

Child Abuse Education for Medical Students:

A Multi-Disciplinary approach for Addressing the 'How'

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Background

- Physicians have an important ethical and legal obligation to recognize and report abuse across age groups
- The literature has numerous examples of '*what*' abuse content should be taught, but there are gaps in '*how*' it should be taught
- We studied a Multi-disciplinary approach using “Teaming” and “Change agency, management, and advocacy” for the delivery of child abuse education to better understand its effectiveness for how abuse content is delivered to medical student learners

Background

- Concepts started with Domain Day for VTC-SOM
- First Domain Day was presented during AY 13-14
- Goals were to in a 3 hr afternoon session:
 - Teach a topic from our discipline that incorporated all of the 4 pillars of VTC-SOM



- The session was to be innovative and not just a series of lectures on a topic normally covered during the clerkship.

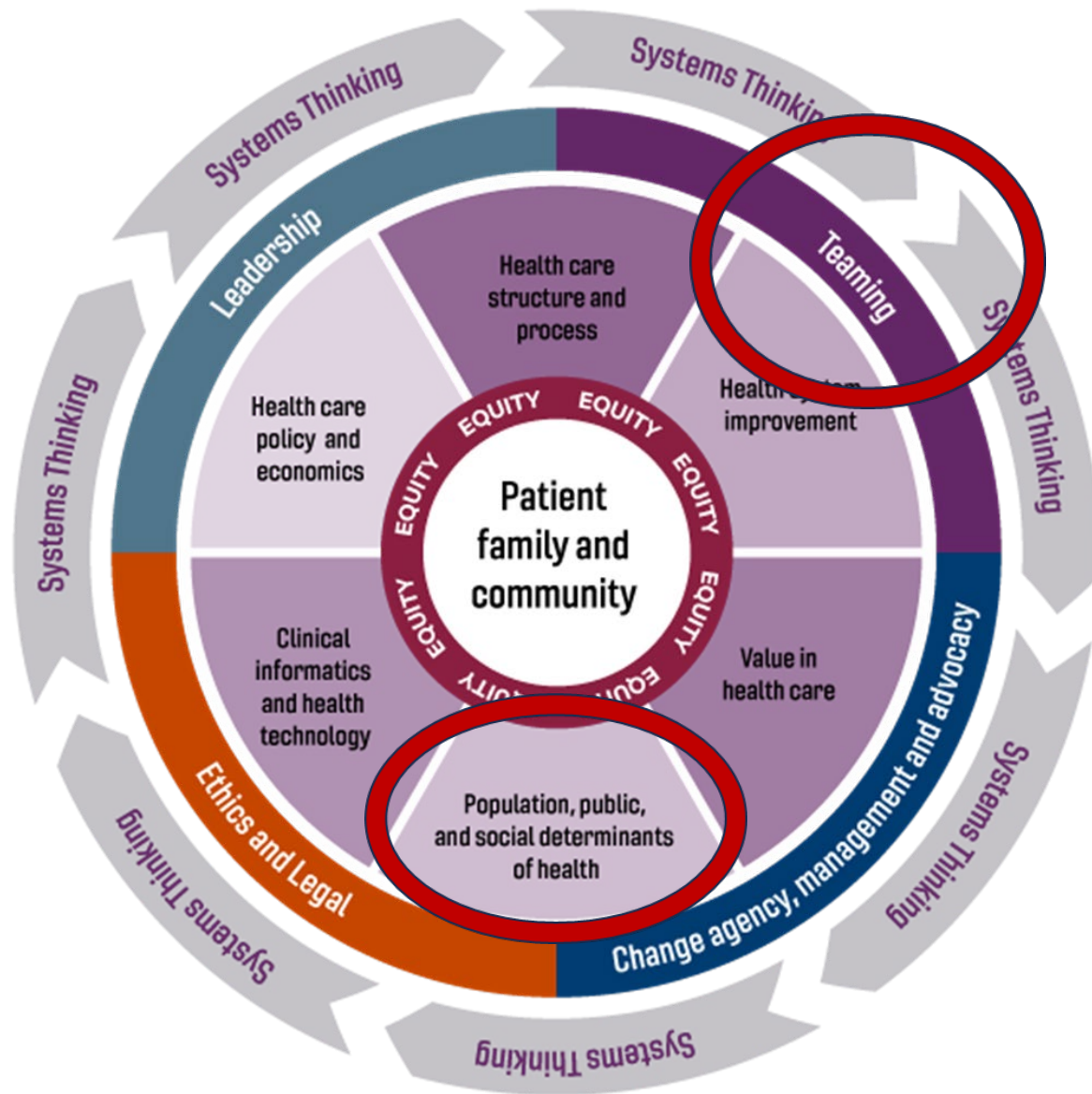
Background

Topic choice

- To achieve the best outcome for an abused child interprofessional work is a necessity.
- This is often not part standard education on this topic.
- The best outcome for the child can't be achieved by the work of the physician alone. We must work with professionals from outside to the medical system.
- Micro system of medicine vs the Macro system of our societies entire child safety system.

Background

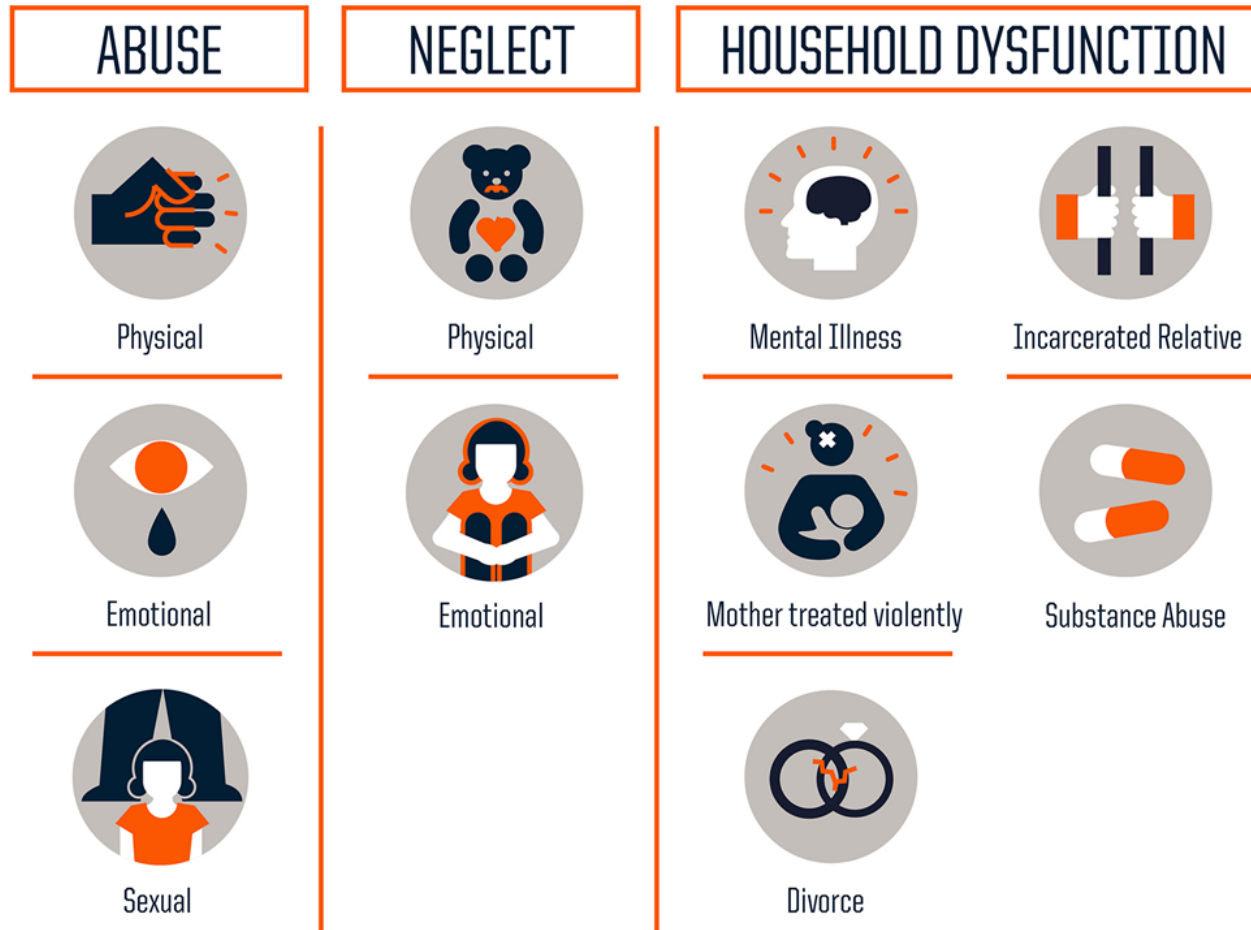
- Past performance
 - Since the inception of the Domain Day series, this session has been highly rated by the students
- Changes with Health System Science and Interprofessionalism
 - Focus on social determinates of health for our department
- How did this session fit with the new focus?
 - The changes started with the 2021-22 AY
 - Changes were made to focus more on an approach to the issue through a systems-based lens.
 - Broader awareness with social/cultural/and structural factors, ex ACE's, that contribute to the prevalence, course and outcome for these children.
 - We mapped concepts to educational program objectives



Course Objectives

- Report the Epidemiology of childhood injuries, including risk factors for child abuse/neglect, family violence and the biomechanics of injury
- Define child abuse, partner abuse, psychological abuse, injury prevention and factors leading to domestic and interpersonal violence
- Identify and distinguish the functions and role of community and social services, procedures of child protective services, cultural aspects of child abuse, child welfare services
- Identify laws and legal procedures related to child abuse, including:
 - Mandatory reporting
 - Forensic investigation
 - The role of law enforcement
 - Civil and criminal justice system
- Describe the use of appropriate techniques for examining, evaluating and managing abuse, including
 - Prepubertal and pubertal pelvic exams and sexual abuse/rape protocols.

Adverse Childhood Events (ACEs)



Changes to the session made over time.

- Exams
 - Covered prereading material and information discussed during the afternoon
 - No longer required
 - One year we included an essay question
- Timing of didactic
 - Moved to the beginning of the afternoon to give some background on the topic prior the breakout sessions.
- Wrap-up panel with members of the MDT

Methods: Session Design

- Prework
 - Approximately 1-2 weeks prior to the session
 - A deidentified case in the VTC-SOM format
 - A brief review article on child abuse
- Introduction and brief opening lecture (30 min)
 - Shares context for workshop
 - Review highlights of case
 - Formal lecture on child abuse with epidemiology, symptoms, signs

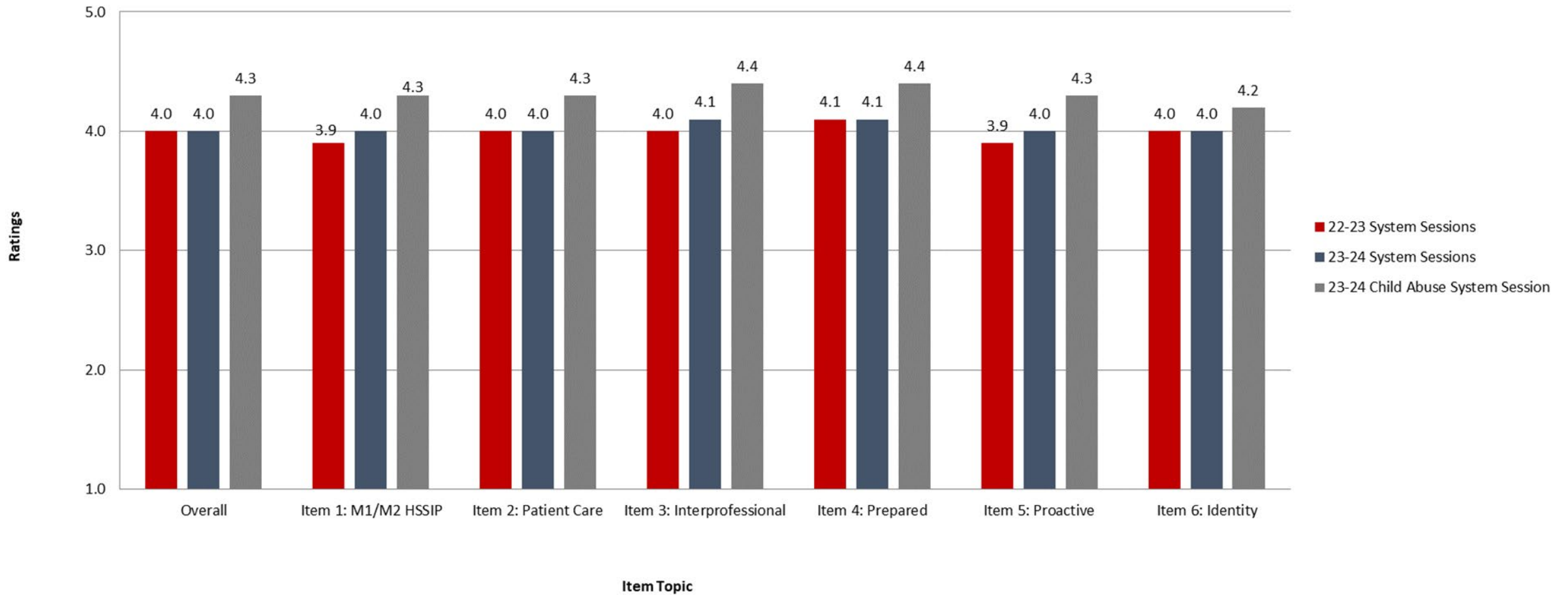
Methods: Break Out Session (40 min each)

- Goals for break outs sent to Multi-Disciplinary Team (MTD) members
 - Law enforcement/Commonwealth Attorneys
 - Child Protective Services/Forensic interviewer
 - Forensic nurse/Physician
- Purpose of using the breakout sessions was to:
 - Create an environment conducive to interactive discussion.
 - Emphasize their role within this complex system of care
 - These were not meant to be lectures.
 - Have movement during the afternoon to help with attention
- Each participant rotates through the 3 separate break out sessions
- Wrap up of the case and panel discussion (10min)

Methods: Analysis

- For quantitative data, responses were tabulated by individual and then aggregated
 - Mean scores were calculated for total scores and sub-scores
- For qualitative data, thematic interpretation and sentiment analysis were performed
 - Sentiment Analysis: Uses text analysis to determine affective states in subjective information
 - Sentiment Scores can Range from -1 to 1
 - Scores close to 1 are associated with positive sentiment
 - Scores close to -1 are associated with negative sentiment
 - Scores near zero are associated with neutral sentiment

Outcomes



Results: Major Findings

- A total of 83 students participated over 2 successive years (AY 22-23, 23-24) and evaluation questions were scored on a 5 point Likert scale
 - Response Rate 100% for evaluation completion
 - Overall program effectiveness mean was 4.4/5
- The sub-question mean responses:
 - “Helped me to further my professional identity” Mean 4.3/5
 - “Helped me to think about care through a systems-based lens” Mean 4.5/5
 - “Prepared me for challenges I might face as a physician, change agent, and advocate” Mean 4.5/5
- A total of 15 themes were detected from the comments with sentiment scores (SS) that ranged from 0.469 to 0.998.
 - The highest ranked sentiment scores were “incredibly effective” (SS 0.998) and “great and informative” (SS 0.929)
 - Lowest ranked was “bit longer than necessary” (SS 0.469).

Challenges

- Having presenters create an environment for questions
- Presenting to students with limited clinical exposure
- Child abuse is a difficult topic for many
- Given the prevalence of abuse in our society there is a high likelihood that more than one person in the audience may have experienced abuse in the past
- Timing and time constraints (Friday afternoon)
- Adequately assessing the student's learning

Conclusion

- This multidisciplinary approach for child abuse education complements other approaches in the literature and avoids the negative consequences associated with didactic and role based educational programming.
- Overall, the participants found it highly effective.