E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING

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AIMS:

- Define e-mentoring & associated terminology
- Supportive research for e-mentoring
- Advantages & Challenges of e-mentoring
DEFINITION ELECTRONIC MENTORING (E-MENTORING):

Provides: learning, advising, encouraging, promoting, and modelling

- computer mediated communication (CMC)

- mutually beneficial relationship between a mentor & a mentee

- boundaryless, egalitarian, & qualitatively different than face-to-face mentoring

Bierema LL et al 2002
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Merging of traditional one-on-one mentoring with the digital age
TYPES OF E-MENTORING:

- E-mail
- Internet chat rooms
- Electronic bulletin boards
- Instant messaging systems
- Tele-mentoring / Tele-consulting via video-chat tools & other online resources
  that make instant communication so easy i.e. SKYPE

Rothwell W. J. et al 2005
Lehr B 2014
WHY DISCUSS E-MENTORING NOW?

Telemedicine has been practiced for over 35 years

Recent technological advances have expanded telehealth/telemedicine’s scope

Telemedical event may involve “live” manipulations of pts &/or tissues “at a distance”

Telecommunications mediums:
- physician-to-physician consultation,
- physician-to-student (physician, nurse, other care giver)
- teaching,
- physician-to-pt examination & consultation,
- physician-to-pt treatment

SAGES 2010
E-MENTORING RESEARCH:

E-mentoring research shows:
Can develop trust & build relationships but involves:
- agreement re frequency of communication
- appropriately frequent & full communication
- social as well as task based communication
- interactive rather than purely reactive communications

DuBois DL et al 2002
Rafaeli S et al 2004
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Developing literature & research, E-mentoring is an under-researched area
Headlam-Wells, J. 2004
WHO 2010

Most of research literature coming from North America:
- Related to resources: internet & technology
STEPS TO START AN E-MENTORING PROGRAM

1. Determine if e-mentoring can be a fit to augment your face-to-face mentoring

2. Do you have the technology in place to implement e-mentoring?
   - **Web-based Model:**
     Mentors & mentees on Internet & access Web page of e-mentoring program or predetermined platform i.e. Skype
   - **E-mail-based Model:**
     Mentors & mentees use own unique email address to communicate with each other. Technology needs to be in place that provides:
     - safe & secure environment for email exchanges,
     - archives all e-mail messages
     - has ability to track e-mail communications between mentoring pairs

3. Develop goals for the e-mentoring
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues
   - E-mentoring had some impact with introverts
   - Research has consistently shown that the internet has:
     - disinhibiting effect on users
     - may lead to ↑ levels of honesty & therefore ↑ validity of self disclosure
     
     Hubschman 1996
     Joinson A 1998
     McKenna KYA et al 1998
     Bargh JA et al 2002
     
     - Equalisation of the mentoring process
     - More egalitarian & democratic
     - Mentees being more comfortable in their own homes or workplace environment
     
     Ellis K. 2000
     Harasim L, et al. 1998
     Lehr B 2014
     Palloff RM, et al 1999
     Sinclair C. 2003
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues

- Internet can be used to express empathy
  Bernard M.M. et al 2011
  Preece J et al 2001

- Online relationships can be just as real /intense as face to face
  Griffiths MD 2001

- May be more interactive rather than purely reactive communications
  Bernard M.M. et al 2011
  Lehr B 2014
  Rafaeli S et al 2004
  Packard BW. 2003
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues
- Mentee may overcome feelings of isolation through personal contact & access to a wide variety of mentors & resources on Web & thereby networking on a much wider scale

- Larger the pool of participants, the more diversity & suitable matches

- Mentees benefit from mentors who can provide useful real-world (real time) applications for what they are studying

- E-mentoring was favoured over in-person pairings due to its ease, better integration of information & immediacy of learning

Burke et al 2005
Owens 2006
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues
- Mentees are able to take responsibility for initiating contact & to play an active role in online discussion

- Can choose to adopt a single communication method, or choose to use multiple, simultaneous methods (for example, e-mail, listservs, Usenet, newsgroups, threaded discussions, chatrooms, videoconferences)

Price MA et al 2003
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

b) **Time:**
   - Flexibility in pace & scheduling as the communication can be asynchronous.
   - Asynchronous nature also facilitates reflection if communication time delay.

   - Highly time efficient & can be used at convenience of both mentor & mentee.
   - Large amounts of information can be exchanged between mentor/mentee in short time.
   - Offers easy access to supportive information & resource experts ...

   ... *information is just a “link” away*

Lehr B 2014  
Noe RA. 1988  
Ravet S1997  
Sinclair C. 2003  
Ellis K 2000  
Lehr B 2014
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

c) Costs: travel / technological / programmes
   - Transcends physical & geographical boundaries
   - Allows those that may have not been able to access face to face mentoring to now be able to

   Lehr B 2014
   Price MA, et al 2003

   - Low barriers to entry: Internet access, email account, & minimal time investment

   - Potentially scalable: programmes may be enlarged or multiplied with comparatively low cost
ADVANTAGES & EFFECTIVENESS OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

d) Student’s expectations: today’s student is technologically suave & a computer native!
BARRIERS, DISADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues
   - Virtual intimacy may be difficult, particularly if parties have never met in person
   - May be difficulty in establishing rapport with someone e-mentor has never seen
   - Developing levels of trust & confidence to sustain the relationship take time, familiarity, & work
   - Making best virtual matches may require several tries
BARRIERS, DISADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

a) Trust / Communication / Relationship issues
- Miscommunication can occur on a number of levels, especially if parties have only a virtual relationship with a frail commitment

- Frequent exchanges recommended to help maintain continuity & flow of mentoring conversation

- Avoid long periods of absence online as often lead to disinterest or misunderstandings

- Many formal e-mentoring programs expect communication at least twice weekly to establish & maintain the relationship

- With no face to face contact, e-mentoring can lead to a loss of non-verbal communication cues such as particular body language, voice volume, and tone of voice (diminished with tele-mentoring)
BARRIERS, DISADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

b) Time/Space:
- E-mentoring geographical issues (time zones, licensure: pt in another country, district)

- E-mentoring programmes must have continuous interactions & reflective influences through the duration of the programme

- E-mentoring may not be a timely process if one or both parties is not conscientious about making quick responses to requests for information or advice

- For the e-mentor, e-mentoring can be more time consuming than face to face mentoring

Lehr B 2014
BARRIERS, DISADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

c) **Costs: travel / technological**
   - E-mentoring programmes may be difficult to maintain, because they require:
     - coordination & management (both technical & human),
     - facilitation and planning,
     - implementation and
     - evaluation

   - technology to support e-mentoring

   - access to computer technology, internet and computer literacy

   - equipment issues (power outages, loss of internet connections, back up plans)

Brotherton 2001
Lehr B 2014
BARRIERS, DISADVANTAGES & CHALLENGES OF E-MENTORING IN OMT TRAINING:

d) Privacy / Regulation Issues
- Privacy & confidentiality issues (informed consent, release forms / patient privacy)
- Credentialing & Licensure issues
- Liability for Practice issues
- Legislation issues:
  Tele-medicine i.e. tele-consultation: national frameworks concerning the health care system, existing connections between health care provides as well as data protection & legal security have to be taken into account

Legal uncertainties regarding tele-consultations & documentation of health data should be clarified

Anvari M. 2000
Axelsson C. 2014
WHO 2010
Research Support:
Research that was identified has shown that e-mentoring can be as effective as traditional mentoring when the project is carefully planned, however, more research is needed.

Bierema et al 2005

Traditional mentoring is unlikely ever to be replaced. However, new technologies coincides & may provide a useful augment to face-to-face mentoring.

Kealy WA et al 2003
Griffiths M, 2005
Rafaeli S 2004
Single & Single, 2005
Thank you for this opportunity to share with you all.

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Note all slides & full reference list will be available on the IFOMPT website.