TEACHING DOCTORS NOT TO "DIS" DISCHARGE PLANNING

John W. Priestley, Jeanne B. Schlesinger, Chris L. Stephens, Peter A. Boling
Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine, Richmond, VA

Relevance Developers needing strategies for engaging reluctant learners will benefit from this demonstration, as will curriculum planners tasked with integrating geriatrics or discharge planning content across medical school curricula. Our innovation involves transforming didactic content into an engaging, simulation-based game.

Purpose Research indicates that inadequate discharge planning contributes to medical errors and healthcare costs. Yet this important component of care is seldom part of the formal curriculum. To address this deficit, we created an online case-based game to entice busy learners to study effective discharge planning for geriatric patients.

Design The program is designed to present four cases in each of five disciplines: Orthopedics, Neurology, Surgery, Psychiatry, and Medicine. The program structure provides a simple mental model illustrating the four basic steps of the discharge planning process. This framework is reinforced throughout each case: each step provides additional case information through text, cartoons, and/or interactive simulations. Challenging questions prompt critical reflection on the discharge planning process and reinforce consultation with an interdisciplinary team. Learners' scores are tracked throughout the game. Two didactic modules present general information on healthcare financing and post-hospital care settings.

Evaluation Formative evaluation on the pilot case elicited qualitative feedback on the program's instructional efficacy. Participants found the cases realistic, the didactic modules relevant, and the overall experience engaging. Program development will continue with the present architecture, incorporating the minor design suggestions and additional content recommendations. Evaluation will be repeated periodically to ensure continued efficacy and relevance.