**Preface to Workshops**

Workshops on the face to face course are designed as discussions and are based around the concept of directed cases. Each directed case consists of a number of pieces of clinical information that should be used to guide the discussion. The cases are intended to complement the pre course online learning modules.

1. On the course, there are four workshops. All four are presented on the course laptop’s hard drive and the APLS website as PowerPoint presentations. They are presented with instructor information in the notes section at the bottom of each slide. The Transfer and communication workshop also contains a role play.

The workshops are:

1. Fluid & electrolytes
2. The septic child
3. Transfer and communication
4. Pain management

The layout of each workshop is the same. Key teaching objectives are given, which indicate the overall aims of the session. They may be supplemented by a list of specific skills that must be gained by the candidates. The materials required to run the workshop appear next. First general equipment is listed. This is followed by a list of the directed cases and of supporting information on other slides. The directed cases appear next. Additional instructor information is included in the notes section.

In order to maximise the educational effectiveness of this teaching method the environment must be correct. Most sessions are based around a data projector and laptop. The instructor must ensure that the layout of the teaching area is such that each candidate can both see the screen, and freely join in with any discussion. A semi-circle of chairs facing the screen with the instructor placed at one end is one of the best methods of achieving this. Anticipate use of your body language (ie: hand gestures and eye contact) to encourage candidates to have their questions answered by other members of the group. As a facilitator aim to only include your verbal contributions when they guide or enhance responses from the group.

At the beginning of the workshop session it is important to try and achieve good group dynamics. This can be done by both creating a friendly atmosphere and also by trying to ensure that each candidate feels that they belong to the group. If members of the group are not known to you, briefly explore their prior experience in the topic. This allows you to adapt guiding questions, or choice of directed cases, to promote discussion relevant to the needs of the candidates. The aims of the session should be clearly stated.

Carefully prepared questions can be used as a method of facilitating learning. Anticipate that candidates will have recently reviewed the online learning modules and have some prior clinical experience in the area. The following table is a guide to question stems that can be used to support the learning needs of the group.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Question Stem** | **Cognitive skill level** |
| What is the normal value of …….? | Knowledge recall |
| What does this result/clinical sign mean? | Understanding of concept |
| What other information would you want to know? | Application of knowledge |
| What treatment would you plan to give? Are their acceptable alternatives? | Analysis of knowledge in clinical context |
| How would you manage…….? | Synthesis of knowledge & experience |
| How effective is…….? | Evaluation |

Furthermore if a particular member of the group is reticent, the use of directed questions might be useful in involving them in the discussion. When using this technique the instructor should try to avoid questions that have single word answers.

Since there is a lot of material to cover it is essential that the instructor keeps the discussion moving and constructive. Familiarise yourself with the cases before the session begins so that you can identify and facilitate discussion of the key points. The use of frequent micro-summaries allows the instructor to bring the discussion back on course should it stray, and to cut short any discussion which is over long. It is recommended that a micro-summary is given at the end of each directed case to allow the group to make the transition from one case to another.

The aim of the workshop session is to involve the candidates in a discussion about the directed cases and thereby to achieve the key teaching objectives. In order to achieve this it is necessary for the instructor to act as both discussion leader and facilitator. It is essential that thorough preparation is undertaken and that each instructor has a good plan regarding both the course of the discussion and the use of the material provided.