

## **Best Practice & Innovation – Department of Otorhinolaryngology**

1.

Title: **Learning over breakfast with the Professor**

Objectives:

- To have an informal discussion of one specific topic over breakfast between a senior professor and post graduate students and Fellows
- Principle: to facilitate PG students to approach and discuss any important topic with senior faculty in a relaxed informal manner without any inhibitions

Context:

- PG curriculum involves many complex topics which are not easy to understand.
- It is not always possible to discuss these topics at length during working hours due to work and time constraints
- A student may not always feel free to approach a senior faculty regarding doubts and clarifications especially when many faculty members are around
- An informal one to one discussion builds a rapport between the professor and PG students and allows enough time to discuss without inhibitions or formalities.

The practice:

- This program of learning over breakfast with the professor is conducted on Saturday mornings at 7.30am in the canteen. It is a totally informal and relaxed discussion and the topic is decided on the previous day by the PG students and fellows in their whatsapp group and conveyed to the professor conducting the program. The professor is always the Unit Chief. It is a small group informal discussion after the PG student has made an attempt to study it. After the discussion the professor summarizes and gives the take home messages and conclusions highlighting the important questions that may be asked on this topic
- It resembles the Shantiniketan style and also builds a rapport between senior faculty and PG students.

Evidence of success:

- Our students have been doing well in PG exams with 100% pass rate and frequently the surgery and Allied sciences Gold medal has been bagged by our PG students

- Majority of the PG having a close rapport with the senior faculty both during and after the PG course
- Has opened avenues for research and few good publications as a result of the discussion

Problems encountered and Resource required:

- Motivating the PG students, fellows and Junior faculty to attend the program early morning
- The PG student on duty may get a call during the course of discussion
- To carry the teaching –learning material to the venue

2.

Title: **Resected specimen discussion**

Objectives:

- To facilitate surgeon and pathologist to orient themselves to the resected specimen and areas of interest during grossing
- To eliminate/ minimize the misunderstanding between surgeon and pathologist with regard to histopathological reporting of the specimen
- To discuss the recent advances on any particular disease and its diagnostic workup and surgical treatment

Context:

- The Dept of ENT regularly operates difficult onco-surgeries on locally advanced Head and neck cancers. Margins of resection, lymph node involvement, depth of invasion, perineural invasion etc. are important factors which determine the adjuvant treatment and outcome.
- The complex anatomy in head and neck region, loco-regionally advanced disease in the region, proximity to important structures and attempted conserving function can lead to compromised margins.

- Orientation to the specimen and grossing from selected high risk areas and clarity about the expectations from the surgeon with regard to histopathology report can be done during weekly specimen discussion meeting with surgeon and pathologist thereby delivering better patient care
- This discussion between surgeon and pathologist will regularly update the surgical team regarding diagnostic work-up and lab techniques and will also update the pathology team about the complex anatomy, lines of treatment and adjuvant treatment
- These discussions facilitate research and protocols

The practice:

- The specimen discussion meeting involves one professor, junior faculty, fellows and PGs from both ENT and Head and Neck surgery department and pathology department
- It is held in the main histopathology lab from 3pm onwards on Fridays every week
- The senior surgeon helps to orient the pathologist regarding the complex anatomy of the specimen, clinical staging and areas of interest in the specimen and conveys the expectations of the surgical team from the histopathological report
- The senior pathologist does the grossing from areas of interest and conveys the best diagnostic methods and difficulties encountered in reporting the given case
- A detailed discussion regarding the pathways of tumor spread, diagnostic methods, treatment options, adjuvant treatment and recent advances on the given disease and surgery is held on the spot.
- This helps to sort out differences between surgeon and pathologist, updates both the teams, delivers better patient care and opens avenues for research

Evidence of success:

- The reduced number of negative biopsies, better and detailed histopathology reports, better understanding regarding lab techniques among surgeons etc. have eliminated misunderstandings and controversies between surgical and pathology teams
- Few good collaborative publications have resulted from the above meetings
- Various on-going research projects involving recent advances and contemporary controversial topics are evidence of success of the above meetings

Problems encountered and Resource required:

- Making time during working hours on a regular weekly basis and motivating the fellows and PGs to regularly and actively participate in these meetings
- Inadequate teaching material on the spot in these meetings

3.

Title: **Cadaver Dissections**

Objectives:

- To provide Hand-on experience of tissue feel and facilitate improved knowledge on complex 3D anatomy to PGs, resident and junior faculty
- To familiarize a young student/surgeon about the proximity of critical structures at each step
- Helps regular surgical upgradation of the department

Context:

- Regular cadaver dissections help provide PGs, residents and junior faculty a hands-on experience of performing surgeries thus helping them have a holistic and three dimensional orientation of complex anatomy and critical structures.
- Cadaver dissections experiences gives students/PGS and residents a hands-on feel of tissue and helps minimize complications during surgery
- The UGs are also able to participate in the dissections and discuss with faculty which is not possible during live surgery due to time constraints and concentration of the surgeon on the surgical field

The practice:

- Cadaver dissections are held on a regular basis in the Dept of ENT after working hours
- Microscopic Dissection of the Temporal bone, endoscopic dissection of the nose and paranasal sinuses, detailed dissection and discussion of anatomy of the head and neck region are performed to enable student to have a 3-D orientation of anatomy of these regions

Evidence of success:

- The PGs and resident are able to directly apply the knowledge gained from dissections in live surgeries as the department regularly performs advanced head and neck onco-surgeries, micro surgeries and skull base surgeries
- Improved competency of the PGs, resident and junior faculty has been observed in overall surgical skills
- Thanks to these dissections our department is one of the best performing all ENT and Head and Neck surgeries with reconstructions

Problems encountered and Resource required:

- Procurement of cadavers for dissection is a hindrance to more frequent dissection courses
- Motivation of students/PG and faculty to stay beyond working hours to participate in dissections

4.

Title: **Is debate an effective teaching – learning strategy?**

Objectives:

- To induce interest in a controversial topic among students
- To encourage students to read in depth a particular topic and put forth their views
- To develop healthy competition and critical thinking among students

Context:

- In this era traditional passive teaching methods like lectures for students are being replaced by more active learning methods. Interactive learning arouses interest in students
- Active learning enables students to learn more effectively. It helps in discussing, analyzing & applying content in a meaningful way rather than passively absorbing information. One such active teaching- learning method is debate
- Students learn more effectively when they play an active role in learning process as opposed to absorbing information passively. A teaching format that ensures student engagement in learning process so as to achieve greater understanding and encourage student centered learning should be formulated.

The practice:

- The topics for debate will be discussed with the senior faculty members and announced in advance. Pre-test is conducted to assess the baseline knowledge for selected topics. The participants are randomly assigned into two groups. Group A (Affirmative) will speak `for` & the other Group `B` (Negative) against a particular issue. Adequate time period (at least 15 days ) are given in advance for self- directed learning for the particular topic. Debate is conducted with ENT faculty as moderators.
- The debate style chosen is parliamentary style. The Lead debater from affirmative group will present the proposed topic for debate and the points in favor, supported by team members. This is followed by points against by negative group.
- Post test conducted to evaluate improvement in knowledge. Feedback taken both from Faculty as well as participants to see the effectiveness of debate as a learning tool

#### Evidence of success:

- An increase in critical and collaborative learning was observed among the post graduate students.
- Additionally active participation of students in learning was observed

#### Problems encountered and Resource required:

- Motivating for participation in extra working hours
- The participants have to prepare prior to their presentation
- Introducing and standardizing a new teaching-learning method