

# Evaluating the Effectiveness of Future Surgeons Key Skills Course for Medical Students and Foundation Doctors

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## BACKGROUND

The Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh Future Surgeons Key Skills course is aimed at providing medical students of all years and foundation doctors with a solid grounding in the following areas: gowning and gloving, handling instruments, handling sharps, knot-tying, suturing, excising a skin lesion, excising a cyst, abscess drainage, wound debridement, laparoscopic and diathermy skills.

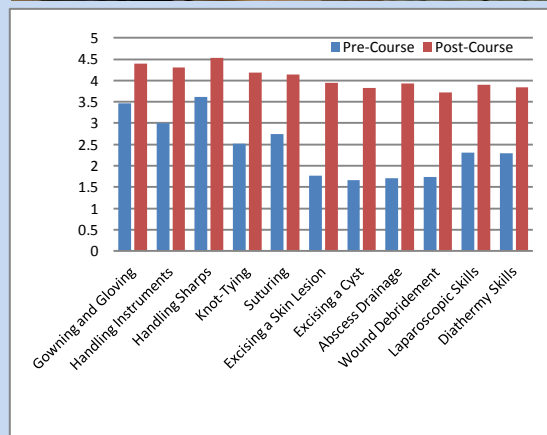


Figure 1 - Margins of improvement for each skill

## RESULTS

Significant improvements in confidence ( $P < 0.0001$  for all skills) were observed in all the course components. Margins for improvement are shown in figure 1, left. Third and fourth year students appeared to benefit the most. The only exceptions were gowning and gloving, handling instruments and handling sharps where second year students benefited more.

## AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To evaluate the effectiveness and ascertain whether the attendees attained benefit and an improvement in their confidence pertinent to the skills learned on completion of this course.

### References

- Koch J, Clements S, Abbott J. Basic surgical skills training: Does it work?. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology* 2011; 51: 57-60
- Stewart RA et al. A CRASH course in procedural skills improves medical students self-assessment of proficiency, confidence and anxiety. *The American Journal of Surgery* 2007;

## METHODS

Attendees anonymously completed a five point pre- and post-course questionnaire rating their confidence in each skill (1=no confidence, 5=very confident). Eighty attendees completed the questionnaire and their answers matched. Mean scores were calculated for each skill and compared pre- and post-course. A paired Student's t-test was performed to analyse the data

## CONCLUSION

The skills taught at the 'Future Surgeons: Key skills course' clearly benefited medical students and foundation doctors. Early year students benefited most from simple skills whilst latter year students and foundation year doctors benefited more from advanced skills. This emphasises the need for tailoring the skills taught at varying stages of the medical school curriculum with consolation towards the end of medical school training and during the foundation years.