Teaching the Teachers of Point-Of-Care Ultrasound (POCUS): Creating a Checklist for an Objective Structured Teaching Examination (OSTE) for Instructors of the Focused Assessment with Sonography for Trauma (FAST) Exam

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Background: Competency in POCUS is required by the Residency Review Committee for multiple medical specialties not just limited to Emergency Medicine. As ultrasound use increases there is a need to ensure that senior residents and faculty are adept at instructing novice learners in POCUS. OSTEs focus on the teaching skills of residents and faculty and have been utilized to evaluate and enhance clinical teaching. There is a lack of literature detailing OSTE use in teaching procedures like POCUS.

Educational Objectives: We sought to create an OSTE checklist that could be used to evaluate an instructor teaching a FAST exam to a novice ultrasound learner. This OSTE is the basis for creating a curriculum for the instructor and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching the teachers of POCUS.

Curricular Design: A panel of faculty from our institution with both POCUS and medical education expertise created a preliminary OSTE checklist after reviewing the literature. The checklist was organized into three parts: short didactics, hands-on scanning and overall learning climate. We conducted a cross-sectional survey which was IRB exempt. We sent the draft checklist to a convenience sample of ultrasound directors for review. We asked specifically, “Is each particular point/item important for a FAST teacher to perform when instructing a novice ultrasound learner?” and the results were recorded in a binary fashion.

Impact/Effectiveness: The checklist was reviewed by 13 US directors nationally. A cutoff of 75% of respondents scoring the item as YES/KEEP was used to determine whether individual items should be kept or dropped. The final OSTE checklist reflects a total of 29 items out of the original 33 draft items (Table 1). Creation of a FAST OSTE will facilitate the development and evaluation of curriculum specifically designed for the instructors of POCUS starting with the core application of the FAST exam.