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CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AMONG UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO'S DEPARTMENT OF RADIATION ONCOLOGY FACULTY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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Objective: Continuing professional development (CPD) and life-long learning are core tenets of most healthcare disciplines. Where undergraduate coursework lays the foundation for entry into practice, CPD courses and offerings are designed to aid clinicians in maintaining these competencies. CPD offerings need to be continually revised and updated to ensure their continued utility. The purpose of this qualitative study was to better understand the CPD needs of members of University of Toronto Department of Radiation Oncology (UTDRO) and determine how these needs could be generalized to other CPD departments.

Methods: Given that UTDRO consists of members of various health disciplines (radiation therapist, medical physicists, radiation oncologists, etc.), eleven semi-structured interviews with various health professionals from different hospitals were conducted. Inductive thematic analysis using qualitative data processing with NVivo was undertaken. The data was coded, sorted into categories, and subsequently reviewed for emergent themes.

Results: Participants noted that a general lack of awareness and lack of access made participation in CPD programs difficult. Members also noted that topics were often impractical, not relevant, or not inclusive of different professions. Members also did not feel motivated to engage in CPD offerings due to a general lack of time and lack of incentive.

Conclusion: To address the deficiencies of CPD programs, a formal needs assessment that engages stakeholders from different centers and health professions is required. Needs assessments of CPD programs should include analysing elements related to access, how to utilize technology enhanced learning (TEL), determine barriers to participation, and understand how to better engage members.

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