

Teaching and Learning/Education

Tutor Guide For Small Group Teaching of Clinical Skills to Preclinical Medical Students

Rahat Qureshi¹, Nigar Jabeen²

¹Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology department, Aga Khan University Hospital, Private wing II, Karachi.

²Instructor, Aga Khan Maternal and Child Care Centre, Hyderabad.

Correspondence: Dr. Rahat Qureshi. Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology department, Aga Khan University Hospital, Private wing II, Karachi.

Email: rahat.qureshi@aku.edu

Introduction

In this paper the small group teaching and learning of clinical skills mostly in Obstetrics and Gynaecology is concentrated upon.

Small group teaching is an effective strategy that helps the students to deal with the vast amount of information and to learn its relevance and importance in practice. It produces deep learning and helps the students to understand and retain information. This allows them to keep on adding to it as they progress.

Small group teaching is an effective teaching methodology that helps the students to thoroughly understand the topic and its relationship to a real time scenario. By retaining the knowledge learned, the students are in a better position to use this information in later years of practice.

Conflict of interest

There was no conflict of interest involved in the conduct and design of the study.

The Tutor Guide

This document is a format for a tutor guide which can be used to guide a new faculty and facilitate in small group teaching sessions based on clinical skills for pre-clinical medical students (mostly about obstetrics and gynaecology). The aim for teaching session is to develop skills for clinical techniques only. The aim is not to help the students to understand the underlying disease or risk factors.

The guide can be used for those students who have been provided with the knowledge of elements required in history taking and have already had theoretical session on development of communication skills.

The skills to be taught

- Obtaining obstetric history in a simulated patient
- Obtaining gynaecological history in a simulated patient
- Performing thyroid examination on a simulated patient
- Performing pelvic examination for taking a cervical smear on mannequin.

This session allows the students to develop their clinical skills and provides them with the experience before they are exposed to real patients in clinical scenario. In real life situation students need to have certain attributes to effectively interact with the patients. These attributes include ability to communicate with each other and the patient, applying skills in gathering information, understanding the presentation and manual skills for examination. Every year there will be a progression in the practice of these skills to ultimately make them clinicians.

The objectives of the sessions

- Obtain a history of a pregnant patient in a clinical lab setting in order to eventually perform this skill completely and thoroughly.
- Obtain a history of a gynecological patient in a clinical lab setting in order to eventually perform this skill completely and thoroughly.
- Perform an examination to palpate the thyroid gland on a patient in a clinical lab setting in order to eventually perform this skill completely and thoroughly.
- Perform a speculum examination and obtain a cervical smear on a mannequin in the clinical lab setting in order to eventually perform this skill completely and thoroughly.

The tutor needs to have a sequencing of events of instruction during the teaching session. In addition the tutor should be familiarized with the size of the group, the venue, timing and requirements for the teaching session.

The events of instructions

- Monitor and facilitate the flow of the session. Encourage active learning, foster collaboration and build trust in group members.

- Provide time to think, support and rationalize arguments.
- Design exercises based on collaborative learning e.g. role model, peer review, couple presentations, etc.
- Anticipate developments that might occur.
- Ask the questions that help the learners reflect deeply to organize their knowledge, identify misconceptions, foster confidence, and communication and presentation skills.
- Design the class exercises by keeping the knowledge and skills that have already been acquired by the learners at different contextual situations, as the focus.
- Assist students to critique their own approach and concepts, and to accept critique positively. Encourage the group to identify any negative group processes e.g. "What is happening here?" Encourage the group to suggest solutions e.g. "What do you think we should do?"
- Deal with the disagreements and managing conflicts constructively, by focusing on learning interests and by keeping an unbiased approach towards group members. Tutor should play a role of a facilitator and suppress authoritative or directive attitude.
- Promote active learning environment by building on learner's prior knowledge and catering to their questions and concerns. Also respect each learner's learning pattern.
- Promote cognitive learning and teaching approach which attempts to integrate new learning into the learner's existing knowledge base.

Table I, outlines an example of the events which are supposed to take place in the

session. There may be some change in the sequence and the timing for each step depending on the task and the tutor.

The student also has an interactive and proactive

role in the small group session. The tutor must facilitate the student in the fulfillment of this role. Student is expected to participate actively by reading through the material already provided to them at the start of

Table I. An outline of the instructional events in a lesson for the teaching of a Motor Skill.

Objective: Obtain a history of a gynecological patient in a clinical lab setting in order to eventually perform this skill completely and thoroughly.		
Learners: 8-10 medical students in the pre-clinical year of medical college		
No	Instructional events	Lesson activity
1	Gaining attention(tutor)	Introduction of facilitator and students. Discuss the ground rules and the importance of functional group dynamics to the whole process of learning. Provide an overview of the process which will be undertaken during the session.
2	Informing learner of the objective(tutor)	Provide a demonstration of the history taking. Role Model ways that we want the learners to interact with the patient. Consider acquisition of appropriate attitudes through role playing.
3	Simulating recall of subordinate concepts and rules (tutor and student)	Simulate recall of earlier sessions of history taking with each sub heading and the details required.
4	Presenting the stimulus material(tutor)	Discuss the difference between earlier history taking with the current task. Discuss the sequence of each aspect.
5	Providing learning guidance (tutor and student)	Allow each student to take the history while the group observes. Group and tutor will provide feedback of performance achievement.
6	Eliciting the performance (student)	Continue with the performance of each student.
7	Providing feedback (student)	<i>Assist students to critique their own approach and concepts, and to accept critique. Encourage the group to identify any negative group processes e.g. "What is happening here?"</i> Provide feedback on the degree of accuracy and timing of performance.
8	Assessing performance (student)	The tutor goes through the log book and enters comments. on student's performance in the session.
9	Enhancing retention and transfer (student)	Provide information on the method by which student can visit the skills lab for continuing performance. Learner continues skills practice.

their module. **They must come in time for the session and conduct themselves respectfully with each other, tutor, patient and staff. They must observe intently while the tutor gives the demonstration. They should be encouraged to ask questions. Each student must perform the task completely and thoroughly during the session.** At the end of the session the **student should provide feedback** (constructive criticism of self and each other).

Various components of the student assessment: An important part of the learning and evaluation.

1. At the end of each performance **the student should get feedback from the group. This is to improve the performance of the individual and the group.**
2. Each session must **conclude with a 10-15 minutes discussion on assessment of the process of learning. The tutor should conclude by summarizing the students' comments and adding his or her own views.**
3. Tutor **should provide a general feedback to the group, except when someone has shown exceptional group communication skills or contribution to the discussion or vice versa.**

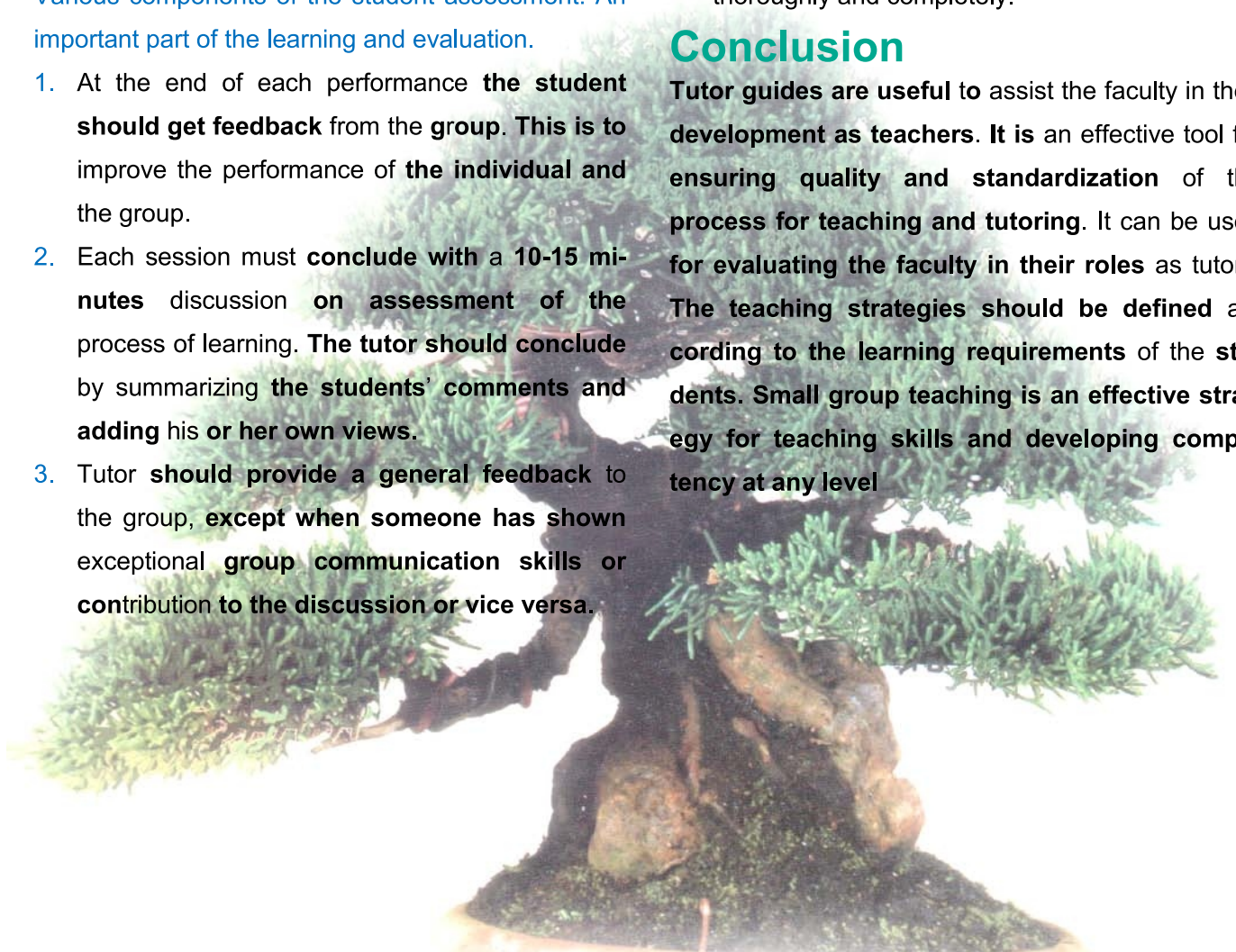
The tutor must reflect on how the session went and what should be done differently next time.

The students should provide written feedback of the session.

4. Students are given a written assessment at the end of the session. Each student's performance is marked as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. A satisfactory performance means a student has attended the complete session, participated actively in the activity and performed the task taught thoroughly and completely.

Conclusion

Tutor guides are useful to assist the faculty in their development as teachers. It is an effective tool for ensuring quality and standardization of the process for teaching and tutoring. It can be used for evaluating the faculty in their roles as tutors. The teaching strategies should be defined according to the learning requirements of the students. Small group teaching is an effective strategy for teaching skills and developing competency at any level



Planned and Monitored Education can trim and tailor a scholar's personality and professional capability like this tree.