

Secondary School Athletic Training Facility Scavenger Hunt

Orientation

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this case study is to explain an educational game that was utilized as part of an orientation component with Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) accredited professional phase athletic training students. The students were guided through a scavenger hunt in 3 phases to help locate items within the athletic training facility and then analyze the item's function and non-traditional usages. In Phase 1 the students were asked to search throughout the athletic training facility and fostered engage in dialogue regarding unknown items. The preceptor asked the students to retrieve random items during Phase 2. During Phase 3 the preceptor found random items and asked the students to think of traditional and non-traditional uses for the chosen item. This activity utilized the educational theory of Bloom's Taxonomy to introduce knowledge of athletic training supplies and equipment, and help students implement that knowledge into future clinical practice. Additionally, medical education literature has shown that games engage learners by increasing interest, retention, and stimulates students into higher levels of thinking.

Key Phrases

Orientation, observation experiences

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INTRODUCTION

Professional athletic training students (ATs) in Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE) accredited athletic training programs (ATPs) are required to engage in clinical education experiences at various sites throughout the curriculum. Many ATs begin clinical rotations at secondary schools and are unaware that often times secondary school athletic trainers are forced to be more resourceful than their collegiate counterparts due to decreased budgets and staffing ratios.¹ Since many secondary school athletic training facilities are smaller than their collegiate counterparts, organization skills and knowing where items are located is essential for students.² Due to these differences, ATs assigned to the secondary school must hone in on their organization and resourcefulness skills from day one. As a result, the training activity described in this paper was done on one of the first days ATs began a rotation at the secondary school level during the professional phase.

ATHLETIC TRAINING STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The activity was performed with 1-2 CAATE accredited professional phase ATs in their first secondary school clinical rotation.

PRECEPTOR CHARACTERISTICS

The preceptor practiced at a local secondary school in a large suburban school district. The preceptor has been an athletic trainer for 4 years and has been a preceptor for 2 ½ of those 4 years. The preceptor has been through a formal graduate level class on educating athletic trainers and attended numerous preceptor workshops over the previous 3 years. There are 2 other

athletic trainers, 1 part time, 1 full time, who interacted with the ATSs on a semi-regular basis.

EXPERIENCE

As an orientation to the secondary school setting, the ATSs took part in a scavenger hunt that has been designed in three phases. In Phase 1 the ATSs were asked to explore and rummage through closets, cabinets, drawers, and kits to discover the location of all items in the clinic. If they did not know the item or its function, they were supposed to ask a preceptor for explanation. Once the students completed Phase 1 by searching through the entire athletic training room, Phase 2 was introduced gradually when the preceptors start asking students to find random items from around the clinic. Phase 3 usually occurred once ATSs were familiar with all items. In this phase the preceptors pulled various items and asked the ATSs if they could think of 3-5 non-traditional functions for that item as it related to athletic training clinical practice.

The objective of Phase 1 was to familiarize the ATSs with all supplies and items located in the athletic training facility and to spark conversations about the function of the items. The obvious benefit to this is that in an urgent situation (i.e. needing an epinephrine injector in the gymnasium for a patient experiencing anaphylactic shock) the ATS is familiar with the location of the item. An additional benefit is that the athletic trainer had an opportunity to plan for future educational discussions based on what items the ATS was familiar and unfamiliar with. For example, if the ATS asked questions about modalities, the preceptor could spend some time discussing modalities in greater detail. Questions that sparked further dialog were often about unique non-traditional items such as, “Why is there a can of dusting spray in the rehab area?” (correct answer: to help decrease the friction of the slideboard), or “Why are there two tongue depressors taped together in the football equipment removal kit?” (correct answer: to remove cheek pads from a football helmet in a cervical spine emergency). However, there have also been questions posed about therapeutic modality and rehabilitation equipment that was not seen at previous observations such as, “How do you use the Vibracussor?” or, “What type of rehabilitation is a BAPS board used for?”

The objective of Phase 2 was to get students familiar with important items or items that may have been missed. Often times this was used as an informal assessment to make sure students were familiar with the location of emergency and acute care items. For example, making sure that a student knew where nasal sponges were, so that during a situation where a patient presented with an epistaxis, they are able to treat the bleeding before there was significant blood loss.

The objective of Phase 3 was to encourage the ATSs to think outside of the box and help them understand that in the athletic training setting, especially at the secondary school level, athletic trainers must be resourceful and items can serve many purposes. Phase 3 sparked other conversations that led to a chain reaction of tangential learning. The preceptor prompted the ATS by finding a random item, such as baby powder, and asked them to list 3-5 athletic training uses of that item. For example, baby powder can be utilized for reducing friction in a multitude of ways. Often times the ATSs mentioned the most common usages such as treating chaffing or sweat reduction in a shoe or cleat. However, often the students did not think of the additional usages, such as using baby powder to help slide on a neoprene sleeve, or helping a patient put on a wet sock back on over a fresh ankle taping. Additionally, baby powder can be used with deep oscillation therapy (i.e., the HIVAMAT 200 Evident unit),³ and this particular usage created an educational opportunity to learn about deep oscillation therapy on numerous occasions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The overall results of the activity have been positive. The ATSs started out thinking that the task was busy work, yet soon realize that it ignited educational discussions. The execution of this activity worked best when the ATS starts at the clinical site and a period of the day with a low patient-load, to allow an opportunity for open dialog. After the scavenger hunt, there was a short debriefing session among the ATSs to ask for their impressions and ways to make the activity better in the future. There was some competitive nature to the activity as the ATSs competed to be the first to find items, and to come up with more unique answers during the Phase 3 questions.

CLINICAL BOTTOM LINE

When looking at educational research, the scavenger hunt activity aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy, an educational theory explained by Benjamin Bloom in 1956, with each phase of learning building upon the previous phase of learning.⁴ In Bloom's Taxonomy, there are 6 levels (1. knowledge, 2. comprehension, 3. application, 4. analysis, 5. synthesis, 6. evaluation) that students experience during instruction.⁴ When analyzing the scavenger hunt in Phases 1 and 2, the ATS are asked to retrieve knowledge by looking for items and then asked to comprehend that knowledge by posing questions for clarification and explanation from the preceptor.⁴ In Phase 3 the ATSs were asked to apply, analyze, and synthesize their knowledge as they critically thought about the usage of items in clinical practice.⁴ The ultimate goal is that the ATSs will then take what they have learned in the scavenger hunt and put it together with other components of their athletic training education to apply this knowledge to their future clinical practice.⁴ Additionally, by turning this experience into a scavenger hunt the ATSs saw it as a game and were competitive. In medical education games have been indicated to promote interest, increase retention, and stimulate students into higher levels of thinking within Bloom's Taxonomy.^{5,6}

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Athletic training students have stated, "I really enjoyed the scavenger hunt activity that we did at the beginning of the semester. It helped me to feel more comfortable in the [athletic training facility] and was helpful for when I needed to find something quickly. It was a really fun way to get oriented and feel more confident there." Moreover, "The scavenger hunt game in the athletic training [facility] is very beneficial and an engaging game. It helped me learn where everything is in the room in a short amount of time. Knowing where all the equipment and supplies are is very important, so there is no delay or questioning when needed to acquire equipment/supplies."

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