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Smartphone and tablet usage among medical students in Prince of Songkla University

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Background: There are many benefits of smartphone and tablet, user can bring them everywhere, communicate with others. Moreover smartphone and tablet facilitate learning in medical students. However, there’s little information about usage of smartphone and tablet among the medical students especially in Thailand.

Summary of work: To study the number, buying reasons, usage, necessary medical application, role in medical education, effects and opinion in promoting smartphone and tablet for support of medical education among first to sixth year medical students in Prince of Songkla University. In this descriptive cross sectional study, the data were collected by a self-reported questionnaire that was completed by 646 students.

Summary of results: There were 646 subjects included in the study which accounted for 82.93% response rate. Forty-three HCPs completed an anonymous online survey.

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Summary of results: 91% of HCPs owned a mobile of which 87% used it during clinical practice. No HCP was supplied with a smartphone by their clinical workplace. Consequently they used their privately owned device. For ten out of eleven statements HCPs had significantly more positive attitudes towards the internet than mobiles. Mobiles were only perceived negatively for two statements: 1) in regard to confidentiality; and 2) HCPs having the perception that patients may think that they are using mobiles for non-medical purposes.

Conclusions: Mobiles, including smartphones, are commonly used within clinical practice and at present most HCPs use their privately owned device. Despite HCPs having more positive attitudes toward internet use, their attitudes towards mobile use were largely positive.

Take-home messages: Mobile use, in particular smartphone use, within clinical practice is likely to increase in the future.

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Just in Time? Using QR Codes for multi-professional learning

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Background: Clinical policies and guidelines are widely available but access can be difficult at the required time and place. Clinical staff with smartphones could use QR codes for contemporaneous access to relevant information, supporting good practice – the ‘Just In Time Learning’ (JIT-L) paradigm.

Summary of work: A list of high-yield clinical guidelines was generated and content adapted for smartphone viewing. QR Codes were generated for each topic and positioned around a medical ward. Website analytics and semi-structured interviews were performed to evaluate usage and educational value.

Summary of results: Use was intermittently high but not sustained. Thematic analysis demonstrated a positive assessment of the JIT-L paradigm. However,