



INTRODUCTION

The Department of Pharmacy at the University of Malta offers a three year post-graduate Doctorate of Pharmacy (Pharm.D) programme in collaboration with the College of Pharmacy of the University of Illinois at Chicago. One study unit relates to Drug Information and Statistics. This unit reviews drug information sources used in healthcare and describes the critical evaluation of literature in a systematic way and presents the clinical application of statistical tools. Students are exposed to concepts of ensuring patient safety and the legal and ethical implications when responding to drug information requests.¹

AIMS

To evaluate a new tutorial which was introduced this academic year targeted at developing skills in retrieving information about safe use of medicines.

METHOD

- The 3-hour tutorial focused on pharmacist recommended use of statins and the new format of Issue 70 of the British National Formulary (BNF).
- Students were led to discuss advantages and disadvantages of having statins as pharmacist-recommended medications.
- As part of the classwork, students were given seven case studies where they had to use the BNF as the primary source of information.
- Students were provided with an evaluation sheet at the end of the tutorial to rate, on a 5-point Likert scale, their reflections on the demonstrator's presentation and to answer questions directly related to the tutorial set-up.

RESULTS

- Fourteen students from a total of seventeen participated in the tutorial.
- Twelve students claimed they found the discussions related to statins and the new BNF format as engaging and felt they could apply what they learned during the taught modules into practice.
- Eleven students strongly agreed that they understood the concepts presented in the tutorial well.
- Eleven students strongly agreed that the demonstrator appeared knowledgeable about the subject, encouraged student participation and presented up-to-date developments in the field.
- Ten students strongly agreed that the demonstrator answered students' questions clearly and appropriately, explained difficult concepts or problems in more than one way and spoke about content and material that was valuable to students' learning.
- Ten students strongly agreed that the demonstrator presented challenging questions to stimulate discussion and has helped students apply therapeutic information for patient care.

CONCLUSION

This evaluation demonstrates that Doctorate of Pharmacy students found value in this tutorial which drew on the practical application of retrieving drug information from a commonly used reference source. The Pharm.D programme aims to give students skills in critical thinking and literature analysis which could be applied in decision-making for selecting drug therapy and evaluating new drugs.

References

1. University of Malta [Internet]. Malta: Department of Pharmacy; 2015 [cited 2016 May 04]. Available from: <http://www.um.edu.mt/ms/studyunit/PHR5614>