

**Title:**

Strategies to improve undergraduate education in Trauma and Orthopaedics: The student perspective

**Background:**

Deficiency in the undergraduate Trauma and Orthopaedics (T&O) education and training is well recognised. Previous studies have shown that a significant proportion of medical graduates feel inadequately prepared to manage T&O patients in their future clinical practice. This study aimed to explore students' views on how to improve the quality of undergraduate T&O education.

**Methods:**

A census of 204 final-year students from 8 UK medical schools was conducted using an online questionnaire. Students were invited to rank the strength of 5 recommendations on a 3-point Likert scale; "extremely effective", "moderately effective", and "not effective".

**Results:**

54.4% felt that the introduction of a nationally validated online T&O resource would be "extremely effective" ("moderately effective"=31%, "not effective"=15%). 35% stated that a focused 1-2 days course during the final-year of medical school would be "extremely effective" ("moderately effective"=50%, "not effective"=15%). Increasing the frequency of formative assessments in T&O was deemed as "extremely effective" by 36%, "moderately effective" by 45%, and "not effective" by 19%. Increasing the provision of didactic lecture-based teaching ("extremely effective"=25%, "moderately effective"=54%, "not effective"=21%) and prolonging the duration of the undergraduate T&O rotations ("extremely effective"=12%, "moderately effective"=58%, "not effective"=30%) were perceived to have the least educational value by the students.

**Conclusion:**

In the past, there has been a significant emphasis on increasing the length of undergraduate rotations to help improve students' knowledge and competence in T&O. Interestingly, this study shows that this opinion is not shared by many medical students. Although there is no substitute for clinical experience, e-learning can be utilised to foster self-directed learning, which allows greater flexibility over content and pace. Medical educators should engage with e-learning to devise innovative approaches to train students in T&O.

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