

AB095. 70. Integration of ear—suctioning into primary care: an educational model

Isobel O’Riordan¹, Camilla Carroll¹, Nash Pati², Martin Donnell³

¹Royal Victoria Eye and Ear Hospital Dublin, Ear Nose & Throat Emergency Department, Dublin, Ireland; ²Department of Ear Nose & Throat, Sligo University Hospital, Sligo, Ireland; ³Department of Ear Nose & Throat, Waterford University Hospital, Waterford, Ireland

Background: We designed a “fit for purpose” educational skills model, to train general practitioners (GPs) and practice nurses in the technical skill of ear-suctioning, with a view to managing non-complex ear conditions in primary care. The programme was funded through the National Clinical Programme in Surgery (NCPS) and delivered by ear, nose and throat (ENT) experts in Dublin, Sligo and Waterford.

Methods: Sixty primary care participants were recruited in January 2018. A competency-based educational model was utilised based on adult learning theories, with a focus on skills transfer in a situated learning environment. Skills training was delivered in a 6-hour workshop with blended

learning, practical skills stations combining simulation and virtual reality ear models.

Results: Sixty GPs and practice nurses were trained in the procedure of ear-suctioning. Thirty in Dublin, 16 in Sligo and 14 in Waterford. Currently, each participant is delivering care to 20 patients. Re-evaluation of practical skills performance under supervision, utilising an environmental protection agency (EPA) model, will take place upon completion of the patient case-load. Twelve hundred patients will be treated in primary care, upon completion of this pilot programme. These patients would previously have had to attend a hospital-based ENT Surgeon for delivery of care.

Conclusions: The aim of this integrated programme is to develop a national network of credentialed primary care practitioners to deliver an ear-suction service for common ear conditions. Thirty-two thousand patients can have their care redirected to the community annually, thereby freeing-up hospital-based ENT surgeons to manage patients with more complex conditions.

Keywords: Ear-suctioning; ear, nose and throat model of care (ENT model of care); technical skills training; primary care

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