Situational Awareness is: the achievement of comprehensive and accurate individual or team knowledge of the environmental context in dynamic safety-critical domains. Simply put, it means: “knowing what is going on around you”. Parush et al (2011)

It was great to see things in context

Linked skills learned before to clinical practice and scenarios

… has made me look thoroughly and not jump to conclusions

Situational Awareness

Gathering Information → Interpreting Information → Anticipating Future States

Model of Situational Awareness adapted from Endsley (1995)

Process

These sessions introduced year 1 undergraduate medical students to situational awareness in a simulated clinical context. The simulated ward area could represent any clinical speciality required. Hazards and clinical cues were put in place to portray specific clinical specialities and how acutely unwell the patient may or may not be. Students were given time, working in small groups, to assess the area, identifying cues and hazards. While no patient was present they did have access to SEWS charts, fluid charts and medical prescription charts. The specific clinical specialities portrayed were care of the elderly, surgical, infection unit and respiratory unit. Various props were used specific to these areas.

Results/Discussion

These Situational Awareness sessions were enthusiastically received both by students and tutors. Students actively engaged with the session and worked well within their teams. They gave positive feedback in reflective discussions utilising Gibbs Model at the end of the session. Hazards and cues prompted thought and discussion about types and levels of care and led to discussion about roles within the healthcare team. Students were able to identify how they could use knowledge gained from the situation to reduce or eliminate risks to patients. Tutors were able to reinforce the elements of situation awareness in the safe and controlled environment of the simulated ward. The opportunity for further development of sessions as an interprofessional learning tool was also highlighted. Further to this success the authors are now in the process of developing an electronic learning tool to complement and enhance this Situational awareness training.

References:


Parush et al., 2011 Situational Awareness and patient safety

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

For Further Information Contact: a.gregory@dundee.ac.uk or g.x.hogg@dundee.ac.uk