

8th Annual Interclerkship Day: Improving Patient Safety

January 3, 2011

The 8th Annual Interclerkship Day on Improving Patient Safety was a unique opportunity for Jefferson Medical College's (JMC) 3rd year students to increase their awareness about medical error and patient safety, while benefiting from lessons learned from the aviation model of crew resource management and its application to medicine. The program was moderated by David B. Nash, MD, MBA, Dean of the Jefferson School of Population Health (JSPH), and sponsored by the Office of the Dean of JMC and JSPH.

John J. Nance, JD is an internationally known aviation expert who served as the keynote speaker. Nance is a founding board member of the National Patient Safety Foundation; a former airline pilot; and an ABC News broadcast analyst on aviation. He presented convincing evidence demonstrating how medicine can use crew resource management (CRM) principles from the airline industry to improve patient safety and increase professionalism. He discussed the importance of communication and the creation of an environment and culture that allows the most junior team member to participate and speak up if something is amiss. Ideally, this type of environment will foster

a team and a culture where all team members are committed to improving patient safety.

The application of CRM via medical simulation was presented by Kenneth J. Abrams, MD, MBA, Senior VP of Clinical Operations and Chief Quality Officer at New York's North Shore Long Island Jewish Health System (NSLIJ). Dr. Abrams shared training scenarios that replicate situations in multiple medical environments, including a critical care unit, emergency department, and operating room. At NSLIJ, residency teams battle in Sim Wars, a patient simulation competition that reinforces teamwork and positive clinical outcomes.

Geno Merli, MD, FACP, Senior VP and Chief Medical Officer of Thomas Jefferson University Hospital (TJUH), provided an intriguing luncheon presentation on various quality and safety initiatives underway at TJUH. The major areas of focus he discussed included readmissions, medical safety and infection control where he outlined improvements made over time. The students had the opportunity to hear firsthand, the perspective of a CMO and gain greater insight into the role and its responsibilities.

Valerie D. Weber, MD, Chair of Clinical Services at The Commonwealth Medical College, used case studies to explore patient safety issues and solutions through leadership strategies. Supporting the theme of the day, she stressed the characteristics and skills needed to become a leader in quality and safety and encouraged the students to take an active role early on their professional journey.

The day concluded with a lively and interactive session on the importance of skillful communication in challenging scenarios. Jason Baxter, MD, MSCP, Assistant Professor in the Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine at Jefferson, set the stage for students to see and experience methods for delivering bad news to patients and families. He helped to characterize the elements of a successful encounter with patients and families through the use of case scenarios, and student involvement in role-plays. The audience observed important skills, actions, language, and non-verbal cues which enhance the provider-patient encounter and lead to patient satisfaction. ■

REFERENCES

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