Top Themes from “Learning from our Learners”

Emory Department of Medicine Faculty Development Session

May 7th, 2013

Top Attending Attributes

1. Create an atmosphere for learning
   a. Encourage everyone to take an active role in teaching
   b. Utilizing “pimping” in a non-punitive way to push learners to think
   c. Encourage everyone to ask you questions and ask for help when needed
   d. Challenge learner to make a decision especially if they are unsure about it and then give feedback on the decision
   e. Make eye contact with your learners
2. Teach to your passion and your strengths
3. Explain/show your clinical reasoning especially when it comes to making difficult decisions
   a. Think out loud (i.e. describe your decision-making process) to best achieve this
   b. If applicable, email learner article that supports your decision-making
4. Be direct in asking learners what they want to learn or focus on
   a. This is especially important when teaching learners at different levels
   b. May be helpful to periodically separate learners by training level for more effective teaching
5. Make time for direct observation during patient care (both inpatient and outpatient)
   a. More helpful if observation is focused on key history or exam skill
   b. Learners also find it helpful to observe you as the skilled physician taking aspects of the history, performing physical exam maneuvers, and counseling patients
6. Give feedback early, often, and in-person
   a. Get learners’ insights on their strengths/weaknesses
   b. Be honest
   c. Cite specific examples of strengths and weaknesses and propose a plan on how the learner will improve on any weaknesses
   d. Follow-up on areas of improvement previously identified
7. Set objectives/expectations early on regardless of setting
   a. Outline how you want patient presentations to be done
   b. Set high expectations for your learners
8. Always remember that you are a role model for every learner you encounter
   a. Role model communication skills and patient advocacy
   b. Always keep the patient as the top priority when working with learners
9. Take time to get to know your learners and let them get to know you
10. Respect the time of your learners
11. Ask the patient to rate the learner
12. Remember to highlight normal findings in addition to abnormal ones
**Tips for the Inpatient Setting**

1. Have a start- and end-time to rounds and appoint the resident to be the time keeper
2. Pre-round on patients before teaching/attending rounds
3. Push learners to decide whether or not a patient is ready for discharge and explain their reasoning — this helps them better distinguish between “sick” and “not sick”
4. Allow students to round with you outside of teaching rounds
5. Make sure all learners have responsibilities so they feel like they are necessary members of the medical team
6. Introduce everyone on the team to each patient when doing bedside rounds
7. When unanswered questions come up on rounds, assign someone to look up the answer and bring an explanation for discussion the following day
8. If you plan to use “formal” didactic teaching sessions:
   a. Schedule a time for it that fits your learners’ schedules and do NOT schedule teaching at the end of the day
   b. Make it case-based and clinically relevant
9. Take an active role in resolving team issues (e.g. disagreement on care plan, interpersonal issues, etc.)

**Tips for the Outpatient Setting**

1. Be aware of learners’ schedules for the day and adjust amount/timing of teaching based on time available
2. Provide at least one “take home point” per patient to your learners
3. Gauge where a learner is knowledge- and experience-wise and teach to the appropriate level
   a. Medical students like more direct observation and like to observe you periodically
   b. Residents prefer less observation
   c. Ask “what part of the history or exam would you like to review?”
4. Help learners stay up to date on recommendations/clinical guidelines
5. Do NOT repeat the entire history and physical exam when you go to see the patient with your learners
   a. Take notes during a learner’s presentation to avoid duplicate questions later
   b. Decide before going back into room about which part of the history and/or physical exam needs clarification
   c. Demonstrate special exam components/maneuvers when appropriate
   d. Ask “what would you like me to do when we go back in the room?”
6. Ask learner what parts of the plan they have yet to discuss with patient and then observe them doing this
7. Do NOT repeat any patient counseling that the learner has already done with the patient unless you are unsure:
   a. The learner has the skills to independently and effectively do this
   b. The patient has clear understanding of what has already been said
8. Allow learner, especially in the continuity clinic setting, to be the patient’s primary physician
9. Role model how to handle difficult situations

Feedback

1. Be specific (e.g. do NOT make statements such as “good job” or “hard worker”)
   a. Probe for learner self-insight to any deficiencies or weaknesses
   b. Use examples that display a learner’s weaknesses/strengths
2. Observe learner enough so you can give feedback on body language and patient rapport
3. Frame end-of-month (e.g. rotation, clerkship, year, etc.) feedback with readiness to move to the next level of training
4. Have a system for giving feedback (e.g. using the competencies as a guide) and plan what your are going to say beforehand
5. Ask students what forms/checklists they will need signed for the month and plan for when this will occur
6. Students want feedback on any knowledge deficiencies they may have and how to improve this

Lecture-Based Teaching (e.g. classroom teaching, core conference, clinic conference, etc.)

1. Make it clear how information being presented is clinically relevant/applicable to your learners
2. Information should be focused and pertinent but not necessarily all-inclusive
3. Make lectures interactive
   a. Call on learners instead of waiting for volunteers
   b. Do NOT use audience response system for conferences that are broadcasted
4. Avoid PowerPoint when possible
5. Email any links of key resources to your audience members
6. Adjust scope of talk for all the learners present in the audience
   a. Include basic information and review up front so audience has the foundation for more complex information later in the talk
   b. Steadily increase the complexity of your talk as it goes to engage and meet the needs of all learners