

# Student perceptions of an online postgraduate course in family medicine in Sri Lanka

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Only the Abstract is available

## Abstract

**Introduction:** The online Diploma course in Family Medicine (DFM) of the Post Graduate Institute of Medicine (PGIM) of the University of Colombo is one of the pioneering online post graduate medical courses in Sri Lanka.

**Objectives:** To describe student perceptions on the online DFM course methods. This is a descriptive cross sectional study. The study population comprised of all the students (19) of the first batch of the course. Pre- tested self administered questionnaires were administered to all students. Likert scale was used to assess the domains of teaching, learning, levels of understanding, community building activities and technical problems. The scale ranged from 1= ["poor / not useful/did not understand"] to 5= ["excellent/ very useful/ understood very well"]. Analysis was done using SPSS. A focus group discussion was carried out to strengthen the student perceptions, based on the themes emerged. Data was recorded verbatim, collated and analysed. Results Response rate was 98.4%. The median score for structuring of the course content was 4 (Range 1-poor, 5-excellent). The individual median scores for usefulness of learning outcomes, discussions, quizzes and assignments in enhancing knowledge were 4 (Range 1-poor, 5-excellent). Levels of understanding the lessons were perceived to be high with an average of 4.8. Students were of the opinion that discussions and assignments helped them to engage in active learning through case discussions with tutors and peers. Online discussions were found to be the most useful form of learning. 88% commented that they are able to link clinical work to their online course work. Respectively 18% and 47% of students felt that time was inadequate for online discussions and assignments.

**Conclusion:** This online course has been useful in improving student knowledge and the levels of understanding of individual lessons are satisfactory. The most useful form of learning appeared to be online discussions.

Keywords - DFM, PGIM, SPSS, active learning, case discussions