Modular teaching – a pilot study in Timisoara

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Introduction: In order to evaluate the impact of a modular teaching system to be implemented in our university, a pilot study was initiated with the aim to assess whether a modular medical curriculum would fit students’ needs. This poster highlights the results obtained following organisation by the Physiology Department of two summer schools (Allergic Respiratory Syndromes: from Molecule to Therapy, 2012 and Urinary system: Malpighi in 2013) and one integrated modular course (Biosignals-Clinical Applications, 2013).

Methods and Results: The modular courses were designed to ensure both vertical and horizontal integration so that to offer students an integrated view of respiratory allergies, urinary system and clinical applications of biosignals, respectively. A total number of 140 students out of 250 candidates (1st to 5th years of study) were selected based on a letter of intent and an interview. Each modular course comprised both academic lectures and practical applications in relevant clinical settings, while the methods used were: lectures, workshops, problem-based learning and small group discussions. Besides the novelty of learning in a modular way, the students enrolled to the Biosignals-Clinical Applications modular course also benefited of the use of SMART Notebook programme and of the Smart Response PE interactive response system. At the end of each modular course, students’ knowledge was assessed by MCQ, and the modular courses were then evaluated by questionnaires for students. The questionnaires comprised 10 – 14 questions, basically looking to obtain the same information, yet adapted to each modular course. All the questionnaires were analysed per each modular course and the results were subsequently centralised in order to get an insight on students’ views about the modular teaching system.

Conclusions: (1) cooperation and communication between teachers from different disciplines (preclinical and clinical) is required for a comprehensive module without overlapping information; (2) small groups teaching enhances the quality of learning process; (3) close interaction with students enables appropriate feedback for improvement of teaching process adjusted to permanent evolving needs. This way of teaching has the potential to improve the quality of both teaching and learning processes. But the great gain of this particular experience for the students is that they are now able to compare the modular against the traditional education. Acknowledgement: The courses were supported by the POSDRU /86/1.2/S/63815 project.