

Introduction of Problem-based Learning in a Traditional Medical Curriculum in Singapore—Students' and Tutors' Perspectives

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Abstract

Objectives: *The Faculty of Medicine at the National University of Singapore was founded in 1905 and has trained many generations of medical practitioners. Teaching has been based on a traditional British-style curriculum with 2 years of training in the basic clinical sciences and 3 years in the clinical disciplines. Starting in the academic year 1999-2000, a more integrated curriculum was introduced. In conjunction with this, approximately one-fifth of the curriculum time was dedicated to problem-based learning (PBL). This will be the first time that PBL is being implemented in the medical school and both staff and students will be new at it. Thus, the objective of this study was to gather information on the reactions of both staff and students after the actual implementation.* **Materials and Methods:** *A questionnaire was designed to assess the following: (1) What are tutors' and students' opinions on the relative benefits on students' learning process and participation of PBL versus traditional lectures? (2) What is the level of satisfaction with various aspects of their PBL experience? (3) What were the difficulties that were encountered?* **Results:** *Several positive and negative aspects of the tutors' and students' experiences were revealed. Most reported fairly high levels of satisfaction with their PBL experience.* **Conclusions:** *Overall, the experiences have been positive and both groups are willing to "struggle" with this new way of learning.*

Ann Acad Med Singapore 2001; 30:371-4

Key words: *Education, Medical, Problem-based Learning, Singapore, Undergraduate*

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