

Miniworkshops: an alternative educational strategy

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To cite: Jawad Hashim M. Miniworkshops: an alternative educational strategy. *Fam Med Com Health* 2019;7:e000216. doi:10.1136/fmch-2019-000216

Received 01 August 2019

Accepted 01 August 2019



► <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/fmch-2019-000219>



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Dear Editor,

I read with interest the article by Drs Schneiderhan, Guetterman and Dobson, curriculum development.¹ This is a timely and well-written paper that is pertinent for Family Medicine clerkship coordinators.

I would like to suggest another instructional strategy, the miniworkshop, which may be of interest to family medicine educators.

Miniworkshops consist of a brief didactic lecture followed by small-group exercises.²

For example, after a lecture on hypothyroidism for 30 min, learners are divided into groups of three (triads, being the ideal group size) and given cases with short-answer questions. The instructor walks around and assists any groups that are struggling. At the end, a closure discussion is held and sample answers displayed.

I have proposed and used this format in the clerkship setting and found it to be superior to either lecture or exercises alone.

The didactic (non-interactive) lecture provides a foundation of knowledge while

the small-group exercises enable application of learning.

Competing interests None declared.

Patient consent for publication Not required.

Provenance and peer review Commissioned; internally peer reviewed.

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