Comparison of an online versus face-to-face Resident as Teacher program: Strengths and weaknesses of each approach

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Purpose: Resident as Teacher (RAT) programs have been widely accepted as a mechanism to meet ACGME/LCME standards while preparing residents for their role as educator. While face-to-face (F2F) RAT programs have been studied, there is little information about e-learning models of such programs. With limited didactic time and busy clinical schedules, e-learning formats may emerge as the preferred format. Based on a survey distributed to residents who participated in either format, this pilot study describes the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Methods: The authors developed an online RAT module and corresponding F2F session. After administering both formats, residents were asked to complete an evaluation survey. 10 residents from the F2F session and 16 from the online platform completed the survey. Items from cohorts were averaged and paired for a descriptive analysis.

Results: For most survey items, the F2F format elicited a more positive response from participants. For each item presented, positive responses (include strongly agree and agree) are indicated for F2F (listed first) versus online (listed second): Learning activities enhanced your learning (70%/57%); Content was delivered at an appropriate pace (100%/87%); Worthwhile for the time invested (90%/81%); Useful for your role as a clinical educator (90%/75%); Likelihood that you will apply to your clinical teaching (100%/56%).

Discussion/Conclusions: While the sample size limits the ability to draw significant conclusions from the data, there are trends that may be of interest to institutions considering online versus F2F programs. F2F experiences appear to enhance learning because there are opportunities for discussion/reflection and flexibility with content based on resident input. While discussions can occur in an online format, there must be program buy-in to incorporate this feature. Most notably, F2F provides the opportunity to practice with peers, likely producing a feeling that the concepts can be applied to the residents’ clinical teaching.

References

Level of Audience: Early-career

Focus of Presentation: UME, GME

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