

CREATION, IMPLEMENTATION, AND EVALUATION OF A FPA SIMULATOR CE PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION: Family practice anaesthetists (FPAs) are essential to health care delivery in Canada, but have an average practice lifespan of approximately 5 years¹, in part due to an isolated environment and lack of specific CME programs. A national collaborative effort has attempted to address this deficiency.

METHODS

Creation: in November 2001 representatives from (at the time) all 8 high fidelity patient simulation centres attended a national meeting where learning objectives, administration and financing of a national CME program for FPAs were discussed. Subsequently, a needs assessment was performed using focus groups and trial courses for 16 participants. Specific scenarios were developed and tested. Startup funding came from, Health Canada, Alberta Rural Physician Action Plan, and University of Alberta.

Implementation: Brochures were printed and widely distributed by mail and at regional meetings. Invitation and information letters were sent to administration at every rural hospital in Canada. Two sites were initially chosen (Edmonton/Toronto) due to geographical and logistic considerations. Teleconferences and e-mail were used to continue and complete the implementation arrangements.

Evaluation: Three methods of evaluation were used. Participants complete evaluations at the end of the course. A second evaluation is completed 3 months later and CME credits withheld until return of this form. An external review and evaluation of the program were performed by a professional evaluation consultant after 2 years. The cost of this evaluation was included in the initial program budget.

RESULTS

The first courses were held in November 2002. Due to demand a third site (Ottawa) was added in April 2004. There have been 5 courses in Edmonton, 6 in Toronto, and 1 in Ottawa for a total of 54 participants (excluding the focus groups). Evaluations have been consistently very good to excellent. Several changes were made based on the feedback.

DISCUSSION

Federal, provincial, and academic funds were essential for the successful startup of the program. The course is now financially self sufficient based on registration fees of \$ 6 00(CDN). Course evaluations, using repeated and varied measures, are necessary to continuously meet learning objectives and modify course content appropriately.

REFERENCES

1. *Can J Anaesth* 1993; 24: 4