

COMMENTARY

Online Training Course on COVID-19

Nasir Shah

ABSTRACT

In the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, global trend for launching online courses and trainings regarding risk factors, acquisition, diagnosis, clinical presentation, management and prevention of COVID-19 is cresting. Department of Family Medicine at University of Health Sciences Lahore introduced a 2-hours online course where a total of 39993 health professionals from all over the world were enrolled and 32000 participants completed the course with encouraging feedback.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Family medicine, Online course.

How to Cite This:

Shah N. Online training course on COVID-19. Biomedica. 2020; 36 (COVID19-S2): 78-80.

The world is paying close attention to the outbreak of novel Coronavirus, following its emergence in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. With the outbreak of a novel Coronavirus declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), academicians and trainers all over the world are working to address it by developing the capacity building opportunities for trainees and health professionals, all over the world. To support countries' preparedness effort on the COVID-19 outbreak, WHO Department of Health Security and Preparedness has developed various COVID-19 related online courses for participants from all over the world.¹ Similarly, American Society of Microbiology in collaboration with National Institute of Health, Pakistan is also organizing online training course on COVID-19 for Pakistan. The first session has been conducted with more than 100 participants from Pakistan. Further sessions will be conducted in successive weeks. The training will cover core materials developed by the WHO and Johns Hopkins jointly in response to the global need for SARS-CoV-2 training.² Though such courses do not encourage complete reliance on their contents for practical purposes in place of

professional advice from a regulated medical professional, still digital learning is considered as the quickest and comprehensive mode of acquisition of knowledge.

On March 17th, 2020 University of Health Sciences Lahore commenced its response to COVID-19 and announced to act promptly for education, service delivery, resource mobilization, production of sanitizers and personal protective equipment. It was decided to launch a 2-hours online course on COVID-19. Department of Family Medicine UHS with the assistance of faculty of FMH College of Medicine and Dentistry prepared a 2-hours course. The most significant resource was the questions asked by people on Telephone about COVID-19. Inclusion of these questions and their authentic answers made this course focused and applied. The educational material was derived from WHO and press conferences of Federal Health Ministry. The course was continuously revised based on guidelines of WHO and Federal Ministry. The course consisted of;

Presentations

Chapter 1-Introduction to COVID-19.

Chapter 2-Diagnosis of COVID-19.

Chapter 3-Prevention of COVID-19.

Chapter 4-Referral to hospital in COVID-19, Protection of health care provider from COVID-19.

Correspondence to:
Dr. Nasir Shah
Professor and Head,
Department of Family Medicine
University of Health Sciences Lahore-Pakistan.
Email: sanasirshah@yahoo.com

Videos

- Chapter 1-WHO-Introduction to COVID -19
- Chapter 2-How to take nasal swab
- Chapter 3-WHO-What is the correct way to wear and dispose of masks.

Final Examination: 20 questions
Passing criteria: 100 % score
Award: 2 CME credit hours

The UHS COVID-19 course was very well received both nationally and internationally. Till May 13th, 2020, a total of 39993 health professionals from all over the world had applied for this course and 32000 have completed the course. The breakup of participants is as follows (Table-1).

It was quite encouraging that feedback received from the participants reflected fulfillment of their expectations with regards to organization and context of course, material used for practical and applied aspects and utilization of learning in real life practice (Fig.1.)

Reading Material

1. Book on Washing Hands Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department.
2. WHO-Clinic-Hospital Care March 19, 2020.
3. WHO-Home Care March 17, 2020.
4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) based on live calls on Governor-UHS Telemedicine center.

Table 1: Countries and number of participants who attended the course.

Afghanistan	22	Israel	2	Palestine	1
Africa	75	Japan	4	Philippines	5
Australia	9	Korea	10	Pakistan	39097
Bangladesh	16	Saudi Arabia	128	Sri Lanka	5
Bahrain	28	Kuwait	12	Syria	5
Central Asia	112	Malaysia	1	Taiwan	7
China	63	Maldives	3	U.A.E	80
Egypt	4	Nepal	12	U.K.	49
Europe	8	North America	58	U.S.A	14
India	34	New Zealand	8	Vietnam	1
Indonesia	4	Oman	10	Yemen	2
Iran	16				

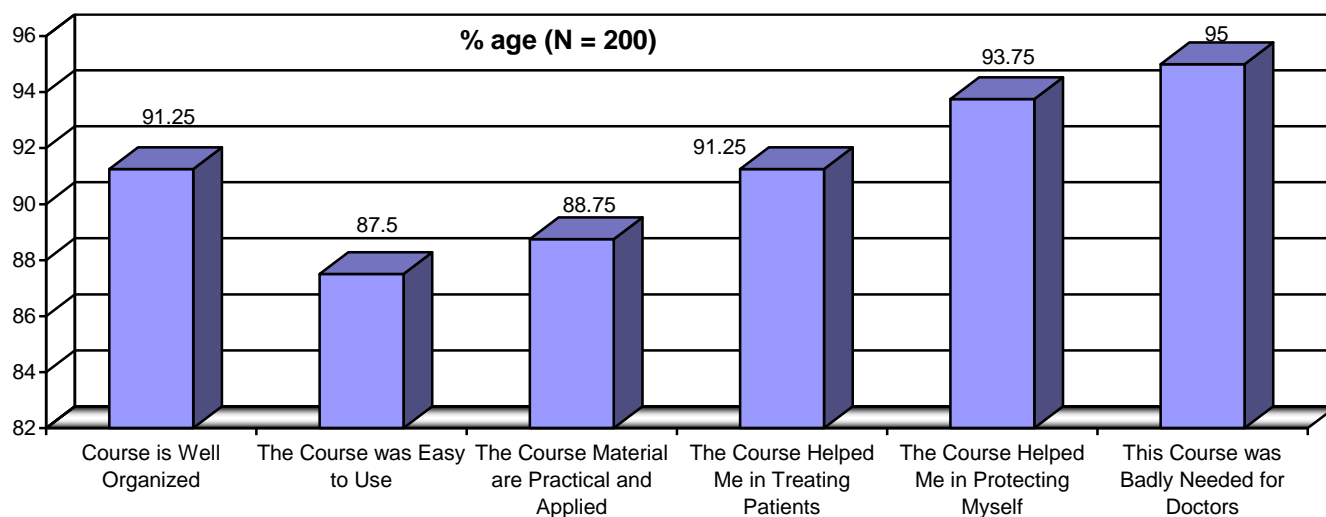


Fig. 1: Feedback of 2000 Participants for the Course.

CONCLUSION

Academia has been socially responsive during Corona Pandemic and has played an active role in spreading awareness regarding COVID-19. The online educational activity of UHS was very well received by participants as most of them felt its need badly. With the same spirit like that in Corona Pandemic, Universities should transform their academic programs according to societal needs.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None to declare.

FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

None to disclose.

REFERENCES

1. World Health Organization. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) training: Simulation exercise. Available online at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/training>. [Last accessed on 21st May, 2020].
2. National Institute of Health Pakistan. Corona virus activity. Available online at: <https://www.nih.org.pk/american-society-of-microbiology-in-collaboration-with-nih-pakistan-planned-online-training-course-on-COVID-19-for-pakistan/?> [Last accessed on 21st May, 2020].

Prof. Dr. Nasir Shah [MCPS, FCPS, MRCGP (INT), FRCGP (INT)] is currently working Professor and Head of Family Medicine Department, University of Health Sciences Lahore. He has more than 15 years experience of training of Family Physicians and Continuing Medical Education programs through distance learning. He is well known for his blended postgraduate courses for Family Physicians and has produced more than 500 MCPS in Family Medicine and more than 100 MRCGP International graduates. He is also serving as Dean of Family Medicine Faculty, College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan and Convener of National Family Medicine Committee of Pakistan.