

USE OF INTERACTIVE DIDACTIC METHODS IN VETERINARY EPIDEMIOLOGY

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A 5 day training course for facilitators in veterinary epidemiology (VE) was held in Teramo from 29.1 to 2.2.1996. The course was based on a new approach inducing participants to apply immediately the acquired knowledge to practical teaching. General objective of the course was training epidemiology specialists to become facilitators in VE in order to transfer their knowledge in their own countries. Technical contents concerned basic epidemiology and epidemiological surveillance. Technical contents were used to evaluate effective learning of both VE and didactic methods: participants were asked to choose one of the course topics and to plan and run an interactive lecture on the chosen subject. The challenge now is the optimal integration of the various tools available for teaching VE: technical training, training on teaching methods and multimedia systems.

INTRODUCTION

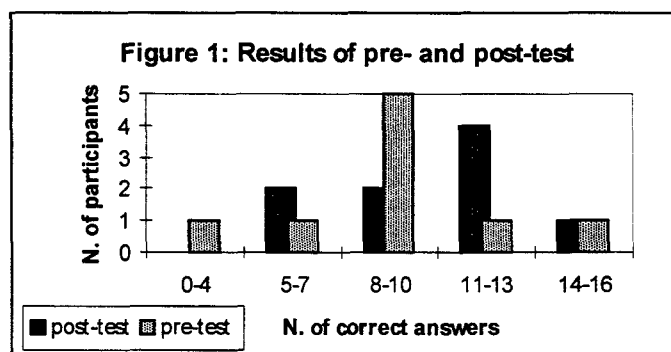
The experiences accumulated in the last years by the Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell'Abruzzo e del Molise (IZSAM) and the needs expressed by various WHO, FAO and OIE member Countries, demonstrated that the demand of training in veterinary epidemiology (VE) is so diffuse that it is impossible to satisfy it through resident training courses, seminars and workshops. A way to enhance dissemination of epidemiological knowledge, skills and know how could be training of veterinary epidemiology facilitators. An international training course of 5 days for facilitators in VE, organized by I.Z.S.A.M., was held in Teramo from 29.1 to 2.2.1996. The course was based on a new approach inducing participants to apply immediately the acquired knowledge to practical teaching.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

General objective of the course was the training of specialists in order to transfer the VE knowledge, skills and know how in their own Countries. Participants were chosen using pre-determined selection criteria and application requirements. The course was divided in two parts: the first one on didactic methods (DM), the second one on technical contents. Technical contents were: «Epidemiological surveillance and information systems», «Descriptive epidemiology», «Field investigations of disease outbreaks or problem occurrence». Technical contents were used to evaluate effective learning of both epidemiology and DM. Participants were asked to choose one of the above listed technical topics and to plan and run an interactive lecture on the chosen subject. Text of the technical contents was sent to the participants 15 days before the course started. Evaluation was performed during the whole course using role-playing, questionnaires, performance during working groups activities and pre-and post-test. A follow up session will be held in 1997.

RESULTS

Results of the course are shown in Figure 1. Questions in pre- and post-test concerned both VE and DM.



CONCLUSION

The experience of training courses shows that resident training can enhance the dissemination of VE knowledge but it is not sufficient to reach a wide target in a short time. The multimedia communication system seems to be a more appropriate tool to enhance learning through a self-instruction method in a short time. The challenge now is the optimal integration of the various tools available: technical training, training on teaching methods and multimedia systems.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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