

Poster presentation

New activity centred technology challenges students of midwifery: An evaluation

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The Fetal On line Electronic Teaching & Learning (F.O.E.T.A.L) is a learning module designed to facilitate learning of Electronic Fetal Monitoring (EFM). The target audience incorporates students of midwifery at ACU National (Vic). Traditionally, the theoretical content was delivered face-to-face and the concepts were difficult to master in the time allocated. Therefore the decision was made to use WebCT as the learning platform and by doing so allowed the students to understand the concepts at a self-directed pace, revisit materials and practice interpretations of fetal heart rate patterns in a non-clinical practice environment.

Evaluation of F.O.E.T.A.L was conducted at the end of first semester 2006 utilising a variety of data sources: online student evaluation surveys, comments posted to the discussion area and achievements of related content in learning assessments. The focus of the evaluation was twofold: to assess the acquisition of knowledge and to beta test the F.O.E.T.A.L program. One hundred and twelve students undertook the module and 46 completed the survey.

The e-learning delivery of EFM content to these students was evaluated as being effective in enhancing knowledge and understanding. In addition, students provided valuable feedback for ongoing development of F.O.E.T.A.L. Students found that the content was extensive and that they had to spend a considerable amount of time undertaking the F.O.E.T.A.L module but it was considered as a valuable learning activity. They also commented that timely feedback was required and this could be enhanced.

Keywords: e-learning, midwifery, foetal monitoring, students, technology, WebCT

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