



Interactive Flash Components to Support Practical Teaching in Electrotherapy

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PURPOSE - To develop a resource that enables students to interact with different pieces of electrotherapy equipment in a controlled and safe environment and to reduce the amount of staff time spent demonstrating the controls of different machines. **RELEVANCE** - The need to demonstrate how to use electrotherapy equipment is an integral part of the practical teaching of physiotherapy. It is also essential that students gain experience of using a wide variety of different pieces of equipment in order to prepare them for the clinical environment. The outcome is a heavy demand on the teaching staff to provide ongoing demonstrations of the equipment with the consequent reduction in time spent teaching the safe, effective application of electrotherapy. **DESCRIPTION** - In order to address the need for students to gain experience of the machines available, and to reduce the amount of time staff spend demonstrating, a range of interactive multimedia elements have been developed to support students. Multimedia can be generated in a variety of forms but on consideration of the machines, interactive flash and digital video were identified as the most appropriate forms. Interactive flash components were based on digital images of the equipment. Each component of the machine is identified as the user places the mouse cursor over it. Switches and dials can be operated by the user and any sounds and display responses occur in the same way as if the user was working the machine. Digital video components were used to produce online demonstrations of machines that had multiple screen components. Students were able to access the material within the practical sessions and at any other time on and off campus. **RESULTS** - The use of the multimedia materials has had significant positive impacts on staff time and the need to demonstrate machines in the practical sessions. Students gained an increased level of confidence when using the machines probably as a result of the interactive nature of their learning. **CONCLUSION** - Using multimedia electrotherapy machines within the context of an electrotherapy module has been very successful. The learning experience for the students was enriched and the teaching staff were able to use the time gained to address the safe and effective application of the equipment.

