A Patient-centred Approach to the Teaching of Pharmacology; Small Group Sessions at one UK School of Pharmacy

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Background: At the Leicester School of Pharmacy we have adopted a novel, patient-centred approach to the teaching of pharmacology, integrated with pharmacy practice. Clinical topics, introduced in lectures, are explored further in small group sessions (SGS) where students complete a workbook in which they are introduced to a fictional patient, suffering from a related health issue. A background story is given linking together related workbooks, encouraging students to engage with the characters as they follow their story.

Description of work: In the workbooks, students are presented with details of the patient's lifestyle together with relevant medical information. As the story unfolds, questions are posed which are designed to test the student's understanding of the underlying physiological processes and mechanisms of drug action. In addition, practice-related questions such as drug side effects and contra-indications are explored, whilst the focus remains fully on the patient in question. Students, working together in groups of up to 6, are encouraged to critically evaluate, and comment on, the treatment received. Reference is also made where applicable, to guidelines and technological appraisals from the National Institute of Clinical Excellence. The storyline is developed in further SGS with related individuals requiring treatment for different ailments, encouraging students to connect with the characters, and to regard them as real individuals.

These sessions are staffed by members of both pharmacology and pharmacy practice teams and form an integral part of pharmacology-based modules in years 1-3 of the programme. They begin with a formative assessment composed of MCQs.

This approach to patient-centred teaching of pharmacology was developed alongside the textbook, *Pharmacology for Pharmacy and the Health Sciences*, Boarder, Newby and Navti (Oxford University Press). With its enclosed workbooks and additional online resources this book perfectly complements our teaching method.

Proposed evaluation: To review comments and feedback obtained over the past 8 years, since the introduction of this teaching method.