

DOPS (Direct Observation of Procedural Skills)-A better assessment tool

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Abstract

A constant change in clinical education has made the necessity of implementing appropriate new method of evaluation more succinct than before. Keeping in mind, the principles of Adult-learning and self- directed leaning, DOPS is one of the best method for procedural skill assessment.

Key Words: DOPS, Assessment, Clinical Education

Proficiency in procedural skills is an important objective of training for post graduates. It was observed that self-guided or self-regulated learning can provide effective learning environment for students.¹ However, self-guided learning require periodic supervision. As a result of constant changes in clinical education, the necessity of implementing appropriate new method of evaluation has become more succinct than before. Keeping in mind, the principles of Adult-learning and self- directed leaning, DOPS is one of the best method for procedural skill assessment. I have selected this instrument for assessing extra oral radiographic skill in post graduates of Oral medicine and radiology.

As literature shows non validated method of procedural performance assessment, UK piloted DOPS among Workplace based assessment(WBA) as a new assessment tool for 'Foundation Programme'.²

To carry out evaluation in clinical environment different methods can be used such as OSCE/OSPE, 360 degree evaluation, Mini CEX and DOPS. DOPS is method where student is assessed when he/she perform task on real patient in real set up and provide immediate feedback pertaining the practical skills. In this new method, student is allowed to perform task as assessor has a structured checklist to rate. Student is assessed not only for cognitive domain; psychomotor as well as affective domains are evaluated.

I am in mid phase of this project and really enjoying the observation which I was performing since so many years, but never documented as it was not structured. By selecting any important clinical procedure one can try DOPS as a new assessment method.

DOPS forms are available online which can be modified according to speciality. Provide student immediate feedback and repeat if needed. This method strengthens the student – teacher relations and develops positive atmosphere of learning.

Thus, DOPS is an effective method in procedural skill assessment.

References

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