DOCCOM: 40 INTERACTIVE ONLINE MODULES TO TEACH AND ASSESS PHYSICIAN PATIENT COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Dennis Novack MD
Christof Daetwyler MD
Clinical Skills and Clinical Skills Assessment
Drexel University College of Medicine, 2900 Queen Lane
Philadelphia, PA 19129-1096

DocCom is a set of 40 web-modules to teach and assess Physician Patient communication. It is a project by the American Academy on Physician and Patient in collaboration with Drexel University College of Medicine, supported by a grant from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation.

This is a unique learning resource, using many of the capabilities of the web, including videos of experts interacting with patients, interactive assessments, webcasts, resources for faculty, threaded discussion groups, chat rooms and more. WebCT in conjunction with ASP is used to provide the framework for this. The interactive video interviews allow the student watching a specialist (positive role model) perform state-of-art doctoring. In addition, it allows the learner to ask for an explanation of the specialist's reasoning, a technique used effectively in "Headache Interactive" which was awarded with the EASA2000 (European Academic Software Award) for this achievement (http://www2000.easa-award.net/index2.html).

The assessment goes beyond multiple-choice questions. For example, a student watches a movie where a medical encounter starts to become ineffective. The task is to push a button at the moment when the student feels that the situation is getting out of control, and offer an explanation, which is then available to the faculty. The time is measured and feedback is provided accordingly.

Besides the interactive elements, each of the 40 learning modules presents key principles, evidence-based recommendations, and a skills checklist in text form. Literature references link directly to MEDLINE abstracts - or when available to the full source texts.

The first 19 DocCom modules are to be up and running until June 2005, the remaining 21 modules will be put in place until summer of 2006. The task of producing so many high quality interactive modules within short time is a big threat. In this talk – besides showing DocCom modules - we'll show as well how we emphasize on the initial creation of a very stable and easy to maintain matrix-module, and how we made use of the Internet to have our dispersed teams collaborate in a very efficient way. We'll also tell the story how we reactivated a forgotten TV studio on the promises of the Hahnemann Hospital in Center City Philadelphia for this production. That studio will become available to other groups who have an interest in the production of videos for medical education.

A demo version of DocCom with a full listing of the modules is available at
http://webcampus.med.drexel.edu/demo/doccom/