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Mock paging program in Internal Medicine Boot Camp

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INTRODUCTION

Transitioning between medical school and internship is rarely seamless. Commonly, interns feel unprepared and lack confidence in their skills, knowledge and abilities when beginning residency. One expected skill is answering and triaging pages, by utilizing clinical knowledge, behaviors and attitudes to provide the best patient care possible.

STUDY OBJECTIVE

We sought to create opportunities to practice paging simulation for graduating medical students as an expected skill that would occur on day one of residency. To increase experience, comfort level and critical thinking skills, we created 14 unique internal medicine (IM) cases commonly found on the wards for mock paging through the Southern Illinois University (SIU) mock paging program.

METHODS

An invited panel of experts reviewed each IM case for appropriate responses, including assessments, investigations, management, and communication which aided in creating a rubric of what students should and should not do in each case. During the monthlong boot camp course, SIU nurse educators called the students and introduced a patient scenario. Students were expected to ask questions to discover the patient’s diagnosis and communicate a plan regarding the common IM topic they were presented. Immediate feedback was offered by the educators after case completion and then weekly compiled feedback to the group was utilized to debrief the case and assess for areas of learning opportunity. At the end of the boot camp course, a retrospective pre-post 5-point Likert scale survey was given to assess comfort level regarding paging.

REFERENCES


RESULTS

Nurse Pager gives scenario: Mr. Thomas is a 32 year old woman admitted last night with pneumonia. I was just checking her vitals and her blood pressure is 65/30.

Table: Dialogue and information to be provided based on instructions and inquiries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Instructions and Inquiries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65/30</td>
<td>Why is there a significant drop in blood pressure?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fever</td>
<td>What are the causes of fever?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheezing</td>
<td>Are there any respiratory difficulties?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Is there any history of anxiety or panic attacks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diaphoresis</td>
<td>Are there any signs of diaphoresis?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1: Example of pager case. SIU nurse educator reports the scenario to the student and then the student is expected to query for the information listed in order to propose a management plan.

Figure 2: Example of pager case responses with actual student performance from inaugural cohort (2019).

Figure 3: Survey responses. Pre-IM Boot Camp Comfort Level with paging, mean 2 (on 5-point Likert scale)

Figure 4: Survey responses. Post-IM Boot Camp Comfort Level with paging, mean 4.4 (on 5-point Likert scale)

DISCUSSION

Our retrospective pre-post survey for our inaugural cohort (2019) showed that prior to our boot camp course students felt a low comfort level in answering pages and after the mock paging program, they felt an increased comfort level in answering pages. We surveyed them again 4 months into their residency; all surveyed reported increased comfort level during the beginning of residency after participation in our mock paging program.

The purpose of our boot camp course is to increase student’s comfort level entering residency as well as their preparedness for this role change.

We demonstrated increased comfort level with mock paging and acknowledge retrospective pre-post surveys can be influenced by recall bias. We had a limited sample size given our small inaugural class. Overall, our study supports that students perceive benefit from a mock paging program. Our work would be strengthened by tying this perception to on-the-job skills.