinical professional development. The early experience suggests the connectivist nature of MEdIC allows for crowdsourcing solutions to ill-defined problems via the wisdom of readers. This methodology may also be effective for other nonclinical and medical education topics.