Embedding trials in evidence-based clinical practice
Oude Rengerink, K.

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CHAPTER 7

WHO TEACHES THE EVIDENCE-BASED MEDICINE TEACHER?

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

K. Oude Rengerink, K.S. Khan, A.R. Horvath, B. Meyerrose, J. Walczak, K. Suter, B.W. Mol, for EU EBM Unity

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Dear Sir,

There has been recognition of the need to train clinicians in the methods of Evidence-based Medicine (EBM). There is considerable variation in the methods of teaching EBM in clinical settings, very often left to the initiative of enthusiastic individuals. Teach the teacher (TTT) EBM courses might help to improve teaching quality and set a standard for EBM teaching.

We determined the availability and content of TTT EBM courses. A questionnaire developed by the EU EBM partnership\(^1\) was sent to medical institutions potentially offering TTT EBM courses in the United Kingdom, Germany, Hungary, Poland and the Netherlands. The country specific infrastructure and existing networks were used to reach out to target organizations between August 2008 and March 2009. We encouraged recipients to forward the questionnaire if not addressed correctly. All courses of which the organisers stated to be a TTT EBM course were included.

We identified 16 courses out of 114 responses (multiple responses per institution): four in Hungary, four in the Netherlands, four in the United Kingdom and four in Germany. The courses mainly targeted academic specialists or medical practitioners and were taught by academic specialists (N=15) and/or methodologists/statisticians (N=11). Twelve courses regarded teaching the various steps of EBM; seven regarded teaching integration of EBM into daily clinical practice. The clinical learning opportunities chosen were (in order of frequency): journal club, ward rounds, outpatient practice, formal clinical meeting and formal assessments. In eight courses, e-learning modules aided teaching. Eleven courses were officially certified or CME-credited, also eleven concluded with a formal assessment.

Course organisers highlighted the need for help providing practical examples on successful techniques for teaching EBM in clinical practice (N=7), help with a curriculum for trainers to train healthcare workers (N=7) and help with funding of TTT courses (N=7).

The low availability of TTT courses in Europe might indicate a need for development of TTT courses that can be used as a reference point for EBM teaching for postgraduate teachers.

REFERENCE