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Early clinical exposure in medical education: The newborn nursery clinical experience

Abstract:

The Newborn Nursery Clinical Experience is an innovative early exposure program designed to introduce medical students to the hospital setting and family medicine. Early in their second year, students are immersed in the newborn nursery while also gaining experience in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) and attending obstetrical deliveries. They observe the interdisciplinary collaboration of pediatricians, obstetricians, neonatologists, anesthesiologists, nurses, and other professionals. In addition, students are trained to read medical charts, practice proper documentation, and understand its significance. They engage directly with mothers and families, emphasizing continuity of integrated care and the importance of the physician–patient/family relationship. This experience has consistently been well-received and highly evaluated by students, while effectively preparing them for third-year clinical rotations in family medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics/gynecology.

Biography

Peter Averkiou is a pediatrician and Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, Florida Atlantic University. He serves as Co-Director of the Foundations of Medicine courses, Director of Service Learning Projects, Director of the Newborn Nursery Clinical Rotation, and Director of the Synthesis and Transition Course at the medical school.