

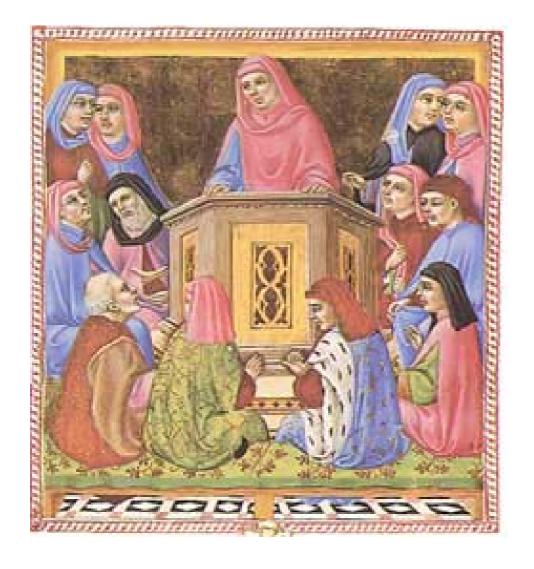


Teaching Evidence-Based Medicine skills in an unsupporting environment: the slow pace of the University of Siena towards EBM

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University of Siena

Established: 1240

Students 20,000 Teachers 900

School of Medicine 3000 Teachers 300 Graduate Students 1000

Frequency = 100/120 per year

Strong expectancy of tradition by students and teachers

EBM-specific Core Curriculum



- . University of **Florence**
- Modules: 0 Modules: 3
- Credits 5/185

- . University of Siena
- Credits: 0/158

Unlike the nearby University of Florence, Siena doesn't offer EBM in the core curriculum (Battle of Monteaperti between Siena and Florence, 1260)

Opportunity: Offering an Optional Course

- Evidence-Based Medicine in Respiratory Medicine
- Small Group(s)
- Required:
 - Basic clinical background
 - Be able to read English
- Not required: Computer literacy
- 5-6 sessions of about 2-3 hours (~15 hrs)

Main Teaching Resources

- Practicing Evidence-Based Medicine 3rd ed. Radcliffe Med 1998
- GIMBE web site, www.gimbe.it
- .Cochrane Library
- ·Inforetriever trial ed (infopoems.com)

5 Editions to date (1998-2003)



Topics

- .What is and what isn't
- .Answerable Questions
- .Sources of Evidence
- .Getting Evidence
- .Evaluating Evidence
 - Diagnosis (LR)
 - .Treatment (NNT)
- .Applying Evidence

Optional Activities 1998-2002

- Evidence-Based Medicine
- Teacher: P. Sestini
- Credits: 2.0
- Small Groups
- Students: 4-10

- Tobacco smoke: health effects and role of health caregivers
- Teacher: P. Sestini
- Credits: 1.5
- Interactive seminars
- Students: 75-50 (>50% of the class)

Two courses, same teacher, quite different attendance!

Barriers

- Computer literacy (improving with time)
- English Language (poor teaching in high school)
- Resources/Facilities (improving)
- Math Phobia
- Support from Authorities
- Recognition/Awareness
- Interest/Perceived importance

Future opportunities

- A Problem-Based Learning course based on Small Group Technology started in 2001
 - Over 20 teachers trained as small group tutors
 - A course on identification and retrieval of scientific literature completed by the group in 2003 for all the students of 2nd year
 - This group could be the basis for an EBM module in the future
- Sneaking EBM in a course on the use of palmtop computer in daily clinical practice

Conclusions

- When Evidence Based Medicine is not included in the mainstream courses, students fail to perceive it as relevant to their medical education.
- Even then, opportunities may be found to offer teaching and to train small groups of rewardingly enthusiastic students
- Pressure from the outside, particularly from the healtcare system, may improve the perception of the relevance of EBHC by students and academy
- Even in difficult conditions, teaching EBM is still fun!