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**Title:** Work–In Progress Report: Development and Implementation of a Cross-disciplinary, Formative, modified Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE)

**Topic area of the submission:** Cross-disciplinary education and Curriculum, Research and Development

**Keywords:** Cross-disciplinary education, Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE), Culture

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**ABSTRACT: Work –In Progress Report: Development and Implementation of an Cross-disciplinary, Formative, modified Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE)**

**Objectives:** The objectives of the modified OSCE are:

1. Develop and implement a competency based learner evaluation tool.
2. Improve competencies in substance abuse detection, intervention and referral by cross-disciplinary generalist health care providers working with a multi-cultural population.
3. Provide an experiential learning opportunity
4. Inform learners about cross-disciplinary teams
5. Illustrate core skills to improve learner cultural sensitivity.

**Methods:** As a Project MAINSTREAM cross-disciplinary fellowship team sponsored by HRSA / AMERSA/SAMHSA-CSAT, the authors have developed and piloted a formative modified OSCE to be conducted in the Schools of Education, Medicine and Social Work. The OSCE developed by the authors is currently five “stations”. Specially prepared actors portray culturally diverse client with a variety of substance use issues. Each station deals with a different learner interviewing competency: screening for substance abuse, detecting and assessing harmful use, intervening with a client with harmful use and referring a patient for more specialized care. Learners are given a brief summary about each case and clearly defined goals for the clinician-client interaction. Under the observation of prepared cross-disciplinary faculty, and within ten minutes, the learner attempts to demonstrate skill in the case - specific competency. Check -lists identifying expected station specific skills and have been developed for the faculty evaluators. After 10 minutes both faculty and the actor provide brief, individualized feedback to the learner. When all learners have completed all stations they meet as a group with the faculty for debriefing. It is during debriefing that broader cultural and clinical issues are discussed from a cross-disciplinary perspective.

**Discussion:** The OSCE was chosen for this education project for several reasons. First, it is ideally suited to competency-based educational goals as it allows learners to practice and refine their skills. The faculty at the Schools of Education (Division of Nursing), Medicine and Social Work are committed to the development of competency -based learner education. Second, it can be easily adapted to learners at different levels and from different fields. Third, it can be used either as a formative or summative evaluation tool. Evidence of learning based on structured faculty observations and pre/post testing provides outcome measures for educational research. Fourth, the use of objective skills-based checklists allows the involvement of generalist faculty who do not have special expertise in the area of substance abuse or with a specific cultural group. The use of five stations is a modification of the standard OSCE format that generally includes 10- 25 stations testing a variety of skills. The involvement of cross-disciplinary faculty is also a modification from the standard OSCE that commonly represents a single professional perspective. Finally, learners in our schools practice in a culturally diverse environment. Students and professionals themselves are part of many cultures. Cultural orientation has been shown to be an important determinant of patterns and presentation of substance use, the operating characteristics of screening tools and client response to treatment. The cultural background of a provider can affect attitudes towards substance using clients and towards treatment. The cultural focus

of the modified OSCE includes professional roles, age and gender issues, and clients of Latino and West Indian ethnicity.

The steps for development of the modified OSCE included extensive cross-disciplinary literature review regarding attitudes and beliefs about substance use and addiction in the West Indian and Latin American cultures. Available literature regarding profession, gender and age as related to substance use was reviewed. The authors also reviewed educational literature on competency - based education, OSCEs, and learning outcome measures. OSCE scripts have been developed for each of the five stations and simulated patients (professional actors) have been trained.

Local key informants have been consulted for validation of OSCE script content and details regarding the actual conduct of the OSCE. The check-lists of critical elements for each of the four competencies (screening, assessment, intervention and referral) was developed according to guidelines provided by the National Institute for on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), Substance Abuse Education for Family Physicians (SAEFP) and World Health Organization (WHO). Learners are evaluated based on skill performance, educational level and the discipline of the learner. Literature review is continuing to explore options in measuring change in self –efficacy in practice with substance use clients. The expertise of the NYU School of Medicine Division of Primary Care, which has experience in developing OSCEs, was utilized. The medical division has a relationship with a pool of actors and has experience with standardizing simulated patients. Instruction manuals for use in the implementation of the OSCEs will be developed. These will include learner-level and discipline specific skill checklists, handouts and faculty guides for debriefing each station. The OSCE has been piloted in the Medical School and School of Education / Division of Nursing. Social Work students are scheduled to participate with nurse practitioner students in the fall 2002 OSCE sessions.

**Expected Learning Outcomes:** A pre/post-test has been used for knowledge acquisition. It is expected that after participation in the modified OSCE the learner will:

1. report improved self-efficacy in clinical skills needed in dealing with persons engaged in substance use.
2. acknowledge that cultural attitudes and beliefs of both clinician and client have an impact on substance use, treatment and outcomes. .
3. apply detection and management strategies of substance use problems consistent with client's cultural background.
4. recognize that cross-disciplinary teams are necessary in dealing with substance use.

An evaluation tool to determine the overall learner satisfaction with the OSCE has also been developed.