

# POINT-OF-CARE TESTING DEVICES AND CLINICAL SKILLS PRACTICAL SESSIONS: A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH

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## INTRODUCTION

For academic year 2020-21, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the point-of-care testing devices and clinical skills practical sessions for first year undergraduate pharmacy students were converted to a blended learning approach, combining traditional in-person laboratory practical training with pre-laboratory synchronous remote sessions.

The practical sessions consisted of: 1) Three x 2 hours synchronous pre-laboratory sessions for all the class held using Zoom, and 2) Three x 2 hours in-person laboratory sessions for each student held in groups of three students. In-person laboratory sessions covered urinalysis, blood glucose monitoring, blood pressure measurement, lipid profile and obesity measurements and injection techniques.

## AIM

To evaluate student perception of practical sessions delivered using a blended learning approach

## METHOD

- A self-administered questionnaire consisting of Likert-type questions (1 Strongly Disagree to 5 Strongly Agree) was developed and validated by an eight-member expert panel consisting of pharmacy academics and pharmacy students in other course years.
- The questionnaire was disseminated electronically to all (N=24) first year undergraduate pharmacy students after completion of the sessions.

## RESULTS

- The pre-laboratory remote sessions were interactive. They included an overview of key procedures to be followed during the laboratory sessions, various demonstration videos and practice exercises such as on how to determine blood pressure readings and body mass index.
- Nineteen students (13 female, 6 male, age range 18-21 years) completed the questionnaire.
- The majority of students gave positive feedback (score 4 or 5) about the blended learning approach adopted for the practical sessions (Table 1).
- Sixteen students recommended continuation of the blended learning approach for such practical sessions.

Table 1: Student feedback on blended learning approach adopted for practical sessions (N=19)

Statement	Number of students who Strongly Agreed/Agreed
Provided opportunity to review material covered in remote sessions on virtual learning environment <i>as often as necessary</i> and <i>at own pace</i> to help in preparation for in-person sessions	18
Helped to increase participation in the in-person sessions	18
Provided an opportunity to pursue own learning	16
Stimulated critical-thinking	14

## CONCLUSION

Students had a positive perception of practical sessions delivered using a blended learning approach and reported that the remote sessions supported the in-person sessions.