

**Problem based learning in continuing medical education: a review of controlled evaluation studies.**

Smits PBA, Verbeek JHAM, de Buissonjé CD. BMJ 2002; 324: 153-155

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**Abstract:**

There is no formal abstract, but the following represents a summary of the salient points relating to this review: -

Reviews of undergraduate medical education cautiously support the short term and long term outcomes of problem based learning compared with traditional learning.

The effectiveness of problem based learning in continuing medical education, however, has not been reviewed.

This review of controlled evaluation studies found limited evidence that problem based learning in continuing medical education increased participants' knowledge and performance and patients' health. There was moderate evidence that doctors are more satisfied with problem based learning.

**Comments:**

**Strengths/uniqueness:** This is a systematic review and as such, hopefully avoids personal reviewer bias.

**Weakness:** Although this is a systematic review, there was a very small number of studies in the literature that met the inclusion criteria for the review. We can, therefore, not expect robust findings on a topic that has not been studied extensively.

**Relevance to Palliative Care:** Although there have been many surveys regarding knowledge of end-of-life care, comparative studies to examine the efficacy of educational formats have not been conducted to any great extent. This systematic review highlights the need for such studies.