In 2014, our institution became concerned with our ACGME survey follow-up data. Programs received lower than anticipated scores in seven areas and identified considerable discrepancies between trainee and faculty responses. Trainees expressed confusion regarding many survey terms, leading to uncertainty of how to answer questions. We took a 2-step approach to establish clarification and thus were able to paint a clearer picture of issues we need to address as an institution.

Abstract: Problem Statement: ACGME requires trainees and faculty to complete annual surveys to monitor program adherence. Program directors do not see the survey questions, but receive follow-up aggregate survey data.1

In 2014, our institution became concerned with our follow-up data. Programs received lower than anticipated scores in seven areas and identified considerable discrepancies between trainee and faculty responses. Trainees expressed confusion regarding many survey terms, leading to uncertainty of how to answer questions.

Approach: Our GME Office took a 2-step approach to establish a clearer picture of institutional concerns: 1.a presentation explaining the survey purpose and clarifying (using ACGME definitions) unfamiliar terms and 2.an internal re-assessment survey.

Presenters focused on term-clarification and stressed the importance of continuing to answer questions honestly. The survey focused on the seven concerning areas: Environment-of-Inquiry (EI); Program-Evaluation-Confidentiality (PEC); Use-of-Evaluations- to-Improve (UEI); Scholarly-Activity (SA); Education/Service-Obligations (ESO); Resident- Concern-Process (RCP); and Concerns- Raised-without-Fear (CRWF). Trainees were anonymously asked if they thought each was a concern in their program and to suggest improvements for those they did.

Lessons Learned: 154/249 (62%) trainees responded.

Comparative results show a dramatic difference among the favorable/unfavorable responses on our 2014 ACGME survey vs. the internal survey vs. the 2015 ACGME survey (EI: 72/28 vs. 94/6 vs. 78/22; PEC: 79/21 vs. 92/8 vs. 82/18; UEI: 63/37 vs. 83/17 vs. 72/28; SA: 63/37 vs. 80/20 vs. 68/32; ESO: 63/37 vs. 90/10 vs. 71/29; RCP: 68/32 vs. 86/14 vs. 75/25; and CRWF: 67/33 vs. 84/16 vs. 76/24).

Significance: Both the internal survey results and the 2015 ACGME results reflected a clear improvement when compared with the 2014 ACGME results. Providing clarifying guidance to trainees on the ACGME questions and re-surveying them has helped us to paint a clearer picture of issues we need to address as an institution. This process may help other institutions do the same.

Level of Audience: Mid-career


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