

AB186. Surgical journal club for undergraduate medical students: a pilot study

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Background: Critical appraisal of published literature is a crucial skill in the era of evidence based medicine. Surgical journal club is a core training activity in Irish teaching hospitals and is an invaluable resource for both students and non-consultant hospital doctor (NCHDs) to analyse the current literature with input from specialist consultants. However, students have reported a difficulty in engaging in journal club due to complex language and statistical concepts that are not formally taught in the undergraduate curriculum. Our aim was to first assess medical student's attitudes toward journal club and establish a student journal club to foster appraisal skills.

Methods: One hundred final year medical students participated in a survey assessing attitudes toward journal club (response rate 31%). A student journal club was

established in our institution by junior NCHDs. An introductory session was carried out to introduce skills in appraisal of publications, followed by small-group sessions assessing contemporary surgical research. A second evaluation will be circulated to re-assess student's attitudes and skills.

Results: Of 31 responses, 20 felt that journal club was a worthwhile addition to their weekly teaching schedule. 26 felt that having the confidence to contribute appropriately would increase the benefit gained from attending journal club. Students were not confident in appraising literature (mean score 2.67/10). 30 students believed having formal teaching in this domain would be beneficial.

Conclusions: Medical students do not feel adequately prepared to engage in surgical journal club. Establishing a student journal club will help to bridge this gap in the undergraduate curriculum.

Keywords: Education journal club; medical education; journal club; undergraduate education; surgical trainees

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