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M3 SOAP Note Training: Don't Take the Basics for Granted

Craig E. Cheifetz MD

Inova Health System, craig.cheifetz@inova.org

Sarah Jane Iglehart

Vibin Roy

Sarina S. Luangkhot

Inova Health System, sarina.luangkhot@inova.org

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M3 SOAP Note Training: Don't Take the Basics for Granted

Craig Cheifetz, MD, Sarah Jane Iglehart, Vibin Roy, Sarina Luangkhot
Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine

Background

The Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine (VCU SOM) is a premier academic medical center in the United States that is focused on medical education innovation. The main campus is located in Richmond, Virginia. In 2005, the VCU SOM partnered with Inova Health Systems to create a regional medical campus in Northern Virginia, the VCU SOM Inova Campus. In August 2009, two fourth-year medical students created and presented on "SOAP Notes: A M3 Primer" to third year students at the Clinical Skills Day, as part of M3 orientation. This project was completed in collaboration with Inova Research in Medical Education Center.

Why is SOAP Note Training for M3s Important?

- The process of writing SOAP notes is not intuitive, and there are many skills that can be taught to facilitate the process.
- In the first two years, students are taught what a SOAP note is, but are given very little practice in writing them.
- Many acronyms or abbreviations are commonly used in medicine, and SOAP note training is an excellent opportunity to clarify key terms.

Methodology

August 2008: Michael Rolen, VCU SOM Class of 2009, drafted and delivered the first SOAP note training to the VCU SOM Inova Campus Class of 2010

August 2009: Sarah Jane Iglehart and Vibin Roy, VCU SOM Class of 2010, further refined the training module and presented it to the entire VCU SOM Class of 2011 during M3 Orientation in Richmond.

Future plans include continuing to develop the training module on SOAP notes and including it in the annual M3 Orientation program. M4 students will be used to update and deliver the presentation.

Feedback

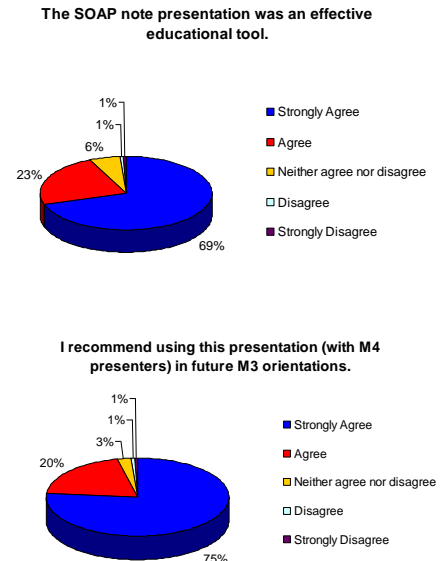
After the presentation, students were asked to complete a 4-question feedback survey. Results of this survey are as follows (N=167):

Q1. The SOAP note presentation was an effective educational tool.
69% Strongly Agree
23% Agree
6% Neither Agree nor Disagree
1% Disagree
1% Strongly Disagree

Q2. I appreciated receiving SOAP note training from my peers, as opposed to from an attending physician or resident.
69% Strongly Agree
23% Agree
6% Neither Agree nor Disagree
1% Disagree
1% Strongly Disagree

Q3. I intend on using the techniques I learned today in writing future SOAP notes.
72% Strongly Agree
24% Agree
2% Neither Agree nor Disagree
1% Disagree
1% Strongly Disagree

Q4. I recommend using this presentation (with M4 presenters) in future M3 orientations.
75% Strongly Agree
20% Agree
3% Neither Agree nor Disagree
1% Disagree
1% Strongly Disagree



Discussion

When creating a comprehensive M3 Orientation, institutions should consider the basics. Students who transition from the didactic years to the clinical years often feel unprepared for working in the hospital setting. SOAP notes can be clarified with a simple training session, and if it is geared toward the experience level of the learner, it will be extremely well received.

For additional information on this training module, email sarina.luangkhot@inova.org