"Flipping the Classroom" for Weekly Teaching Sessions: Create Your Own Low-Cost Website with Learning Resources for Fellows and IDTs (FR469-F)

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Objectives
- Create a comprehensive list of 45 topics pertinent to both adult and pediatric HPM fellowship training, including topics applicable to geriatric fellowship training and interdisciplinary team members to encourage their attendance to small group discussions.
- Develop a website that "flips the classroom" for individual study of content prior to each session, followed by weekly small-group discussion of practical application to patient cases.

Background: Creating a comprehensive set of engaging traditional PowerPoint lectures for a full year of fellowship training is a daunting task for a new program director. In a collaborative effort to combine and improve weekly classroom sessions for two small HPM fellowships (adult and pediatric), we “flipped the classroom” by creating a simple low-cost website to organize background materials for an annual series of 45 weekly small group HPM topic discussions.

Methods: We created a list of 45 HPM topics from 32 lectures in the 2012 AAHPM Board Review Course and chapters from two core related to communication skills and pain management. We created a simple password-protected website using an online service and uploaded background lecture MP3 recordings and PDF articles organized by weekly topic. Each week one HPM faculty member or fellow facilitated group discussion of patient cases related to the background content. Paper handouts were often distributed, but not a single PowerPoint slide was projected during the year.

Results: HPM fellows and faculty rated weekly sessions very highly and strongly encouraged continued use of the “flipped classroom” approach. Both the adult and pediatric fellows said the series was the single strongest teaching component of their fellowship year. They strongly endorsed the value of periodic attendance by geriatrics fellows and IDT members and suggested ways to increase their attendance.

Discussion: A simple website with weekly background content and small-group discussions of 45 core HPM topics were highly rated by both adult and pediatric palliative care fellows and faculty. Now that the website content is established, it is low cost ($18 per month) to maintain and improve in subsequent years.

Conclusion: This approach to classroom teaching is an efficient and engaging way for fellowship programs to organize and present weekly teaching topics and could be easily adapted by interdisciplinary teams for regularly scheduled professional development sessions.