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Innovation in Education

Poster Title
Teaching Communication: A Core Competency in Radiology

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Abstract

According to the Institute of Medicine, between 44,000 and 93,000 deaths secondary to medical errors in the U.S. are preventable. It is presumed that this number could be reduced significantly by improved diagnoses and by better communication of diagnoses which have been made correctly. The role of radiologists in this is quite obvious.

Up until 2 years ago, the radiology Board exam included an oral component in which communication skills could be directly assessed. These skills are no longer assessed on this "final exam," but are skills which must be honed. Despite the mandate of the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education that these skills be taught, few programs report more than 1 hour total didactic teaching on how to write a useful report.

The first part of the project consists of a survey which aimed to determine residents' methods of learning dictation, comfort with dictating, and interest regarding getting more feedback.

The second part of the project was the creation of a module geared toward residents at the beginning of their training in which they would have the opportunity to critique suboptimal reports, learn how to create more optimal reports, and demonstrate what they have learned.

The majority of residents stated relative comfort with dictating although none reported having had formal teaching. There was no predominant way in which residents learned the components of a useful report, and nearly all were interested in being taught more.

It can be concluded that communication skills are critical to radiologists' ability to be consultants, and given the current residents having stated that they would welcome feedback, it is likely that a module on reporting geared to first year residents would be a useful addition to their introductory lecture.