

Characteristics of competency based training programs

Training should build competency and confidence because the trainee knows what level of performance is expected, how knowledge and skills will be evaluated, progression through training is self-paced and that there are opportunities for practice until mastery is achieved. Presently postgraduate programs of Orthodontics in Pakistan are going through a change from a more traditional method to a competency based model. Therefore it is imperative to understand what the change is about and hence the characteristics of competency based training approach are enlisted:

- Competencies are carefully selected.
- Supporting theory is integrated with skill practice. Essential knowledge is learned to support the performance of skills.
- Detailed training materials are keyed to the competencies to be achieved and are designed to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
- Methods of instruction involve mastery learning, the premise that all participants can master the required knowledge or skill, provided sufficient time and appropriate training methods are used.
- Participants' knowledge and skills are assessed as they enter the program and those with satisfactory knowledge and skills may bypass training or competencies already attained.
- Learning should be self-paced.
- Flexible training approaches including large group methods, small group activities and individual study are essential components.
- A variety of support materials including print, audiovisual and simulations (models) keyed to the skills being mastered is used.
- Satisfactory completion of training is based on achievement of all specified competencies.

Emphasis of the postgraduate training should be on development of qualified consultants, not on the number of clinicians undergoing training.

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