

Dialogues between the tutoring physicians and the physicians undergoing specialist training in occupational health (OH) in Finland

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Background

The duration of the Specialist Physician's Programme in OH in Finland is six years. Specialist training occurs by learning in work places. The fundamental part of the training is the two-year period in the service of an OH unit where the tutoring physicians (trainer) provides tutoring dialogues for the trainees. These dialogues serve as one of the main methods of learning. The objective of this study was to explore the tutoring dialogues. More specifically how they are arranged and what they consisted of?

We collected 13 semistructured interviews with four trainers and nine trainees and asked them to record one or two of their tutoring dialogues. All of the interviews and five recorded tutoring dialogues were transcribed and analyzed by inductive content analysis to gain understanding about the present practices.

What kind of experiences the trainees got?



"They are the weeks welcome relief!"

"They raise the community spirit"

"I get knowledge which is difficult to find elsewhere"

"Relieves the stress"

"We learn from each other"

"Invaluable!"

"I learn good practices"

"Ability to spread good practices"

"Good team, great spirit!"

"They are just great!"

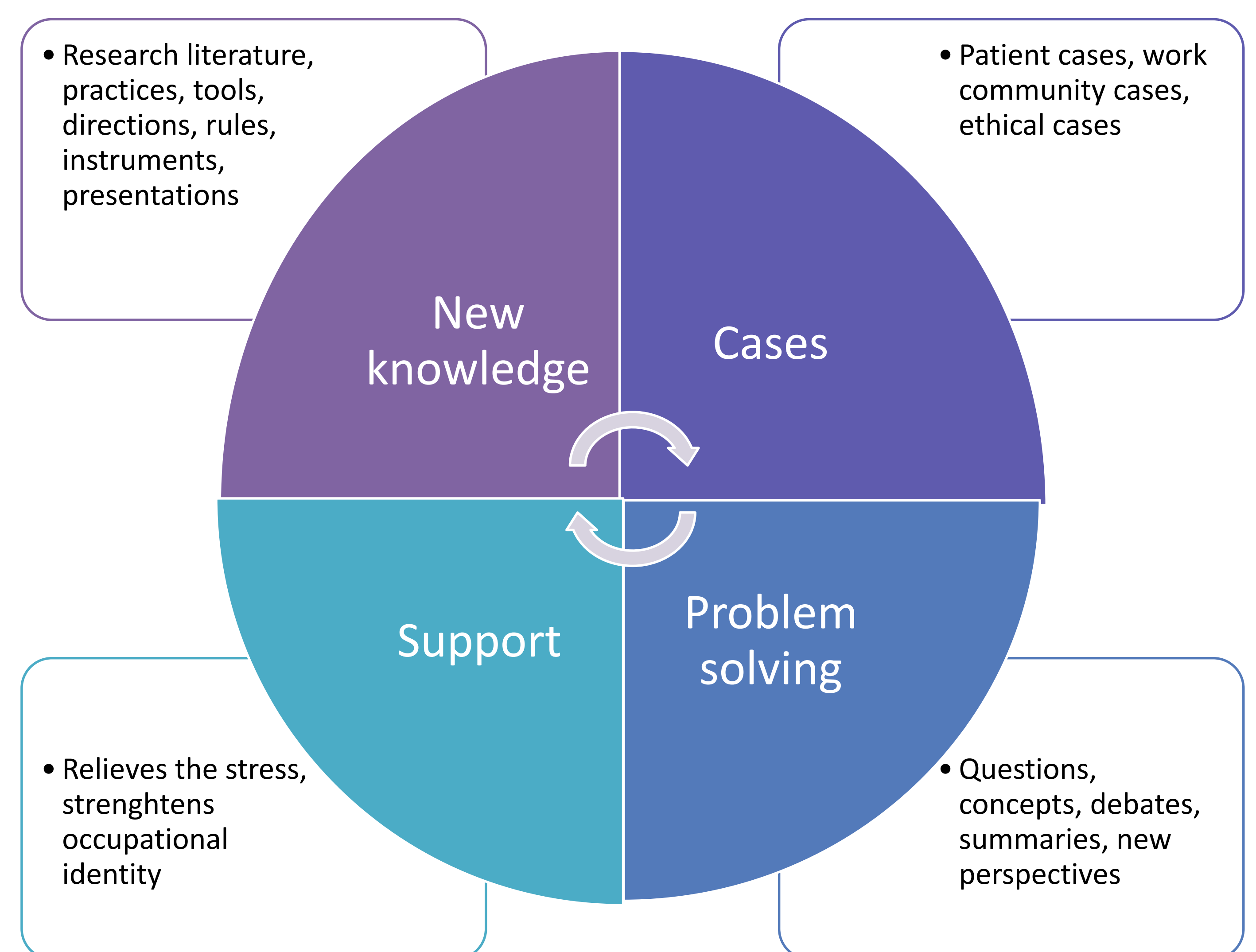
"We laugh a lot!"

"We get many new perspectives"

Results

The trainers organized tutoring dialogues in training program with 1-2 week intervals lasting 1-2 hours each. The dialogues were carried out either privately with the trainer and the trainee or in small groups with the trainer and 2-3 trainees. The themes were agreed in advance and were mostly based on the logbook used in the OH training program. The participants explored the themes in advance. The structure of the dialogues varied, but mainly they consisted of short presentations and practical cases. The dialogues were arranged face to face, except one trainer used Skype connection.

The contents on the tutoring dialogues



Take-home message

Tutoring dialogues are one of the key methods of learning for the specialising physicians training program. The dialogues are structured and based on the official learning objectives and their execution varied. Both the trainees and the trainers appreciated dialogues as a learning method but also as tool for raising the work community spirit.