

# *Wither PBL in Dentistry: Successes & Limitations*

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## **Wither PBL in dentistry? Success and limitations**

- ◆ Success
  - ◆ Mostly anecdotal as literature mostly on other disciplines
  - ◆ successes of PBL
    - ◆ more articulate
    - ◆ quick at decision making
    - ◆ has a broader view
    - ◆ more responsible
    - ◆ good team workers

## Wither PBL in dentistry? Success and limitations

- ◆ Success
  - ◆ Improved clinical judgment/diagnostic skills/application of knowledge
  - ◆ Better communication with peers and teachers
  - ◆ Less compartmentalization of clinical knowledge (between disciplines/clinical and supporting sciences)
  - ◆ Acceptance of importance of lifelong learning

## Does problem-based learning work?

- ❖ Weaker in the basic sciences  
Albanese and Mitchell ('93), Vernon and Blake ('93)
- ❖ No difference USMLE Step 1 (Basic Science)  
Harvard data (Vernon and Blake '93), Berkson ('93), Distlehorst and Robbs ('98)
- ❖ No difference or better in clerkship and Step 2  
Albanese and Mitchell ('93), Vernon and Blake ('93), Blake ('98), Harvard data (Vernon and Blake '93), Berkson ('93), Distlehorst and Robbs ('98), Richards *et al* ('96), Blake *et al* (2000)

## Wither PBL in dentistry? Success and limitations

### Limitations

- ◆ `Holes` in knowledge base/incomplete coverage of topics
- ◆ Can not easily adapt to professional diploma and examination modes
- ◆ staff resources: not all are willing to contribute equally (increased burden falls on a few).
- ◆ Greater demands placed on staff time (e.g. more elaborate assessment/examination system).

## Wither PBL in dentistry? Success and limitations

- ◆ Maintaining momentum of PBL
  - ◆ Difficult task
  - ◆ Reviewing/rewriting/changing PBL problems each year
  - ◆ Workshops valuable
  - ◆ WebCT and electronic media assistance
  - ◆ Help from the university (e.g. financial and other resources)
  - ◆ Accreditation (e.g. quality control)

## Conclusions

- Each school has to choose its own PBL mode
- Depending on :
  - Financial resources
  - Human resources
  - Infrastructure support (e.g. space, library etc)
  - Number of students
- Hence hybrid model appear to be the most popular