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SHORT COMMUNICATION

Redesigning the Internal Medicine Curriculum

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INTRODUCTION

The landscape of healthcare is undergoing profound changes, driven by advances in technology, evolving patient demographics, and the increasing complexity of medical care. These changes necessitate a re-evaluation of the traditional internal medicine curriculum, which must adapt to prepare future internists for the challenges and opportunities of modern practice. This commentary explores the need for curriculum redesign in internal medicine education, emphasizing the importance of fostering critical thinking, inter-professional collaboration, and lifelong learning. The traditional internal medicine curriculum, with its roots in the Flexnerian model of medical education, has long focused on a robust foundation in the basic sciences, followed by clinical training through rotations and residencies. While this model has produced generations of competent physicians, it is increasingly clear that it is no longer sufficient to meet the demands of contemporary medical practice.

DESCRIPTION

One of the primary challenges is the sheer volume of medical knowledge that has expanded exponentially over the past few decades. The traditional curriculum, which often emphasizes rote memorization of facts, struggles to keep pace with this growth. As a result, there is a risk that trainees may be overwhelmed by the breadth of information they are expected to master, leading to burnout and a superficial understanding of key concepts. Moreover, the traditional curriculum has been criticized for its lack of emphasis on critical thinking and problem-solving skills. While medical students and residents are often exposed to a vast array of clinical scenarios, the focus on didactic learning and the hierarchical structure of medical training can stifle independent thought and creativity. In a rapidly evolving field like internal medicine, where clinicians must navigate complex patient presentations and integrate new research findings into their practice, these skills are more important than ever. To address these challenges, a redesigned curriculum should prioritize the development of critical thinking and problem-solving abilities. This can be achieved through the incorporation of Case-based Learning (CBL) and Problem-based Learning (PBL) methodologies. These approaches encourage active engagement with the material, allowing trainees to apply their knowledge to real-world clinical scenarios. The growing complexity of patient care requires a collaborative approach that extends beyond the boundaries of internal medicine. To prepare future internists for this reality, the curriculum should place a greater emphasis on Inter-professional Education (IPE). IPE involves training alongside students from other healthcare disciplines, such as nursing, pharmacy, and social work, to develop the skills necessary for effective teamwork in a multidisciplinary environment. By working together in simulated clinical scenarios and participating in joint educational activities, trainees can learn to appreciate the unique perspectives and contributions of each discipline. This not only enhances their ability to collaborate in the clinical setting but also helps break down the silos that often exist between different specialties [1-4].

CONCLUSION

The redesign of the internal medicine curriculum is not just a response to the challenges of modern healthcare but an opportunity to create a more dynamic, responsive, and effective educational framework. By integrating critical thinking, inter-professional collaboration, and lifelong learning into the curriculum, we can better prepare future internists for the complexities. As educators, it is our responsibility to lead this transformation, ensuring that our trainees are equipped not only with the knowledge they need but also with the skills and attitudes that will enable them to thrive in their careers and provide the highest quality of care to their patients.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Author declares that there are no conflicts of interest.

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