Attitudes of Medical Students and Teachers towards Education in Community-oriented Medical Education (COME) Centre, Zanjan University of Medical Sciences 2004

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Background: Practical training of medical students is not limited to only hospitals. Outpatient departments and ambulatory care centers attending a greater number of patients can provide students with more exposure to a variety of medical cases. Moreover, community-oriented medical education centre, where more patients come for consultation is a suitable centre for training medical students. Although awareness toward the importance of community-oriented medical education is increasing, and medical faculties have already adopted this approach for their training, this idea does not appear to be accepted fully in all of schools.

Objective: To find the attitude of Zanjan Medical students and teachers towards education and facilities in COME centre in 2004-2005.

Methods: In this descriptive study two separate questionnaires for teachers and students were designed to assess their attitudes towards the method of education, number of patients, situation of centre and the quality of education in the Community-oriented Medical Education centers. The questionnaires were filled out by 136 interns and externs' who had been trained in COME centre and 14 teachers in Zanjan Medical University. Validity of questionnaires had been confirmed and internal consistency reliability had been determined by Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.79).

Results: In whole, 66.9% of the students and 53.8% of the teachers were interested in attending COME program and most of them believed that COME is necessary for medical education. The percentage of interns who agreed with this center was more than externs. In regard to the teachers’ educational method the highest satisfaction rate (83.2%) was obtained for teachers in the pediatrics ward (p=0.0005). In regard to the number and variety of patients, pediatrics ward (with respectively 71.7% and 65.6%) was the best and internal ward (with respectively 20.7% and 21.5%) was the worst ward according to the students. The overall satisfaction rate was 51.9±12.5 in students and interns had a more positive attitude comparing to others.

Discussion: It seems that using more experienced teachers, continuous supervision and evaluation of educational activities, establishing proper research facilities and financial support of COME centers are necessary for improving community-oriented medical education.

Key words: Community-Oriented Medical Education (COME), Attitude, Student, Teacher

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