

Continuing Professional Development: eStrategies to Outreach the Practicing Physician

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Introduction:

The International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) has long been leading efforts to ensure good educational practice and enhance worldwide educational programs to meet the growing need for eye care. CPD encompasses life-long learning, a contextualized variety of professional learning interests and the demonstration of the educational programs impact on patients, outcomes and on the community healthcare. Internet-based technology facilitates the access to educational resources especially for geographically remote practitioners or those in constraint resources practice settings, with less financial impact and a richer variety of content and delivery formats. The purpose of this study is to measure the global outreach of a website containing continuing professional development (CPD) educational resources specifically targeted to practicing ophthalmologists and ophthalmic educators.

Material and Methods:

Members of the Editorial Board of the ICO Center for Ophthalmic Educators (ICO-COE) [<https://educators.icoph.org/>] monthly seek out and suggest useful, applicable, accessible and multifaceted educational material. Accepted new educational resources, are catalogued according to:

- a) How to Teach, including instructional design strategies, methods and tools to improve teaching ability,
- b) What to Teach, including educational curricula and teaching guidelines,
- c) What to Teach With, presenting medical educational websites with quality multimedia medical content,
- d) How to Assess, regarding assessment strategies and principles, and
- e) How to Assess With, offering tools to assess knowledge and skills.

In each category, resources are also tagged to different intended learners: residents, subspecialty fellows, practicing ophthalmologists, medical students, and allied ophthalmic personnel.

The editorial board consists on an international group of fourteen ophthalmic educators led by an editor in chief. The team works collaboratively on a shared online Google Spreadsheet for Resource Submission each in a personal sheet. The editor-in-chief monthly email to the editorial board reminds about their personal contribution with one educational resource to be defined by: title, direct web address, appropriate category, target learner and a brief description. The editor-in-chief selects the educational resources to be published on the monthly ICO Newsletter for Ophthalmic Educators and on the ICO-COE.

A descriptive analysis of quantitative variables was conducted to measure the outreach of CPD resources, and included: number of resources for each category; subscribers to the monthly ICO Newsletter for Ophthalmic Educators; site visits and unique page views of the ICO CPD Guide to Effective CPD/CME with Google analytics. A qualitative description of ophthalmic societies

opinion regarding this latter resource was also included. These analysis included site resources as of January 2018.

Results

The ICO-COE website included the following number of educational resources for CPD:

- How to Teach: 137 resources
- What to Teach: 37 resources
- What to Teach With: 638 resources
- How to Assess: 45 resources
- What to Assess With: 31 resources

Resources in categories How to Teach and How to Assess targeted all audiences, while those in categories What to Teach, What to Teach With and What to Assess With were specifically for CPD.

ICO authors CPD resources on:

- Educational concepts, strategies and tools:
 - The ICO Guide to Effective CPD/CME, available at <http://www.icoph.org/resources/339/ICO-Guide-to-Effective-CPDCME.html>
 - The ICO-Ophthalmology Surgical Competency Assessment Rubrics (OSCARs) available at <http://www.icoph.org/resources/230/Surgical-Assessment-Tool-ICO-OSCAR-in-English-Chinese-Portuguese-Russian-Spanish-Vietnamese-and-French.html>
 - The ICO Online Course for Transforming Lectures Into Effective Teaching Interventions
- Clinical guidelines:
 - ICO Guidelines for Diabetic Retinopathy, available at <http://www.icoph.org/downloads/ICOGuidelinesforDiabeticEyeCare.pdf>
 - ICO Guidelines for Glaucoma Eye Care, available at http://www.icoph.org/enhancing_eyecare/glaucoma.html

Subscribers of the nonprofit ICO Newsletter for Ophthalmic Educators increased from 3626 (November 2016) to 4182 (December 2017), consistently maintaining an approximate 25% opening rate.

The ICO Guide for Effective CPD received 770 visits, with 621 unique page views including its flip pages version. The resource was downloaded as PFD for 42 times. Thirteen national ophthalmological societies (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Somalia, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, and Yemen) spontaneously acknowledged the resource and expressed their intent to share their feedback regarding the e-book learning application into their practices. The ICO Guide to Effective CPD/CME was acknowledged in terms of interest and comprehensiveness, concept update, useful principles and guidelines and available format and design. There was an invitation to further dissemination as a webinar integrating a global educational society program of webinars.

Conclusion:

We described a collaborative, simple and effective process to build a clearinghouse of CPD educational resources for ophthalmologists and CPD educators using technology as a robust scaffold.

As an international team, we aim to globally facilitate the access to effective CPD programs, including those geographically remote or with constraint resources to custom tailor curricula in accordance to practice needs.

Practicing ophthalmologists can benefit from accessing educational programs and from having faculty better prepared to teach effectively.