

The use of POCUS (Point of Care Ultrasound) in Emergency Setting “as the new stethoscope”

The point of care ultrasound (PoCUS) Is a “diagnostic or procedural guidance ultrasound that is performed by a clinician during a patient encounter to help guide the evaluation and management of the patient”. The practice of POCUS is done by health professionals trained to diagnose diseases, no matter where the patient is being treated (in a modern hospital, an ambulance or a remote village for example etc...). There is a solid evidence base for POCUS improving traditional examination techniques in the diagnosis and management of the acutely unwell medical patient and it is expanding rapidly. This special Issue of Signa Vitae will continue to focus on the fact that POCUS is an increasingly integral part of emergency medicine. Currently the pocus is considered as the ‘the new stethoscope’. Rapid assessment by PoCUS has progressed to become a useful tool in the diagnostic evaluation and management of medical and surgical emergencies:

- Abdominal POCUS (Including urolithiasis, nephrolithiasis, abdominal aortic aneurysm acute).
- Trauma POCUS (FAST Focused assessment includes abdominal and thoracic applications.EFAST).
- Ultrasound-guided vascular access (including peripheral and central vascular access).
- Thoracic POCUS (including identification of pneumothorax, hemothorax, pleural effusion, interstitial lung syndrome and pleural procedures).
- Cardiac POCUS (including cardiac arrest, assessment of global cardiac activity, left ventricular systolic function, right ventricular size, presence of pericardial effusion, and inferior vena cava calibre).
- Vascular POCUS (Femoral and popliteal thrombosis).
- Gastric Ultrasound (assessment of gastric content and volume for anesthesia).

Moreover, this list is not exhaustive and there is no limit to the use of ultrasound in clinical practice.

The growing availability of ultrasound machines coupled with enthusiasm from trainees to learn POCUS means that training managers need to start thinking about how to systematically incorporate it into medical education curricula. Thus, we strongly believe that POCUS should be an obligatory element in the curriculum for Anesthesiologists, Emergency Physicians, Internists, Emergency Surgeons, General Practitioners and Pediatricians. Undeniably the ultrasound probe will be ‘the new stethoscope’ and using it leads to safer, better, and cheaper patient care.

Keywords:

POCUS Point of Care Ultrasound, Emergency, FAST Focused Assessment with Sonography for Trauma, E FAST Extended Focused Assessment with Sonography for Trauma, Anesthesiologists, Emergency Physicians, Internists, Emergency Surgeons, General Practitioners, Pediatricians.

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