



The Surgical Oncology Advanced Practitioner Conference (2018-2021): Evaluating Educational Gaps, Needs Assessment, and Future Programs

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Objectives

- To describe the purpose and goals of the Surgical Oncology Advanced Practitioner (SOAP) Conference.
- Summarize the post-conference evaluations from the 2018, 2019, and 2021 SOAP conferences, including the effectiveness of virtual learning format (2021).
- To identify the educational needs of surgical oncology advanced practice providers.
- To provide recommendations for future educational events.

Introduction

- The SOAP conference is an educational forum that focuses on the latest advances in surgical management of solid tumors and the role of the advanced practice providers (APPs) in clinical practice. The goal of the SOAP conference is to foster collaboration and share best practices among APPs working in surgical oncology. A comprehensive conference evaluation is needed to understand the impact of the SOAP conferences, pinpoint the educational needs among surgical oncology APPs, and identify ways to improve future conferences.

Methods

- Demographic and professional characteristics of conference participants were obtained from the first three SOAP conferences (2018, 2019, and 2021).
- An optional post-conference survey that consisted of multiple choice and open-ended questions was distributed to participants and a summary of the findings were presented. Survey questions focused on the quality and effectiveness of the conference, including anticipation of practice changes and recommendations for future educational events.

SOAP Conference	2018 Marriott Texas Medical Center (Houston, TX)	2019 MDA Hickey Auditorium (Houston, TX)	2021 3 rd SOAP 100% Virtual
Total Participants	224	262	267
Total APPs:	208 (92.8%)	216 (82.4%)	224 (83.9%)
Location: Texas Non-Texas US States Non-US	145 (64.7%) 79 (35.3%) 29 0	157 (60.0%) 105 (40.0%) 25 0	152 (56.9%) 115 (43.0%) 23 3
Faculty: MDA Non-MDA	30 10	41 10	30 10
Length	2.0 days (concurrent sessions)	2.5 days (concurrent sessions)	3.0 days (general session only)
CME lectures Workshops	12.75 hrs 4	17.7 hrs 6	20.50 hrs n/a
Posters/ Abstracts Mini-oral sessions	20 n/a	11 3	17 4

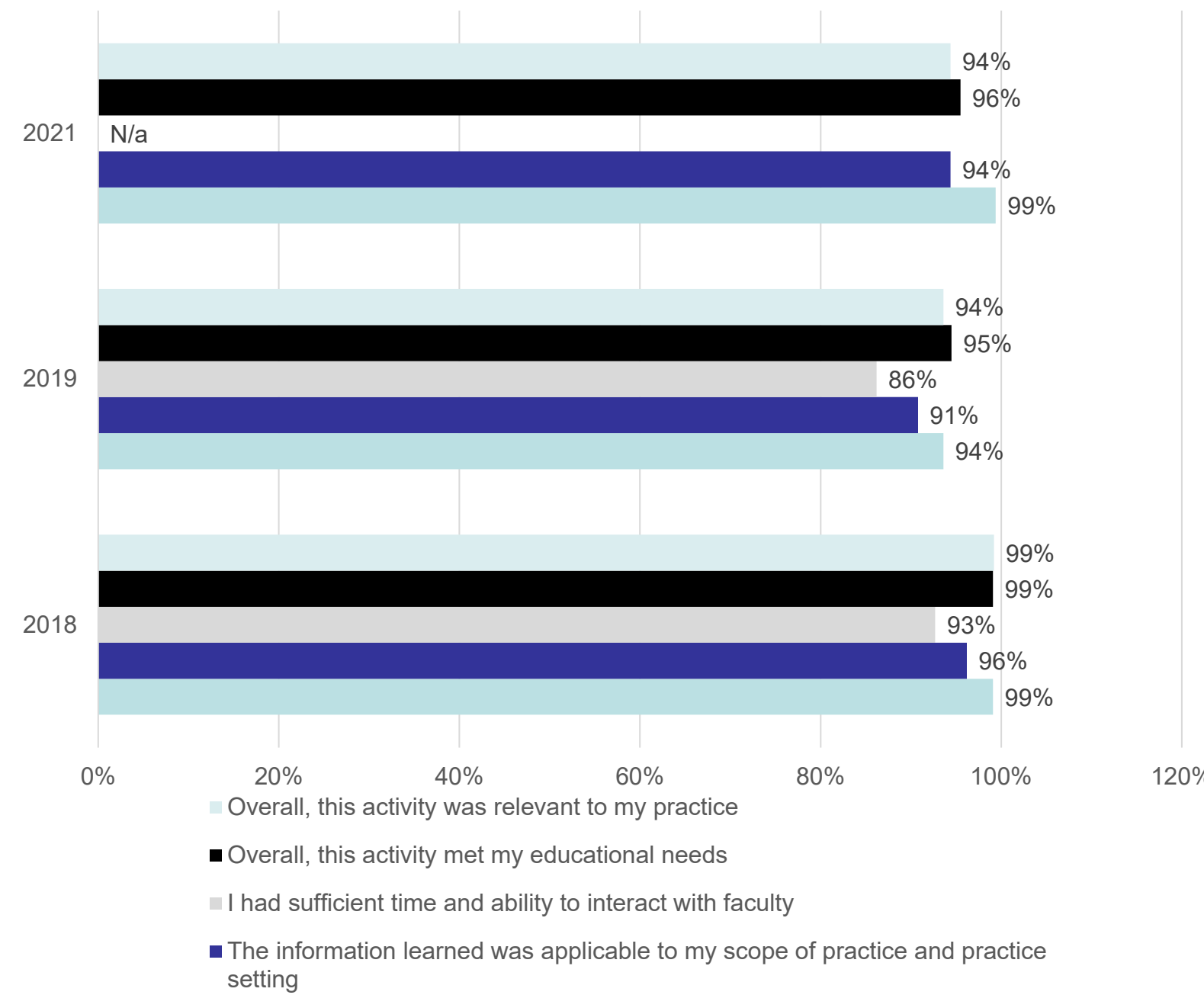
Summary of 2018, 2019, and 2021 Conference Participant Survey

	2018	2019	2021
Demographic of participants	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Majority of the participants (93%) are APPs, and <5% were registered nurses with BSN/MSN with over half practicing in the hospital setting.59% practice in a hospital and 35% in an academic setting. Other settings include research, community, private practice, and a combination of inpatient and outpatient.Approximately 60% of the participants have been in practice for less than 10 years, and 10% have been in practice for over 25 years with most participants seeing 11-50 patients on an average weekly basis.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">82% participants of conference attendance were APPs, and 10% were RN/BSN/APN61% of participants practice in hospital/ academic settings, 4% in community/ private practice settings, and 5% in research.Over 65% of participants have been in practice for less than 10 years, and about 6% have been in practice for over 25 years.57% of participants see between 26-50 patients in weekly while 31.6% see 11-25 patients weekly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">84% of conference participants were APPs, 2.2% were RN/BSN, 1.6% physicians, and 1.1% Resident/fellow.87% of participants practice in a hospital/ academic setting, 8% in community/ private practice setting.
Overall Evaluation of the Conference and Practice changes	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Majority of the participants (90%) report the overall learning objectives were met.Most participants agree the information presented at the conference will enhance their practice and have appositve impact on their knowledge, competence, performance, and patient outcomes.84% of the participants said they plan to make at least one practice changeMajority of the participants (>90%) agree that the information learned was applicable to their scope of practice and practice setting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Majority of the participants (95+%) report the learning objectives were met, while 33% said the information was new.Most participants agree the information presented at the conference will enhance their practice and have appositve impact on their knowledge, competence, performance, and patient outcomes.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Majority of the participants (99.4%) report the learning objectives were met.Over 98% of participants agree the information presented at the conference will enhance their practice and have appositve impact on their knowledge, competence, performance, and patient outcomes.
Activity effectiveness	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Almost all participants (>99%) agree the conference met their education needs.Over 90% of participants said the conference content was relevant to their practice, and they had sufficient time and ability to interact with the speakers.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Over 90% of conference participants agree the overall organization and quality of the activity met expectations.About 90% said the information learned was applicable to scope of practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Over 94.5% of conference participants agree that the educational objctive were met.Majority of the conference participants (95%) said information learnt was new and will impact their practice
Additional comments/ information	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Participants appreciate the relevancy and variety of topics presented at the conference.Additional time for lectures, questions/discussions, and small group/subspecialty activities.Need for more workshops in future conferences.interest in radiology-related topics.High likelihood to attend future conferences.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">26% of participants indicate CME sessions and topics influenced their decision to attend the SOAP conference. Other factors include conference dates/timing of the year (23%), location (20%), affordable cost (17%), and networking opportunities (14%).Participants hear about the SOAP conference from friends/colleagues (44%) and MDA marketing (32%) and most prefer future conferences to be held at MDACC	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Participants appreciate the multidisciplinary approach to the conference lecturesMost of the conference participants indicate the topics presented were a major influence on registration.

Result

- Over 90% of the participants were APPs, with most practicing in the hospital, clinical, or academic setting.
- Over 90-95% of the participants agree that the conference content met their learning objectives, and the information learned was applicable to their scope of practice. For most participants, the information presented at the conferences had a positive impact in knowledge, competence, performance, and patient outcomes.
- Despite changes related to a complete virtual learning platform in 2021, the educational effectiveness and learning outcomes remained strongly positive.

SOAP Conference Effectiveness and Virtual Limitations



Conclusion

- The surgical oncology APP group is one with a diverse clinical background and experience. Additional assessments of the APP learners, such as training experiences and preferred learning formats, may provide guidance for future conference planning. Overall, the SOAP conferences provided effective, relevant, and broad-spectrum education for the surgical oncology APPs.
- Furthermore, participants from the 2021 conference expressed satisfaction with the virtual learning experience and were open to attending a hybrid conference format in the future.

Recommendations

- With the growing demand for surgical oncology APPs and the lack of formal subspecialty training, more educational events for this APP group are needed.
- Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the shift of a learning platform from an in-person setting to a virtual learning environment was inevitable. Positive learning outcomes from both in-person and virtual conferences open the possibility of a hybrid learning environment for future programs.
- Future studies are needed to evaluate overall attendee satisfaction with in-person versus virtual learning and how these different learning platforms impact APP continuing education.