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An Online Learning Environment for Interdisciplinary Pediatric Emergency Care Practitioners

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ABSTRACT

Access to, and integration of, timely, relevant, and evidence-based information at the point of care is challenging for health care professionals in an emergency department (ED). Disparities are also apparent among practitioners in isolated or rural practice settings versus those in acute, tertiary care facilities. The busy and unpredictable nature of an ED does not readily provide an optimal environment for learning or knowledge sharing related to care issues other than those immediately at hand. Instructional and informational technologies provide an alternative to the traditional face-to-face interactions ameliorating issues of practice location, accessibility, and convenience.

An interdisciplinary, pediatric emergency care, online learning environment was developed to support learning and knowledge sharing amongst rural and urban emergency health care professionals in Nova Scotia. An online needs assessment was used to inform the content for the learning environment. Learning modules developed by content experts and an electronic discussion board were used to facilitate the learning and knowledge sharing process. Descriptive analysis of participation rates, content analysis of transcripts from asynchronous dialogue, and comparison of pre/post test scores will be conducted to evaluate effectiveness of the learning environment. This paper will present preliminary results of data analysis.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Janet Curran is a Clinical Researcher at the IWK Health Centre. She is a PhD candidate in Interdisciplinary Studies at Dalhousie University and is the recipient of a CIHR Child Health Clinician Scientist Training Award. Janet teaches Health Informatics in the School of Nursing at Dalhousie University and her research is focused on the development of a knowledge translation model for rural and urban Emergency Practitioners.

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Andrea Murphy is an Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University, School of Nursing and a post-doctoral research fellow in Drug Use Management and Policy with Dr. Ingrid Sketris at the College of Pharmacy. Andrea teaches pharmacotherapeutics to nurse practitioners and undergraduate nursing students. Her research program involves pharmacoepidemiology,

drug policy, and technology resources used by practitioners for accessing drug and therapeutic information at the point of care.