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Department
of Pharmacy

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PE7: Introduction of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination for Pharmacy Students in Serbia

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Introduction: At the Faculty of Pharmacy University of Belgrade, the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) was introduced to assess clinical competences and communication skills of pharmacy students following their 6-weeks practice in public pharmacies during the 10th semester.

Methods: The OSCE consisted of one patient case that was presented to the student firstly in a short written form. The patient case had at least one drug-related problem that the student was expected to identify and solve. A teaching assistant played the role of the patient and a teacher assessed the communication skills and clinical competences during the student's interview with the „patient" using a structured form (checklist). The student had limited time (7 minutes) to identify and solve the drug-related problem(s) and to councel the patient. The use of a Drug register and Pharmacotherapy guide were allowed.

Results: One hundred fifty students completed the OSCE so far. The students could achieve 0-40 points during the exam, according to their performance. The maximal point score was achieved if the student obtained all relevant information from the „patient", identified and solved the drug-related problem(s) and offered appropriate information. The minimal point score (0) was assigned if the student made an error which could harm the patient. The median result of the OSCE was 28 points (interquatile range 10), while 7 students (4.7%) scored 0-9 points, 12 (8.0%) scored 10-19 points, 68 (45.3%) scored 20-29 points, 58 (38.7%) scored 30-39 points and 5 students (3.3%) scored 40 points.

Conclusions: The introduction of the OSCE was successful and enabled the teaching staff to obtain a more accurate knowledge of the students' clinical competences and communication skills as well as to identify gaps in the competences in skills which need to be improved.

PE8: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) during COVID-19 Pandemic

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Introduction: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) allows simulation of the interaction between the pharmacist (or the pharmacy student) and the patient in a community pharmacy or at a hospital setting. Hence, OSCE is considered nowadays the gold-standard for competency-based assessments in clinical disciplines such as Pharmacy. As a result of the pandemic situation, conventional face to face OSCE presents with challenges related to health and safety. Accordingly, we designed alternative clinical competence assessments with similar objectives and standards for pharmacy students.

Methods: OSCE was conducted during the academic year 2020-21 for fifth-year students after the completion of 6 months of practical rotations. Students completed an exam with five stations consisting of two face to face stations with simulated standarized patients and three online stations developed through the online learning platform Blackboard, each one with a duration of 5 minutes. The stations tested student knowledge, patient counselling and communication and acquisition of technical and/or clinical skills.

Results: A total of 49 fifth-year students and 10 examiners were involved in this OSCE hybrid format. The analysis of results showed that the best average grade was obtained at live stations. Comparing the results with previous conventional OSCEs (before pandemic) shows higher average grades for the hybrid OSCE celebrated in 2020-21. Amongst the participants in the hybrid OSCE, 33% of them preferred the online stations.

Conclusions: During the COVID-19 pandemic, online stations have been implemented in OSCE as an opportunity to assess clinical skills in pharmacy students. The online version was effective for evaluating knowledge. However, there were limitations in the assessment of some specific skills such as communication.

Reference

Hsia SL, Zhou C, Gruenberg K, Trinh TD, Assemi M. Implementation and evaluation of a virtual objective structured clinical examination for pharmacy students. J Am Coll Clin Pharm. 2021; 4 (7): 837-848. DOI: 10.1002/jac5. 1448