

# The Implementation of an Introductory Medical Terminology and Abbreviations Session into the GW SMHS Pre-Matriculation Program

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## Background

Medical students participate in various extracurricular activities in preparation for matriculation, and as a result, have varying levels of medical knowledge. In order to ensure students have a similar baseline level of knowledge, an introductory medical terminology and abbreviations session was developed for the George Washington School of Medicine and Health Sciences (GW SMHS) Pre-Matriculation Program (PMP), a summer preparatory course for a percentage of matriculating first-year students.

## Methods

A reference packet was developed, adapted from resources available online which was provided to the 20 PMP students prior to a live session. During the session, students practiced dissecting medical notes. To assess the course's benefit and students' knowledge, surveys and assessments were administered before and after the session. After data analysis was performed, the session materials were provided to GW SMHS for integration into the Practice of Medicine (POM) course for first year students.

## Results

For comparable questions on the surveys, all questions yielded an increase on the post-session survey. The following results compare percentages of students who felt somewhat or very prepared, comfortable, or confident as applicable. Compared to 30% of students who felt prepared for recognizing abbreviations on the pre-session survey, 65% felt prepared on the post-session survey. 30% of students felt prepared for recognizing prefixes and suffixes on the pre-session survey compared to 60% on the post-session survey.

## Results

45% of students felt comfortable dissecting unfamiliar terms on the pre-session survey compared to 75% on the post-session survey. 40% of students felt comfortable defining terms on the pre-session survey compared to 65% on the post-session survey. 35% of students felt confident understanding abbreviations in an HPI on the pre-session survey compared to 60% on the post-session survey. 25% of students felt confident understanding terms in an HPI on the pre-session survey compared to 65% on the post-session survey. The average on the pre-assessment was 79.5% compared to 76.93% on the post-assessment. 87% of students felt this was an effective course. 92% of students felt it was beneficial.

## Discussion

It is important for medical students to have a similar baseline level of prior medical knowledge. An introductory session on medical terms and abbreviations is a feasible solution to this inequity. The results show that the course was effective, far more than the assessment comparison. It is possible that the decrease in assessment score was due to the higher difficulty level of questions on the post-assessment compared to the pre-assessment. By implementing this session into the GW SMHS curriculum, medical students will have a solid foundation to maximize their understanding of material that will be presented to them.

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Pre-session vs Post-session Survey Results

