

## **MEDICAL SCHOOL USE OF “GENETICS IN CLINICAL PRACTICE: A TEAM APPROACH”**

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*Genetics in Clinical Practice: A Team Approach* is an interactive CD-ROM educational tool used by practicing physicians, residents, and medical students. It was developed by the Interactive Media Laboratory at Dartmouth Medical School and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention using the “Virtual Mini-Fellowships<sup>TM</sup>” model. This program provides a simulated clinical rotation in genetics giving students the opportunity to interact with a patient in a ‘safe’ environment and a better understanding of the different complexities involved in a genetic disorder.

This educational tool has been incorporated successfully into the genetics curriculum of the University of Arkansas Medical School (UAMS). Beginning in 2002 UAMS students were required to complete at least one patient scenario (cystic fibrosis, colon cancer, hemochromatosis, or Fragile-X) within the program and an online evaluation.

Results indicated that 80% of the students believed they learned ‘as much’ or ‘more’ than they could in a real clinical setting. 90% of students rated the simulated patient encounters as ‘extremely useful’ to ‘quite useful’ with the lowest rating being ‘moderately useful’. Other elements of the program evaluated include case discussions with genetics experts, various genetic lab tours, lectures, and interviews with real patients. Student comments and additional statistics will be provided.

In 2004, an optional survey was developed to evaluate what sections of the program these students used, what motivated them to spend additional time with the program, and recommendations for using the program throughout their medical training.

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