

PDQ Preceptor Development Quarterly

An E-Newsletter from the OSU College of Medicine

Ticket Drawings Continue to Reward Preceptors



In the past several weeks, preceptors from Akron, Bucyrus, Cincinnati, Columbus, Marysville, and Cleveland received OSU Football tickets through our email drawings.

THERE'S MORE TO COME, including an opportunity to be among our guests at the Medical Center suite for an upcoming Buckeye Men's basketball game. And, just in time for the holidays, look for a drawing for several AMC family movie ticket packages.

Keep checking your email!!!

So Glad You Asked...

Questions from preceptors about teaching in the office setting are answered by the Ambulatory Clerkship co-directors, Drs. Curren and Cronau.

Q: My medical students often ask me about coding for office visits---

I am not a certified coder—what should I be teaching them?

A: One of the goals of our students working in ambulatory offices is to learn to complete an office visit in an efficient and accurate manner. Along with the basics of appropriate history taking, physical exam, and developing a coherent plan for assessment and treatment, this necessarily includes coding. We encourage students to think of medical coding as representing the content of the visit in numeric terms. We want them to know that we use codes for reimbursement and to justify procedures or lab studies that are subsequently ordered.

Students struggle with the distinction between CPT codes, representing visit type and complexity, and ICD-9 codes, representing distinct diagnoses. The concept of coding to the limits of specificity (i.e., wheezing or COPD with acute exacerbation) and the concept of using V-codes for well visits can be daunting. Also, our use of problem-based codes for medical follow-ups or acute visits is confusing to students

and attendings alike.

Explaining how you make decisions about coding on the fly, whether this represents an absolute best practice or not, encourages students to consider how they will do this in the future.

It is often helpful for students to look at returned billings with a business or office manager. In this way, students can learn that further communication with insurers is often needed to maximize fair reimbursement. And since we don't always get it right, they will see that failure to use specific or accurate codes, or to code for vaccines given or supplies used, can lead to financial losses for the practice.

Accurate billing for services performed and documented is an ongoing physician responsibility. It is important that our students enter residency with an appreciation of this and a basic knowledge of how to use a coding book or database to accomplish coding their visits.

Ultimately, we want our students to know that with the help of their office staff, physicians can become adept at this important part of clinical practice.

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Preceptor to Preceptor – Holly Cronau, MD

Teaching Physical Exam Skills

Physical examination skills are the single most common area in which students request more instruction and feedback.

During your student's experience with you, he should:

- Demonstrate the ability to perform basic physical examination techniques
- Describe normal and abnormal findings accurately
- Document findings in notes with accuracy
- Begin to recognize and interpret abnormal findings

Keep in mind that the student may not yet have learned or done a breast, genital, or rectal examination.

How can you help students acquire these essential skills?

DEMONSTRATION

Demonstrate proper techniques. Remember to explain when your exam technique is modified from the ideal and why.

"Mrs. B is unable to stand and weighs just under 400 pounds. I will examine her heart and lungs while she is clothed and sitting in her wheelchair because my exam table is unable to safely support her. For today this limited exam will suffice, but I will make a note that it is limited due to these considerations."

Emphasize important aspects of physical exam (PE) techniques.

"Did you notice how I asked the patient to roll to the left lateral side to listen to her mitral valve prolapse?"

OBSERVATION

Observe your student performing PE skills.

FEEDBACK

Give feedback to the student on her PE skills.

"You did a nice job of aligning the ear canal and not inserting the otic speculum too far."

ABNORMAL FINDINGS

Look for and point out abnormal PE findings for the student to see, feel, hear, or smell.

"Did you notice the shiny skin and loss of hair on Mr. D's shins? This is due to his peripheral vascular disease and diabetic neuropathy."

Physicians Named to "Preceptor All Stars"

Based on consistent stellar evaluations from students, several preceptors will join the list of Preceptor All Stars.

These physicians will be visited by a member of the College of Medicine staff and given an All Star trophy:

Vivek Awasty, Marion
Priscilla Bresler, Columbus
Marc Comianos, Marion
Mark Evans, Hilliard
Cynthia Kreger, Columbus
Rajeev Mehta, Miamisburg
Betty Mitchell, Marion
L. Terry Olson, Westerville
Howard Rothbaum, Columbus
Daniel Scheerer, Zanesville
Carmen Skinner, Marion
Neeraj Tayal, Columbus
Craig Thompson, Marion
Jasmine Trouten, St. Clairsville
Sanjay Vora, Marion

Student Voices

Comments from students regarding their experiences with preceptors

She listened attentively, asked me what areas I would like to work on, gave me opportunities to develop those areas I identified.

Very approachable, interested in student learning, motivated to include students in the patient care process.

He definitely gave me the best constructive criticism of any instructor that I've had during school. It allowed me to improve throughout the clerkship.

He took time at the end of each day to go through each patient and talk about learning points. We also went over labs at the

end of each day. He provided useful quizzes as well as articles about patients we had seen.

She is always very kind and challenged me just a little beyond my comfort-zone so that I became more and more comfortable with management and diagnosis of complex chronic problems.

She consistently quizzed me and allowed me to offer my opinions about the next steps. She valued my ideas and allowed me to be involved in coding, diagnosis, script writing, procedures, physical examinations and patient counseling! I felt like an important member of the team.