Teaching Clinical Skills

Learning objectives

• Develop effective strategies for teaching clinical skills including:
  – Understand the steps of skills development.
  – Introduce and demonstrate a skill.
  – Facilitate skills practice and give feedback.
  – Assess learners’ competency
Effective development of skills

• Introduce and demonstrate the skill.
• Observe students practicing the skill.
• Provide feedback.
• Assess students’ competency.
Skill development

• Skill acquisition: Knows how skill should be performed, but does not always perform it correctly.

• Skill competency: Performs skill correctly, but may not be efficient.

• Skill proficiency: Consistently performs skill correctly and efficiently. Most students attain this step after using the skill in practice.
Steps for developing skills

Skill Acquisition and Competency

Assessment of Students’ Competency

Students’ Practice with
Feedback

Introduction and Demonstration

Simulated or Real Environment

Preparation

• Chose teaching methods that will be effective
  – Simulation (airway management)
  – Role-playing (teaching with patients)
  – Real patients (triage)

• Use as realistic a setting as possible.

• Make sure that you have all of the equipment and supplies that you need and that they are functional.
Introduce the skill

What are the objectives of the demonstration?

• What is the skill?
• Why do you perform it?
• When do you use it?
• Identify the steps involved in performing the skill.
Demonstrate the skill

• Demonstrate the skill correctly (including use of equipment and materials), according to a standard.
• Ask questions during the demonstration.
• Discuss and review after the demonstration.
Skill demonstration:
“Whole-part-whole” approach

• Begin by demonstrating the whole skill.
• Then demonstrate the steps.
• Finish by demonstrating the whole skill.
Practice

• Review and discuss the steps of the skill.
• Make sure that there is plenty of time for students to practice.
• Interact with students as they practice.
Provide feedback

• Avoid embarrassing the student.
• Use facial expression and tone of voice to provide positive reinforcement.
• Ask students how they think that they did.
• Tell students what they did well and how they can improve.
Active listening

• Helps to stimulate discussion and establish rapport.

• Techniques
  – Stop talking and listen to the student.
  – Restate the student’s exact words.
  – Paraphrase what the student said.
  – Identify and reflect the student’s feelings.
Questioning

• Closed versus open questions
  – Closed questions have a small range of correct answers. Use to assess specific, factual knowledge.
  – Open questions permit the student to describe the answer to the question in her own words. Use to assess additional knowledge points or depth of knowledge.
Effective feedback

• Immediate: at the time that the student is performing the skill.
• Specific: what did the student do correctly?
• Constructive: how to improve performance.
• Non-judgemental: do not criticize.
Assessment of competency

• Observe performance directly, whenever possible.
• Use measures that are realistic and relevant to the student’s clinical practice.
• Set goals for additional practice, if necessary.
Summary

- Steps for skill development
- Preparation
- Demonstration
- Practice
- Feedback
- Assessment