



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CLINICAL SKILLS



A Peer Reviewed International Journal for the Advancement of Clinical Skills
– ‘docendo ac discendo’ – ‘by teaching and learning’



C.O.M.E.T. – A novel educational method in clinical skills

From simulation to reality

Shibboleths of incompetence

Development of a clinical skills bus: making simulation mobile

“See one, do one, teach one!” – the uphill struggle for clinical skills acquisition

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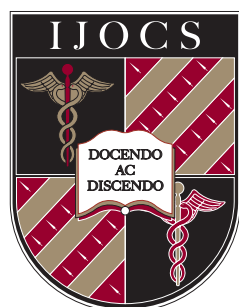
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Contents

The Executive Board Members	1
Acknowledgements	1
The Editorial Board	2
Mission Statement	2
Foreword	
– Professor The Lord McColl CBE	3

Editorials

Developing the continuum of clinical skills teaching and learning; from simulation to reality	
– Patsy Stark	4
Medico-legal consequences in surgery due to inadequate training in anatomy	
– Harold Ellis	8
Development of clinical skills bus: making simulation mobile	
– Maggie Nicol	10
Clinical communication: the emergence of a clinical discipline	
– Elaine Gill	14
See one, do one, teach one – the uphill struggle for clinical skills acquisition	
– Raina Nazar	17
Feedback to enhance student learning: facilitating interactive feedback on clinical skills	
– Faith Hill	21

Original Research

COMET: Clinically Observed Medical Education Tutorial – A novel educational method in clinical skills	
– Rajiv Nair	25
Preparing for practice – use of simulation to identify sub-optimal levels of care with junior medical students	
– Jean Ker	30
Assessment of final year medical students in a simulated ward: developing content validity for an assessment instrument	
– Louis McIlwaine	33
The use of medium fidelity simulation to develop technical and non-technical acute care skills early in the undergraduate curriculum	
– Lucy Ambrose	36
Reducing errors in laboratory test requests	
– Lysa Owen	38

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The International Journal of Clinical Skills looks forward to contributing positively towards the training of all members of the healthcare profession.

Reviews

Shibboleths of incompetence	
– Dason Evans	41
Patient safety skills	
– Rick Johnson	43
Face to face: a training DVD-rom to develop skills to diagnose patients presenting with mental health problems	
– Lisetta Lovett	47
Interview with Kuldip Birdi, author of 'Clinical Skills for OSCEs'	
– Wing Mok	49

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51

Clinical Skills Notice Board

52

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The clinical skills arena is an ever expanding field with an increasing wealth of knowledge; however there is no central resource for the sharing of evidence based research and information. The International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS) is a peer reviewed International Journal, which will promote the sharing of information and evidence based research, as well as bringing together the clinical skills community.

The Journal aims to develop and maintain standards in research and practice, lay a platform for discussion and debate, and provide opportunity to present evidence based medicine and critical appraisal of research. Provision of this much needed resource for both students, teachers and healthcare professionals, will ultimately enhance patient care.

The IJOCS will be a regular publication, three times a year in the first instance, both online and in print. The implementation of the IJOCS website will provide a continual resource for daily use. Also, in conjunction with the 'Clinical Skills Lab', the IJOCS will allow access to an online database on over 200 clinical skills – launching in 2008.

A diverse range of reviewers support the Editorial Board, all of whom are leaders in their respective fields and the IJOCS prides itself on the quality of content. Contribution of original ideas, research, audit, policy, reviews, case reports and 'Letters to the Editor' are welcome from all those involved in this multidisciplinary field. Submissions are not limited to these specific publication types and your novel suggestions will be considered.

I wish to thank all those involved in the development of this unique venture – a Journal whose remit is highly significant to today's needs.

Dr Humayun Ayub
Editor-in-Chief
International Journal of Clinical Skills

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Foreword

International Journal of Clinical Skills – An exciting forum for clinical skills

There has been an explosion in the volume of medical information related to clinical skills, which are essential in our efforts to maintain optimal patient care. The International Journal of Clinical Skills (IJOCS) aims to disseminate this knowledge in an easily accessible form. This will not only enhance our attempts to provide a quality health service, possibly with some standardisation, but also provide a vehicle for teaching and learning, hence the Journal's motto – 'docendo ac discendo' (by teaching and by learning).

The IJOCS will not only serve as an avenue for publication of research papers, but will also act as a means of communication between clinical skills professionals at an international level. Consequently, those involved in the clinical skills field, can keep those in other countries informed of their activities, as well as offering best practice guidance.

Alongside this valuable publication, a continually evolving online database ('Clinical Skills Lab') will become available for students and teachers to access – this will hold extensive information on over 200 clinical skills. The Clinical Skills Lab will be regularly updated by all those involved in this field and provide a platform for discussion and debate.

The IJOCS also aims to present comment on items of specialist interest. For example, the current issue contains a paper by Professor Harold Ellis CBE, on 'Medico-legal consequences in surgery due to inadequate training in anatomy', and explores the potential niche for anatomical clinical skills training within the newly developed medical Foundation Years (F1 & F2). It is hoped readers will make use of the Journal to comment on matters such as this – and on others relating to the subject of clinical skills – by means of 'Letters to the Editor', research based evidence and shared practice.

In order for IJOCS to become an exciting forum for clinical skills, the Journal welcomes submission of innovative research, papers, reviews and case reports. Of course, submissions are not only limited to these specific publication types and your innovative ideas would be greatly welcome by the Editor.

I am confident that IJOCS will be appreciated by a variety of health care professionals, at an international level. It promises to be representative of an ever expanding field, and with the support of all those able to contribute, it will, without doubt become increasingly influential.

I wish those responsible for the production of the International Journal of Clinical Skills, the success which their initiative deserves.



Professor The Lord McColl of Dulwich CBE
September 2007

'Face to Face': a training DVD-Rom to develop skills to diagnose patients presenting with mental health problems

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Introduction

Like most other areas of medicine good history taking and communication skills are essential for arriving at a differential diagnosis in patients who present with a mental health problem. Unlike other specialties, psychiatrists place a high value on a thorough examination of the patient's mental state to facilitate the diagnostic process. The mental state examination requires students to ask questions which are unfamiliar to them. Some students perceive them as embarrassing and can feel self conscious when asking a patient whether, for example, they ever hear voices.

In order to prepare the students before they do their first clinical attachment in psychiatry, at Keele School of Medicine we organise an introductory session which provides an overview of psychiatric classification and history taking as well as introducing students to the mental state examination. In the past, we have used actors to give the students an experience of interviewing in a safe context observed by their peers and a senior psychiatrist both of whom provided feedback. This was very well received but was stopped because of financial restrictions and the logistic problem of growing student numbers¹.

An application to the Workforce Development Corporation provided funding for a DVD-Rom, which we now use instead. This does not of course provide the hands on experience of interviewing but it does allow students to observe a variety of different patients, pathologies and interviewing approaches. Furthermore, it was constructed to illustrate how the process of questioning is that of hypothesis testing where questions are asked or symptoms explored in an informed way in order to confirm or exclude a diagnostic possibility.

Content of the DVD

The learning objectives of the DVD are summarised in Table I.

Table I

Learning Objectives
<p>After using this DVD Rom, the student will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • know what questions to ask to develop a clearer understanding of what the diagnosis maybe. • know how to conduct a mental state examination. • recognise the diagnostic symptoms and signs of depressive disorder, phobic anxiety disorder, post traumatic stress disorder, alcohol dependence, dementia, bulimia nervosa, somatoform disorder, hypomanic and schizophrenia. • be able to use appropriate questions to test out differential diagnoses.

The DVD consists of eight psychiatric interviews, each lasting about twenty minutes.

The interview is preceded by a short monologue from the patient, played by a trained actor, explaining what he expects to happen or what he wants to get from the interview. For example, a patient with chronic diarrhoea who is about to see a Liaison Psychiatrist explains that he suspects this will be a waste of time but nevertheless has come because his gastroenterologist recommended it might be helpful. In most of the interviews, the patient's preoccupying concern is initially framed in non-

medical terms with little indication of the underlying diagnosis. Thus, there are complaints of poor sleep, problems with neighbours, difficulties getting to school and trouble with memory. Skilled interviewing demonstrates that it is possible to arrive at a justifiable diagnosis from rather nonspecific complaints.

Between them, the interviews cover most psychiatric conditions. The man with poor sleep turns out not only to have a post-traumatic stress disorder but also a secondary complication of alcohol dependence. An apparently straight forward postnatal depression is revealed to be a more serious paranoid psychotic depression and an insomniac opportunistic business woman illustrates the hypomanic phase of Bipolar disorder. Each interview demonstrates the diagnostic features of the condition under scrutiny as well as the use of careful questioning to elicit those features.

Before the interviewer summarises the features elicited in the interview, the DVD pauses and invites the student to consider the differential diagnosis. All interviews are accompanied by optional subtitles which indicate what pathology is being explored or revealed by the interviewer. The subtitles sometime signpost other interviews for a further exploration of a particular sign or symptom. They also may refer the student to interactive supporting information which is available for each interview.

All the interviews are realistic portrayals of outpatient new assessments. The interviewers are experienced psychiatrists and the actors, most of whom had participated previously in psychiatric interviewing training courses for nurses and medical students received specific training in their roles from the author.

Target groups

Although this DVD was originally created to use with medical students, any psychiatric trainee taking a work-based placement assessment or student from an allied mental health discipline would find it useful. It could be used as well with GP trainees and Foundation doctors. It has been used on an Addiction Diploma course at Keele University as well as medical students within fourth year.

With the Department of Health driven implementation of New Ways of Working in Psychiatry², that more routine assessments are to be carried out by non-medical staff such as psychiatric nurses and occupational therapists. This DVD Rom for such staff could be a learning resource and may help to ensure that they achieve a satisfactory standard in assessment and diagnosis.

This DVD can be used by students on their own in self-directed study or in small group teaching with a tutor. Feedback from students and tutors who have used this resource in different ways has been very positive.

Conclusion

Educational media such as this DVD Rom of psychiatric interviews can be a useful additional tool to demonstrate psychiatric pathology, the process of diagnosis and heterogeneous interviewing styles. Such a learning resource can be used to support self-directed learning or within the small group teaching forum. This is an efficient method of ensuring students are exposed to core pathology and a range of mental disorders, as well as to observe experienced psychiatrists match their diagnostic interviewing techniques to the individual's presentation. ■

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Educational interests particularly include:

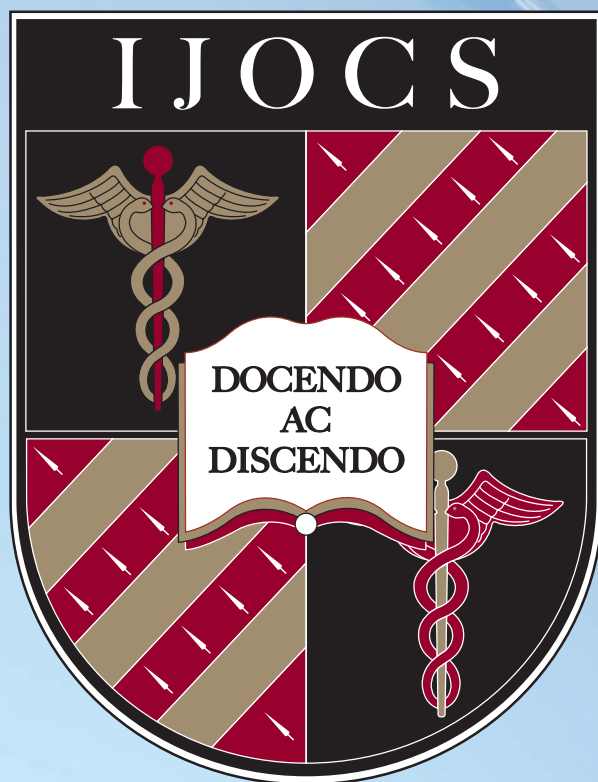
How to embed and assess ethical, personal and professional development in the Undergraduate Curriculum; and how to use the Medical humanities in the Undergraduate Curriculum.

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2. Mental health: New Ways of Working for everyone. Department of Health, May 2007.

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Clinical Skills Lab (CSL)



The Clinical Skills Lab database will comprise information on over 200 clinical skills, broadly separated into:

- History taking skills
- Communication skills
- Clinical examination/interpretation skills
- Practical skills

Not only will this valuable resource provide material to students as a learning tool and revision aid, for example, OSCEs, it will also offer educational materials for teachers from all disciplines, allowing some standardisation of practice. The Clinical Skills community will also be encouraged to contribute, making this database interactive.

CSL is Launching in April 2008 – view sample material at www.ijocs.org and take advantage of a 50% discounted rate if booked prior to **1st March 2008** (enter promotional code **CSL63R** at registration)