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Multi centre study from Malaysia on student preparedness for clinical learning: Perspectives of lecturers and students from medicine, pharmacy and allied health sciences

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Objectives: To determine the characteristics important in health profession students' preparedness for clinical learning from the perspectives of lecturers and students

Methods: A descriptive cross sectional study was conducted at International Medical University, Perdana University and Monash University in Malaysia. All lecturers involved in preparing students for clinical learning in medicine, dentistry, nursing, pharmacy, nutrition and dietetics, chiropractic and Chinese medicine and immediate preclinical students were invited. We explored views regarding student preparedness on knowledge and understanding, willingness to learn, professionalism, communication and interaction, personal attributes and interpersonal skills rated on a 7 point Likert scale in a questionnaire with 62 items.

Results: A total of 187 lecturers and 317 students participated. Fifty percent of lecturers had 5-9year of experience. Neither the lecturers nor the students had differentiated or identified specific characteristics as more important over the others but rated all 62 items as important (score >5) for training. The mean score of the 6 themes for lecturers and students respectively were for knowledge and understanding (5.44,5.09), willingness (5.95,5.51), professionalism (5.89,5.49), communication and interaction (5.54,5.34), personal attributes (5.54,5.35) and interpersonal skills (5.54,5.38). Interesting suggestions such as promotion of inter-professional learning among student from different disciplines, case discussions as a team with other professional categories, self reflection for lecturers regarding their attitudes towards students and teaching methods had been stated by students.

Conclusions: Both lecturers and students deem that the knowledge and understanding is not the most important characteristic that makes a student better prepared for clinical learning.