The impact of clinical maturity in evidence based medicine: a mixed methods study

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Undergraduate (UG) versus graduate (GRAD) medical student performance. What’s the difference?

Objective
How does the clinical maturity of medical trainees impact upon competency in evidence-based medicine (EBM)?

Methods
Time frame: 2010-2014
Participants: Undergraduate & graduate medical trainees at Monash University
Outcomes: Competency in EBM (measured by the Berlin questionnaire)
Analyses: Student t-test to examine differences between UG and Grad students
Qualitative data: 10 focus groups, with data thematically analysed

Results & Discussion
- Quantitative data on 883 trainees
- Significant difference in EBM competency observed between UG and GRAD students between years 2010-2012
- No difference observed when curriculum redeveloped from didactic to blended learning in 2013-2014

Focus group themes
- Both student groups appreciate the need for EBM in clinical practice
- Blended teaching is the preferred learning style for trainees in EBM
- Case-based assessments link theory with practice

What does this study add?
Clinical maturity, teaching and learning preferences, role modelling, previous clinical and non-clinical training are contributing factors to achieving competency in EBM.