New OSCE's for the New MPharm

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Background: General Pharmaceutical Council standard 10.2.2 requires undergraduate students to show how they 'Instruct patients in the safe and effective use of their medicines and devices' (10.2.2c) and how they 'Communicate with patients about their prescribed treatment' (10.2.2g) with regard to the supply of both prescribed and over the counter medication.¹ With these standards in mind a new third year module was developed, building on a previous OTC module and introducing more stations to assess a broader range of competencies.

Description of Work: The OSCE consisted of three stations covering minor ailment consultations, OTC advice on smoking cessation, malaria prophylaxis and Emergency Hormonal Contraception (EHC) and an oral examination on complimentary therapies. In previous years students had only undertaken one minor ailment station. Trained simulated patients were used for all stations requiring patient interaction. Although patients were invited to give feedback on student performance they were ultimately assessed by a qualified pharmacist who had been observing. Particular care was taken to integrate this module to others. Minor ailments covered were ordered to follow the order that the systems of the body were taught elsewhere.

Evaluation: The unit will be evaluated by students, staff and representatives of employers. Student evaluation of this module has been positive (overall module score of 4.29 out of 5, school average 4.02). The students particularly liked the relevance of this module to practice, and appreciated the improvement it made to their communication skills. Staff evaluation of the module identified the need to recognise and reward students who demonstrate a patient centred approach. A summary of the scenarios and the competencies assessed will be presented to an External Advisory Board of pharmacy employers to ascertain relevance to practice.

References

1. GPhC. Standards for the Initial Education and Training of Pharmacists. May 2011. Available from:
http://www.pharmacyregulation.org/sites/default/files/GPhC_Future_Pharmacists.pdf