

## Short Clinical Case Quizzes: A Useful Tool to Help Enhance Lectures

Kong-Bing Tan, MBBS, MRCPATH, FRCPA

Department of Pathology  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine  
National University of Singapore  
National University Hospital

Lectures have been a cornerstone of teaching in traditional medical curricula.<sup>1</sup> Despite the advent of problem-based and integrated systems-based medical curricula, lectures continue to play a vital role in providing core knowledge and serving as a foundation for learning. Through proper planning and an effective delivery, lectures have inspired many a student in their study of Medicine.<sup>2</sup> Short clinical case quizzes, interspersed appropriately within a lecture, can help to enliven what would have been an otherwise didactic teaching session.

Such quizzes begin with a brief clinical scenario supplemented with pertinent clinical/pathologic photograph(s). This is followed by one or more short questions on the diagnosis and selected key features of the case, to which students are invited to contribute interpretations and relevant short discussion. Each case quiz usually lasts between two to five minutes. Volunteers are called from the class or students are picked randomly to respond to the quizzes. Lots of encouragement should be given, and this helps create a relaxed environment

Such clinical case quizzes should be complementary to the lecture. It is recommended that the solving of the case quiz require the application of information presented earlier in the lecture, thereby expanding on existing concepts.<sup>3</sup> For example, for a neuroscience lecture on cerebrovascular disease, where a general discussion of cerebral infarcts had taken place, a case quiz on multi-infarct dementia helps to broaden the clinical spectrum of ischemic cerebral disease and to highlight the unique features of the entity.

Case quizzes help generate class participation and interest in the lecture class. They are versatile tools that can be used in lectures from various medical disciplines, ranging from the basic sciences to pathology to the clinical sciences. It is often a pleasant surprise that students who had been asleep during the lecture will be aroused during case quizzes. Integrating a few of such clinical case quizzes during a lecture can help to make the teaching session livelier and more clinically relevant.

### References

1. Golden AS. Lecture skills in medical education. *Indian J. Pediatr.* 1989;56:29-34.
2. Gelula MH. Effective lecture presentation skills. *Surg Neurol.* 1997;47:201-4.
3. Tan KB. Some variations of case-based techniques in the teaching of undergraduate pathology. *Malays. J. Pathol.* 2005; 27:127-8.

### Correspondence

Dr Kong-Bing Tan, MBBS, MRCPATH, FRCPA  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Pathology  
Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine  
National University of Singapore  
National University Hospital  
Lower Kent Ridge Road  
Singapore 119074, Singapore  
Tel: (65) 67722057  
Fax: (65) 67780671  
E-mail: [pattankb@nus.edu.sg](mailto:pattankb@nus.edu.sg)