

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION AMONG DENTAL STUDENTS. JR Fuchs, (MD, SOM), AM Tannous, G Guiton, and P Kaul, Department of Pediatrics, University of Colorado School of Medicine, Aurora, CO

Racial and ethnic minorities remain underrepresented within the healthcare workforce generally and within the dental profession specifically. Consequentially, professional organizations including the Commission on Dental Accreditation have identified the importance of cultural competency training in dental education. One essential component of providing care for patients of diverse backgrounds is culturally sensitive, patient-centered communication. To address this need, we implemented an interactive, two-hour Cross-Cultural Communication (CCC) educational session for Dental Students (DS). This study describes the intervention and provides data on its effectiveness. Our session employed dyad training, role playing, education about Kleinman's Explanatory Model, and introduced the new "Model for Negotiating Across Cultures" that can be broadly applied to various aspects of patients' culture. Learners included 51 first-year (24) and third-year (27) DS. Evaluation compared students' pre-/post-intervention responses to a modified Health Belief Attitudes Survey (HBAS), which measured four domains: Opinion, Belief, Context, and Quality. For the first-year students, the mean difference improvement between the pre- and post-intervention surveys for each domain was statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). For the third-year students, there was a similar result as compared to the first-year students with the exception for the domain of Quality ($p = 0.083$). The educational paradigm used in this study fills a curricular gap in effectively teaching CCC among DS. Moreover, the intervention can be applied across health professions education. Limitations include that the study did not explore the long-term retention of knowledge or performance of CCC in the clinical settings.