Developing Standards for Dental Educators

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The UK Committee of Postgraduate Dental Deans and Directors (COPDEND) has a key part in co-ordinating postgraduate dental education and training, and aims to promote and share best practice.

Aim
To report how the COPDEND Standards for Dental Educators were developed and to provide an outline of their content.

Materials & Methods
1. The COPDEND Guidelines for Dental Educators were used as a starting point.
2. Information about current training for dental educators was gained from an online questionnaire (completed by over 400 dental educators and providers of training for educators) and discussions with all Postgraduate Dental Deans/Directors or their representatives.
3. Draft standards were extensively discussed by the Advisory Group, led by the COPDEND Chair.
4. During a 10 week consultation period, 83 responses were received from individuals and organisations. Revisions were made and the final standards document was launched in May 2013.

Results
The standards are divided into the Core Values and five Domains:
1. Teaching and Learning;
2. Assessing the Learner;
3. Guidance for Personal and Professional Development (PPD);
4. Quality Assurance;
5. Management.

Within each Domain, the Core Knowledge required of all dental educators is set out.

Beyond the Core Values and Core Domain specific knowledge, the standards are arranged into two levels

Main messages
Patient care is improved through the maintenance of high professional standards.

High quality education and training relies upon excellent educators.

Standards for Dental Educators provides a framework which supports the continuous improvement of dental educators.

Core Values: The dental educator is committed to:

Not all standards are relevant to all educators

- should reflect educator’s role.

Broadly - dental educators (L1) and the strategic leaders and managers of dental education (L2).

Core Values and Core Knowledge for all.

Conclusions
• Standards clarify the expectations of multi-professional educators and offer:
  • Greater recognition of the role,
  • Greater consistency for learners,
  • Shape the educational content for educators of dental teams.

• Standards can assist aspiring dental educators to better understand:
  • What they need to learn,
  • What competences they should acquire, and
  • Demonstrate to progress their own careers.

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COPDEND ‘Standards for Dental Educators’ is available from www.copdend.org