

Doctors' Assistants Training in Simulation (DATiS)

T Galliano, E Hadley, A Kermode, G Picton, M Bossy, H Davies, L Richardson,

Introduction and Aims

Doctors Assistants (DAs) are a new role in several hospitals in Southern England. They work alongside Junior Doctors to support their inpatient work. Their role is predominantly administrative but they can also perform basic clinical skills such as phlebotomy. DAs have a two week induction before starting their role and, unlike Physician Associates, are not required to have university qualifications.

Though embedded in doctors in medical teams, DAs often have only limited previous clinical exposure, the aim of DATiS was to familiarise them with emergency equipment and techniques in a safe environment and empower DAs to provide an appropriate level of assistance in emergencies.

Description

DATiS was attended by all DAs at Royal Surrey County Hospital (RSCH) at our Simulation Suite using a SimMan3G manikin and facilitated by a Junior Doctor.

Building on the Basic Life Support course the DAs had already attended, the session was structured in an ABCD(EFG)H format: Airway, Breathing, Circulation, Disability/Don't-Ever-Forget-Glucose, Handover. This allowed introduction of the uses of all key equipment of the resuscitation trolley, an understanding of what clinical staff may be doing during an emergency, and tasks which DAs may be asked to perform in these situations.

Discussion

DATiS was an opportunity to cement existing learning and fulfil aspects of the new DA curriculum in a high fidelity environment.

Given the novelty of the DA role, DATiS also provided an opportunity to highlight which roles DAs are capable of undertaking in emergency situations as well as what their limitations are, specifically highlighting what is beyond their competency.

DAs who have responded to inpatient peri-arrests have described them as feeling chaotic and felt that they had little to contribute. However, being ward based, they are often well placed to know where items the arrest team might need are (e.g. patient notes, request forms etc). DATiS has helped improve DAs confidence to help participate in emergency situations in a safe manner and feedback for the session was overwhelmingly positive.

DATiS will now be repeated twice per year at RSCH allowing existing DAs to refresh their knowledge and empowering any new DA staff to fully feel able to contribute as part of a team responding to an unwell patient.