

Getting physical in a socially distant world: Sensitive exam workshop for medical students

BACKGROUND:

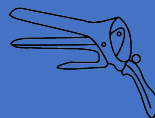
Teaching physical exam maneuvers of the breast and pelvis is difficult; the COVID-19 pandemic has added challenges with Standardized Patients reluctant to encounter students or prohibited from returning to work. Simulation with mannequins affords students familiarity and confidence prior to performing exams in real-world encounters. Students were surveyed on their performance confidence before and after participating in the workshop.

METHODS:

A facilitator-led workshop was developed to teach second year medical students sensitive exam skills using simulation mannequins, Pap smear, cervical culture, wet mount and potassium hydroxide preparation. 30-minute sessions were held over three days to accommodate 280 students. Sessions were facilitated by faculty, chief residents and fourth year medical students. Participants were surveyed following the workshop.

RESULTS:

105 unique responses were collected. 70% of students reported not being comfortable performing these exams prior to the workshop. Following the workshop 90% of students reported feeling more confident with performance.



The use of mannequins in place of standardized patients in the era of Covid-19 was a successful method of training for pelvic and breast exams at our institution.



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Figure 1: Student responses to "Prior to the breast and pelvic exam workshop I felt confident performing breast and pelvic exams"

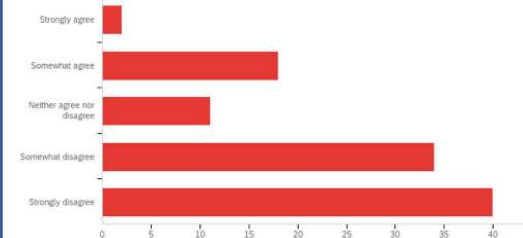
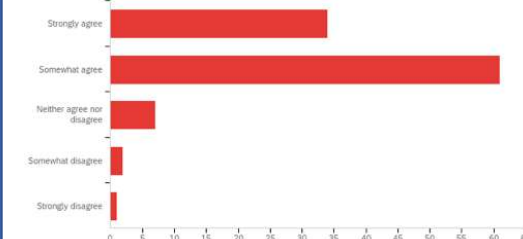


Figure 2: Student responses to "After participating in the breast and pelvic exam workshop I feel more confident performing breast and pelvic exams."



"Having M4s walk us through it is optimal because we don't feel like we're being judged/tested by SPs, so I personally had a great learning experience because I was comfortable asking questions and making mistakes."

"I loved being able to apply the work and appreciate the personal lessons by way of the M4's that were teaching us!"

"Appreciative of the M4s. They were great teachers."

"I enjoyed the low-stakes atmosphere of exam workshop. I often feel that I learn more when exams are taught in a workshop setting over a mock patient encounter because I can ask more questions and get more out of the session."

"I think the school did a great job with the workshop! It was a lot of fun and educational."

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