Feed Forward: Identifying and Strengthening support for our at risk students during the clerkship year

Session Plan: Description: For many students, the clerkship year represents the most difficult transition during their medical school career. Depending on the structure of clerkships, students may experience a new work and learning environment as frequently as every 2-8 weeks. As such, they are exposed to new academic, interpersonal, and professional challenges with little time to acclimate. Due to the busy nature of the clinical environment, students may struggle through their clerkships without consistent guidance. To compound the issue, faculty are expected to supervise students with little or no prior knowledge of their skills or development. There is no consensus on how to support students who are struggling during this period, and opinions on whether information on these learners should be shared or how it should be shared varies greatly.1 This debate encompasses many challenges including supporting the needs of struggling students, potentially stigmatizing those students, and considering how local policy dictates how information is used by administrators and teachers regarding students at risk.2-5

In this session, we will meet with administrators and educators from four medical schools that have created their own feed forward processes. We will discuss how each institution has approached dissemination of knowledge regarding struggling students and how that information is ultimately used in their institution to help their learners. We will also discuss some of the policy ramifications of such approaches, as well as ethical implications and unintended consequences. We will break into small groups with case studies based on real scenarios to help illustrate some of the challenges and successes associated with creating a feed forward process. Finally, we will regroup to share best practices with the larger group.

Session Agenda:
1. Overview of the challenges of identifying and helping students that are struggling during their clerkship year and the factors that make this time period unique. (10 minutes)
   Speaker: **
2. A discussion of how different institutions have approached forward feeding including a description of how information is gathered, shared, and utilized. We will also discuss mitigating risks with the sharing of sensitive student information in light of the family education rights and privacy act (FERPA). (25 minutes)
   Speaker:***
3. Small group activity (groups of 6-8): We will conclude with five case studies of students who were part of feed forward discussions and remediation. 7-10 minutes per case with discussion about how each person and/or their institution would handle (40 minutes total):
   a) Sharing information about a struggling student
   b) Approaches to helping the student
   c) How policy might affect your ability to spread information and help this student.
   Moderator(s):***
4. Group sharing of themes identified in small groups (10 minutes)
Learning Objectives:
1. Discuss pros and cons of sharing information on struggling students during the clerkship year.
2. Describe methods used by different schools for identifying and helping at-risk students by forward feeding during the clinical clerkships.
3. Explain how different institutional policies influence approaches to information about struggling students.
4. Explain different cases that demonstrate how feed-forward information is used by four different institutions that demonstrate the benefits and challenges of the process.