

Integrating the Bovine Rectal Palpation Simulator into a veterinary curriculum. Part 2 – customised sessions and student feedback

S Baillie, D J Mellor, S Brewster and S W J Reid

Department of Computing Science and Department of Comparative Epidemiology and Informatics, Institute of Comparative Medicine, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Glasgow, Glasgow. UK

Background: The Bovine Rectal Palpation Simulator, a virtual reality based teaching tool, has been developed for training veterinary students and was introduced into the curriculum at the University of Glasgow Veterinary School during 2003/2004.

Summary of work: Students were offered two training sessions. The first session covered basic skills and students completed a questionnaire afterwards [1]. Further feedback was gathered after subsequent examinations of cows and during a focus group. This information was used to design a second session, customised to individual student's needs. Scenarios were included: students examined virtual cows, representing typical fertility cases, and discussed treatment options with the teacher, who acted as the farmer. Students then completed another questionnaire.

Summary of results: The feedback after both sessions indicated that the simulator was a useful supplement to existing teaching methods. The training increased confidence to perform procedures, equipped students with skills to search for and identify structures, and the scenarios were rated as a particularly beneficial way of learning.

Conclusions: Teaching with the simulator was successfully integrated into the curriculum and, importantly, student feedback provided useful information for improving the teaching protocol. The simulator provides a safe and flexible environment where students develop and integrate skills.

1. Baillie S, Mellor, DJ, Brewster, S and Reid SWJ. Integrating the Bovine Rectal Palpation Simulator into a veterinary curriculum. Student feedback: Part 1 - immediately after the initial training session. In: Proceedings of Association for Medical Education in Europe; 2004 Sep 5-8; Edinburgh, United Kingdom.