

Evaluation in continuing education

The new FDI (World Dental Federation) code of professional ethics specifies that the dental surgeon has the duty to maintain and enhance the knowledge, specifically participation in continuing education (C.E) activities.

For its part, the ERO.WG (European Regional Organization Working Group) of education specifies that if the dispensing of the science makes benefits available to those who enforce it, it requires qualities of devotion and altruism and must not be an occasion for commercialism and profit.^{1, 2}

Finally, it is admitted that there cannot be any notion of obligation to continuing education without an associated notion of quality of the instruction and transparency of the organization.

It is in this spirit, by no means coercive, but respectful of ethics, that the different National Dental Associations (NDAs) had accepted principles concerning continuing education events.⁷

Control of the events

Events of a scientific nature meant for the information or the permanent education of dentists are under the total and exclusive control and responsibility of the continuing education authorities.

The scientific responsibility

Organizers of scientific events, conferences, seminars, conventions maintain total independence, specifically they have the choice of speakers and themes particularly in relation to any commercial company which may be associated with these events.

The scientific sessions

The principle maintained for labeling sessions as scientific is that the dispensing of knowledge will be done in an objective, honest, public and independent way, as cited in the Ethic Code. The quality of the event must be subject to evaluation.

The speakers

Speakers on the subject of clinical aspects of dental surgery are practitioners. Their titles must be clearly stated. It is under their sole responsibility that non medical speakers

Fig. 1

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Evaluation Test

Location:
Date:
Course title:

Before the Lecture :

A: Why are you're here ?
1- Because the Lecturer :
2- Because the subject :
3- Because the accreditation.

B: What are the main points you wish to be developed
1- Basic knowledge; concerning : 1=..... 2=..... 3
2- Clinical procedures ; concerning : 1=..... 2=..... 3
3- Laboratory ; concerning : 1=..... 2=..... 3

After the Lecture
Evaluation on a Scale from 1 to 5

A : Program Content
1- The content was relevant and met my expectations : 1-----5
2- The information was right and well presented : 1-----5
3- I can apply what I learned immediately : 1-----5

B: the Lecturer
1- The Lecturer was well prepared : 1-----5
2- The Lecturer answered the questions effectively : 1-----5
3- The Lecturer was able to transmit the knowledge easily : 1-----5

The Georgian experience
Prof. V Margvelashvili, Prof. Alex Mersel

Fig. 2

		Before the Lecture Motivation	The Topic	The Accreditation
2010	Batumi	23 %	72 %	5 %
2011	Tbilisi	11 %	87 %	2 %
2012	Tbilisi	64 %	77 %	1 %

Evaluation in Cont Education Questionnaire Management

may be called upon for technical questions relevant to the competence of dental surgeons.

Speakers who collaborate with commercial companies must make known their links to these companies. They may only participate at public discussion sessions, on themes which are normally treated there, at scientific events which are held in accord with this charter.

The evaluation

One of the main issues is a valuable evaluation of the quality of the education. Without a correct evaluation method the value of the education is hard to control.

This control could be realized in two directions, evaluation of the speaker and the feedback from the dentists. The use of a questionnaire provided to the practitioner is a frequent form evaluation used in the CE programs. This is in order to control the efficacy of the courses and their relevance.

Nevertheless in a survey realized on the ERO dental Associations an evaluation was performed only in 10 countries (27 %).³ There is no standardized evaluation method between the different NDAs. If we have to suggest an evaluation system should it be used prior the course, prior and post or only post? And what would be the exact aspects that we wish to evaluate? Finally the transmission and the upgrade of the knowledge and the skills of the dentist is a major target on the CE activities. And in this concern the evaluation of these activities is an important issue.^{4, 5}

Materials and methods

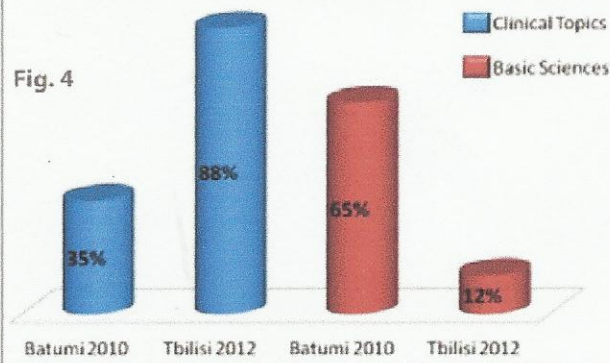
In order to evaluate the effect of a new approach for the evaluation of CE courses a new questionnaire was drafted.⁶ This new approach involves a pre-course questionnaire which is mandatory to fulfill PRIOR to the Lecture and includes the questions like: the reason you are participating in this course -lecturer, topic, accreditation. Fig 1.

After the course and before the questions and answers, the participants were asked to fill in the questions dealing with the program content, quality of the lecturer, handouts,

Evaluation after the lecture : Satisfaction Fig. 3

	Presentation	Application	Question Answers	Facilities
2010 Batumi	39 %	60 %	68 %	51 %
2011 Tbilisi	59 %	36 %	52 %	68 %
2012 Tbilisi	77 %	65 %	67 %	78 %

Dentists' Expectations for the Lecture Topic



visual aids and training venue. In addition, the free space provided is meant for the written comments regarding an over-all satisfaction.

The study was aimed at assessing two main points issues: expectations—what are the main points the dentist wishes to acquire in the C.E course and what one sees as the main topic that he would like the lecturer to put emphasis on.

With the close collaboration of the Georgian Stomatological Association (GSA) a survey was conducted during the National Congresses days in: Batumi 2010, Tbilisi 2011, and Tbilisi 2012.

The same lecturer presented on the topic of removable prosthodontics. The number of questionnaires present on the table when the dentist attended the conference room was 60. In Batumi only 35 complete answers were registered, in Tbilisi 2011 and in Tbilisi 2012. 42 answers.

Results

Significant changes in the motivation and the satisfaction of the participants was noted. Fig 2 , 3 . The index for motivation regarding the lecturer registered in Batumi 2010 was increased from 23% to 64% while the accreditation was decreased from 5% to 1% in Tbilisi 2012.

The Batumi 2010 indicator of satisfaction for the presentation was also increased from 39% to 77% when compared to Tbilisi 2012. Increased trend was recorded when the satisfaction about the facilities was assessed; Only 51% in Batumi 2010 68% in Tbilisi 2011 and finally 78% in Tbilisi 2012. No significant differences were noted concerning the appreciation of the topics or the Q&A issue .

Discussion:

This longitudinal pilot study realized within the ERO-FDI C.E program demonstrates the need of a correct evaluation system. A campaign of explanation was necessary to obtain a better communication between the lecturer and the dentists.

The lecturer must be informed in advance of the importance and the way of presentation of the questionnaire. In the same manner the dentist before starting the lecture should become instructed by a proper explanation about the need of a relevant feed-back in order to develop an efficient C.E. C.E is not a static transmission of knowledge or skill. It is a duty of improving a dynamic interaction. In this way, we will be able to reach a real C.E Development.

Conclusion

The present pilot study highlighted the importance of a liable evaluation tool. Without this there is no proper way for evaluating the transmission of key knowledge to the practitioner. This is also the right way to have an opinion of what the dentist is requiring on basic or clinical issues. Finally the authorities in charge of the program should be informed on the quality of the lecturers. DA

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