

Title: Evaluation of Dental Students Clinical Performance

Presented by: Tofool Alghanem

Authors: Tofool Alghanem, Department of Public Health and Community Service, School of Dental Medicine, Tufts University; Angel Park and Jennifer Bassett Midle, Department of Academic Services, School of Dental Medicine, Tufts University; Paul C. Stark, Office of Advanced and Graduate Education, School of Dental Medicine, Tufts University

Abstract:

Purpose: School of Dental Medicine, Tufts University (TUSDM) uses a discipline-specific evaluation system to promote students through academic years and to make decisions for graduation. This system relies on "points" that students obtain by performing clinical procedures. This system might make students favor performing procedures that yield the highest possible points rather than promoting patient-centered care.

In this study we aimed to describe students' clinical performance based on the points they accumulated during their clinical work.

Methods: We conducted a retrospective cross-sectional study comprised of extraction of students' clinical records for the students enrolled in the classes of 2011-2013. Using the electronic health records (axiUm), a de-identified list was created of all students and the assigned patients, and all the procedures that were performed by the students during the students' tenure in the clinics.

To assess performance, we evaluated the average number of patients treated by students and the average number of students each patient saw, and we assessed the breakdown of procedures performed across the 9 disciplines (diagnosis, prevention, restorative, removable prosthodontics, fixed prosthodontics, implant, endodontics, periodontics, and adjunct dental procedures) at the school.

Results: Five hundred and twenty-six students treated a total of 21,776 patients during the study period. The median number of patients treated by any given student was 59, IQR=(53,66). Ninety percent of patients had their treatment performed by two or fewer students, while the remaining had between three and eight student dentists.

A total of 197,086 procedures were conducted at the school over 9 disciplines. Diagnostic procedures were the most commonly performed (36.6%), followed by periodontal procedures (19.4%), while the least common was endodontic procedures (1%).

Conclusion: This study found that the majority of patients were seen by one or two providers. In addition, more than half of the required points were earned by diagnostic and periodontal procedures. Further studies are needed to better understand trends in patient care.