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Can education of GP's be a waste of time?

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Background & Aim: in general practice, care quality and patient security rests to a great deal upon doctor's knowledge, skills and attitudes. Throughout their career, doctors continuously learn in order to maintain and develop professional ability.

Contrary to what many of us believe, the main portion of learning emanates from informal collegial interactions and from experiences that we achieve in daily practice. Undoubtedly, there is also a need for keeping up with new scientific findings that will be obtained on courses, conferences etc. There is also a need for reading on one's own and for professionals to come together in formal small group discussions.

Many countries have elaborated educational programs for GP:s of which some are optional and some compulsive. In many countries CME credits are used to ascertain relevant competence and hence to allow for further practicing as a specialist.

It has been argued (Janet Grant and others) that isolated learning activities like sporadic clinical courses are ineffective unless they are reflected on and coherently managed as a part of a personal learning plan.

This workshop will address two questions:

1. What constitutes a national educational policy designed to fulfill the requirements of being pedagogic, feasible, cost-effective and appealing to GP:s?
2. What should GP:s, professional bodies and decision-makers do to implant such a policy into practice?

Method: After a brief introduction by workshop leaders, delegates are invited to share experiences and ideas, which will be discussed later in the workshop.

Result and Conclusions: The workshop will end up with a conclusion and a summary of important sayings during the session.