

BACKGROUND

Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) are student-facilitated small groups that aim to help improve students' performance during the first year of medical school. PASS groups consist of one or two M1 facilitators and three to five M1 participants. There are PASS groups for each M1 course that meet weekly. After conducting a needs analysis, we found that formal facilitator training was lacking and needed. We developed a medical education research study to address this gap.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

A study was conducted last spring in which Brody PASS facilitators were asked to attend monthly training sessions and both facilitators' and participants' perceptions of PASS were assessed throughout the block. Due to inconsistent participation by both facilitators and participants, there was difficulty in quantifying students' and facilitators' perceptions.

Lessons learned:

In order for there to be measurable outcomes from Brody PASS, student participation in small groups cannot vary, and students must attend only one PASS group. Facilitator training sessions must be mandatory for all facilitators in order to assess the impact of training on the effectiveness of Brody PASS. In order to better accommodate for facilitators' busy schedules, PASS training should be condensed into one extended session.

RATIONALE/IMPROVEMENTS ON PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The current study seeks to expand upon the previous study by addressing its limitations and improving the study design. In order to improve facilitator participation in the study, one extended training session will be held at the start of the block instead of having monthly training sessions throughout the block. A facilitator training manual will be developed as an additional resource for facilitators. Students will be required to attend the training session if they wish to serve as a PASS facilitator.

Facilitator Training Manual

Table of Contents:

Part 1:

- I. Introduction: What is PASS?
- II. Examples of PASS Sessions
- III. Writing Goals and Objectives
- IV. Managing Time
- V. Asking Good Questions

Part II:

- I. Learning Styles
- II. Study Strategies
- III. Difficult Situations
 - Take home points from standardized classroom
- IV. Frequently Asked Questions
- V. Contacts/Resources



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METHODS/DESCRIPTION

- Participants will be first year medical students who are selected to be facilitators for Brody PASS. Facilitators are nominated by faculty based on academic success and interest. A mandatory training session will be held for facilitators before they begin their PASS sessions. Facilitators will be provided with a training manual to use during the session that will also contain information for them to reference later.
- During the first half of the training session, students will learn:
 - How to make objectives
 - How to manage time
 - How to ask effective questions
- Students will be able to apply these concepts by planning their first PASS session.
- During the second half of the session, facilitators will participate in a "standardized classroom" scenario, in which second year medical students will act as participants in a simulated PASS session. Each standardized student will be trained to portray a difficult student in the simulated classroom. Facilitators will be instructed to teach a topic to a small group of students while dealing with any problems that arise.
- Facilitators and standardized students will be debriefed at the end of the session.
- Data collection will consist of pre- and post-training surveys that will ask facilitators to rate how confident they feel in their ability to lead an effective PASS session.

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