Teaching and Assessing Healthcare Professionalism Through Standardized Patient Simulations
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OVERVIEW: This workshop will focus on training and assessing professionalism using standardized / simulated patients. Professionalism in healthcare is evolving and is defined by a set of abstract principles (e.g. norms, values, etc.) and observable behaviors (e.g. confidence, competence, ethical conduct, etc.). Competency-based healthcare training requires that learners demonstrate their ability to act in a professional manner in a variety of situations, whether they are observed or not. However, there is a subset of observable professional behaviors that can be assessed in vivo (i.e. with actual patients) or through standardized / simulated patients (SP) which this interactive workshop will focus on.

The use of SPs to teach and assess professionalism arguably offers the most control over the teaching / learning / evaluation process. SP cases can be created that parallel challenges to clinical professionalism, e.g. a patient pressuring a physician to describe an inappropriate medication. Such patient simulations can be designed to match the setting of medical educators and their respective professionalism challenges.

The workshop presenters will define professionalism as a core competency, describe the potential use of SPs for teaching and assessing skills and charge participants to prepare to use SPs through interactive exercises.

OBJECTIVES: Following the workshop participants will be able to:

Objective 1: Identify the subset of medical “professionalism” competencies that can be taught and assessed through SP encounters.

Objective 2: Explain how SP cases and assessment rubrics can teach and assess professionalism.

Objective 3: Describe how feedback and debriefing can help healthcare learners understand and develop his / her professional behaviors.

WORKSHOP TIMING:

Part 1 – 20 minutes: Introduction and overview of the challenge to define “professionalism”
Part 2 – 45 minutes - Participant interactive component. Three simultaneous work groups will:
- Group 1: Define professional competencies that can be taught and assess through simulations
- Group 2: Outline SP cases that can be used to teach and assess professionalism
- Group 3: Develop a set of professionalism assessment competencies that can be used with the standardized patient cases (scenarios)
Part 3 – 25 minutes: Integrate work group ideas and discuss debriefing strategies.