

First virtual interactive symposium with synchronous distance education techniques

Eş zamanlı uzaktan eğitim teknikleri ile ilk sanal etkileşimli sempozyum

Serdar Kula, Velit Halit, Levent Oktar**

From Departments of Pediatric Cardiology and *Cardiovascular Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Gazi University, Ankara-Turkey

One of the most noteworthy features of today's world is the unusual speed of development in the fields of knowledge and technology. This leads the existing knowledge to become outdated rapidly and so emphasizes the importance of the update of the knowledge.

In conventional medical congress system the physicians get together in a particular center between particular dates and try to exchange knowledge using a traditional education system (lecturer - classroom) in a limited time interval. This traditional model of congresses or symposium-type meetings has some disadvantages. These can be listed as follows:

- High cost of organization
- High registration, accommodation and transport fees
- Staying away from the place of work or habitation during the activity
- Loss of labor (The physician cannot provide medical service during the activity)
- Insufficient communication due to deficiency in self-confidence or inadequate time
- Inability to get the opportunity to know the participants by their names
- Necessity for paying for registration, accommodation and transport for participation to interested programs selectively, in the activity
- Inability to evaluate the active participation of the participants to the activities exactly.

However, the problems of modern life, as the individual's

desire to spare the time for the family, social life or hobbies, the pressure of job and responsibilities lead the physicians to look for new methods for education (1). Anyway, the concept of distance education has been established and this forces the educational institutions to find new ways of teaching (2-4).

For this purpose, we have started the activities of web seminars (webinar) in the field of medicine two years ago. We have decided to organize the first international interactive virtual symposium in accordance with our experiences we have got from these activities (5). First International Virtual Pediatric Cardiology Symposium, announced and performed via the website, www.virtualpedcardiology.org, was performed by the presentations of two foreign and two Turkish, totally four speakers with four separate topics. All activities were performed in English, since the participants were from different countries. Dr. Erik Thaulow and Dr. Egil Seem took part in the activities from Oslo as foreign speakers. Both speakers performed their presentations from their hospital. The average number of the participants was 36 in the sessions. Although most of the registered participants were Turkish physicians, it was noteworthy that 56% of the participants were foreign physicians in virtual sessions. The distribution of the participants with their countries is shown in Table 1.

The participants watch and listen to the presenter, view the session presentation on-line, and ask questions simultaneously with this system (Fig.1).

All questions and contributions of the participants were answered by the speakers online and orally (Video 1. See corresponding video/movie images at www.anakarder.com).

Address for Correspondence/Yazışma Adresi: Dr. Serdar Kula, Gazi Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi, Pediatrik Kardiyoloji Bölümü, Ankara-Türkiye
Phone: +90 312 202 56 26 E-mail: kula@gazi.edu.tr

Accepted Date/Kabul Tarihi: 10.02.2012 **Available Online Date/Çevrimiçi Yayın Tarihi:** 06.04.2012

© Telif Hakkı 2012 AVES Yayıncılık Ltd. Şti. - Makale metnine www.anakarder.com web sayfasından ulaşılabilir.

© Copyright 2012 by AVES Yayıncılık Ltd. - Available on-line at www.anakarder.com

doi:10.5152/akd.2012.101

Table 1. Distribution of the participants according to the country of origin

Country	Number of participants
Egypt	2
Saudi Arabia	2
Iraq	6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2
Sudan	1
Turkey	45
United States	9
Poland	2
Argentina	2
Germany	1
Canada	2
Slovenia	1
Puerto Rico	1
United Arab Emirates	1
Switzerland	1
Bulgaria	2
India	4
Peru	1
Malaysia	1
Total	90

The online certificate of attendance was presented to the participants via the website, www.virtualpedcardiology.org, after the activity. The participants had the possibility to get the printout of their certificates by typing their names.

We have demonstrated that the traditional congress and symposium activities can be easily performed with distance education technologies, eliminating the disadvantages mentioned above. This activity, providing a simultaneous interaction in the field of medicine, has been performed successfully with positive international feedback.

It has been decided to organize an activity of VirtualPedCardiology 2012 and to make this organization traditional due to positive feedback.

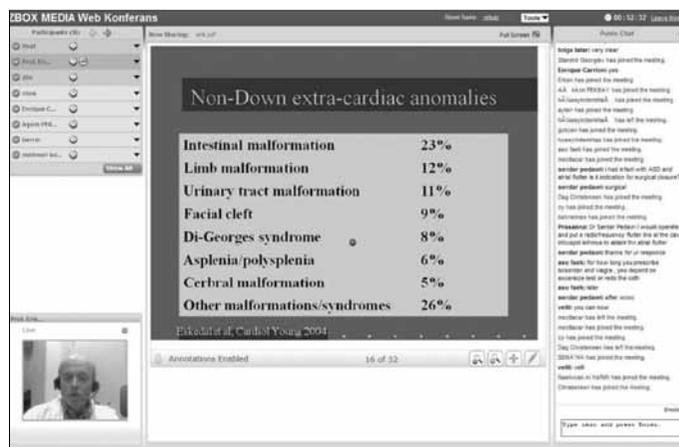


Figure 1. Dr. Eric Thaulow is presenting his lecture simultaneously in a virtual class with 36 participants

Acknowledgement

This activity was supported by Actelion pharmaceuticals Ltd., author has no financial or any other conflict of interest to declare.

Video 1: Dr. Egil Seem presenting his lecture and answering questions

References

- Gürpınar E, Zayım N, Başarıcı İ, Gündüz F, Asar M, Oğuz N. Kardiyoloji eğitiminde e-öğrenme ve probleme dayalı öğrenme entegrasyonu. *Anadolu Kardiyol Derg* 2009; 9: 158-64.
- Bates AW, Poole G. *Effective teaching with technology in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass; 2003.
- Holsapple CW, Lee-Post A. *Defining, Assessing, And Promoting E-Learning Success: An information systems perspective*. *Decision Sciences* 2006; 4: 67-85.
- Knebel E. *The use and effect of distance education in healthcare: What do we know?* *Operations Research* 2001; 2: 2.
- Baturay MH, Kula S. "Video konferansla tıp eğitimi: dinamikler, zorluklar ve tavsiyeler," 6. Ulusal Pediatrik Kardiyoloji ve Kalp Damar Cerrahisi Kongresi, 2010, Eskişehir.