

PQRST – a new tool for trainee-initiated case discussion in GP training

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Background

Case discussion is a core teaching and learning method in general practice training. Case discussion embraces two fundamental aspects of the GP trainer's role - clinical oversight, to ensure patient safety, and teaching, to ensure effective learning.

Case discussion is either trainer-initiated, as part of workplace-based assessment, or trainee-initiated, in the context of help-seeking. Trainee-initiated case discussion includes brief, ad hoc supervisory encounters (corridor consultations) and more comprehensive, 'end-of-the-day' problem case discussion (PCD).

Until recently, there has been no simple framework to guide trainee-initiated case discussion specific to the general practice setting.

Method/Results

The 'problem-question-reasoning-solution-teaching' (PQRST) model is a framework for both ad hoc supervision and PCD in the general practice setting. This paper will discuss the development, implementation and evaluation of the PQRST framework in Australian general practice training.

Discussion

The PQRST framework was developed as a simple framework for use by trainers when a trainee seeks assistance. It emphasises identification of the trainee's specific question, assessment of the trainee's clinical reasoning, and prioritisation of patient safety. PQRST is adaptable for trainees at all levels of training and/or competence.

The PQRST framework has been introduced into the GP trainer professional development program in many jurisdictions in Australia. A pilot study has demonstrated high levels of utility and acceptability, and ongoing evaluation is currently underway.

Conclusion

The PQRST framework is a useful tool to facilitate more effective and structured case discussion when the trainee seeks assistance from the trainer. Further research will inform its role in general practice training.

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