

2011

Using Script Concordance Testing (SCT) as a new modality of assessment for graduate entry medical students – a pilot study.

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This conference paper was originally published as:

Wan, M., Canalese, R., Lam, L. T., Frost, G., & Duggan, P. (2011). Using Script Concordance Testing (SCT) as a new modality of assessment for graduate entry medical students – a pilot study. *Asian Medical Education Association Congress*.

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Using Script Concordance Testing (SCT) as a new modality of assessment for graduate entry medical students – a pilot study.

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Background: SCT is a new modality of assessment in medical education. By presenting a clinical scenario, additional pieces of information are given and the students are asked to assess whether this information increases or decreases the probability of the diagnosis. This reflects the clinician's everyday real-world script determination. It tests the clinical reasoning and problem solving ability and how they apply their learned knowledge in the context of uncertainty. Their decision is compared to a panel of clinicians. Studies have shown that the scores correlate with the level of training and predict future performance on clinical reasoning

Methods: The School of Medicine, Sydney, University of Notre Dame examined a cohorts of 113 graduate-entry Year 3 medical students using 20 SCT questions in the formative midyear examination. Their answers were compared with the panel of 15 general practitioners (clinical tutors). This pilot study also correlates the medical students' scores with their Year 2 summative performance.

Results: The mean and standard deviation (SD) of the students' and panel's scores were 15/20 (SD 2) and 17/20 (SD 2) respectively. The correlation with Year 2 summative written and total scores were 0.44 and 0.38 respectively ($p < 0.001$). Feedbacks from students were very positive.

Conclusions: SCT is a new modality of assessment looking at the concordance of clinical thinking and decision making between the students and the panel. The pilot study showed a moderate correlation with other assessment scores. Further studies to investigate the correlation between SCT and clinical reasoning components of the clinical OSCE examination would be very useful.