

# Using Bedside Teaching to teach Frailty to Undergraduate Medical Students

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## Introduction

Patients with Frailty account for 20% of those admitted to hospital.<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment improves outcomes through multidisciplinary assessment of physical, psychosocial, functional and environmental factors.<sup>2</sup>

A gap exists in undergraduate Frailty teaching. Patients with Frailty are excluded from teaching due to mobility, sensory and cognitive issues.<sup>3,4,5</sup> In the Department of Elderly Medicine, at a Glasgow teaching hospital, a gap was identified in undergraduate medical students gaining experience with patients with Frailty.

## Aim

To implement a bedside teaching programme to improve the confidence of Year 4 medical students identifying, assessing and managing patients with Frailty.

## Method

The teaching programme was organised as two weekly bedside teaching sessions. Tutors were given a guideline on structuring the sessions, ensuring standardisation. With a tutor present, students took a history from and examined patients with Frailty, followed by discussion of management. Qualitative and quantitative feedback was gathered using questionnaires.

## Results

Fifty questionnaires were completed. Students' confidence in identifying, assessing and managing patients with Frailty improved after the Frailty bedside teaching sessions, as evidenced by Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1: Pre-intervention responses- How confident do you feel...?

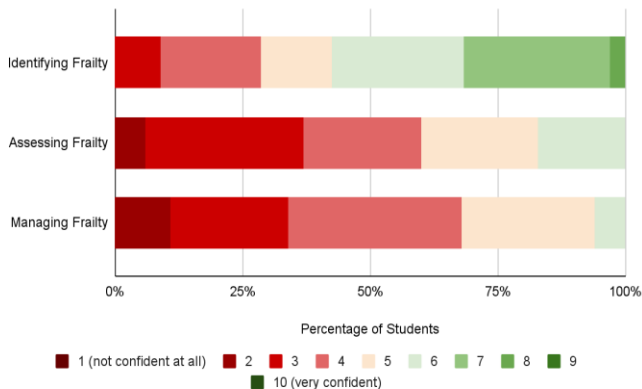
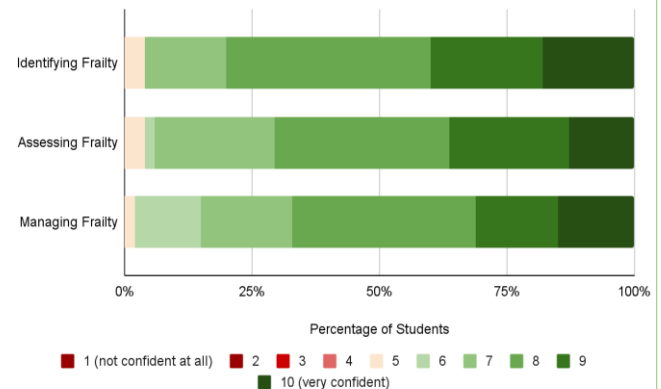


Figure 2: Post-intervention responses- How confident do you feel...?



The students enjoyed the opportunity to take a history and perform examination, whilst supervised, gaining timely and specific feedback.

Qualitative feedback included that it's "good to gain a better understanding of Frailty. I feel more confident dealing with Frailty," and that there was a "Good balance of talking through how to assess before having a chance to speak to a patient then debrief."

## Conclusion

Bedside teaching sessions improved students' confidence in identifying, assessing and managing patients with Frailty. There is no previously published research on teaching Frailty at the bedside. This programme should be replicated and delivered as part of other undergraduate medical courses. This is a step towards creating doctors who are confident in managing these patients, a necessity given the growing population of patients with Frailty.

## References

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