Providing AC₂Tionable Feedback Improves Resident & Fellow Satisfaction

Deborah Simpson, PhD,1,2,3 Jacob Bidwell MD, 1,3 Tricia La Fratta MBA, 1 Wilhelm Lehmann MD,1,3 David Hamel MD,1,3 Nicole Salvo MD,1,3 William MacDonald MD,1 Aboud Affi MD,1,3 Mohammad Mortada MD,1,3 Colleen Nichols MD 1,3

1Advocate Aurora Health; 2Medical College of Wisconsin; 3University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

Introduction

Feedback
• Feedback is an essential component of the learning process
• It is a required element for graduate medical education (GME) program accreditation
• Evidence Re: Challenges to Successful Feedback
  o Feedback is often among the lowest rated items on learners’ evaluations of teachers
  o It is stressful for learners/teachers alike
  o It is not actionable
  o Actionable feedback must include
    o Current performance (omission/commission, deficient/error)
    o The desired goal performance (the gap)
    o A stepwise approach to bridging that performance gap with strategies and resources

Key Elements of Actionable Feedback

- Say Thanks as feedback is a dynamic relationship

Unfortunately, one or more of these elements are often omitted rendering most feedback unactionable.

Current Literature
• Feedback is conceptualized as a growth-oriented, reciprocal relationship
• Limited focuses on enhancing both learner’s and teacher’s ability to mutually assure that feedback is actionable

Aims
1. To educate learners and teachers to seek/provide actionable feedback
2. To determine if residents’/fellows’ ratings of feedback improve

References

Method

Participants: All faculty & trainees in our Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) approved residency/fellowship programs

Time Frame: 2-year intervention period

Intervention: Participants expected to attend a 45-minute AC₂Tionable feedback session

- Session typically incorporated into an established training program venue (eg, faculty meeting, core curriculum session)
- The core elements of AC₂Tionable feedback were highlighted from both a faculty & learner perspective using AC₂T model:
  - A = Ask for feedback /Answer targeting specific performance gap
  - C = Clarify if any actionable feedback elements were omitted
  - T = Say what steps you will take/Coach to support learning and growth

Results

- All residents/fellows annually complete an ACGME administered program evaluation
- One item focuses on feedback – Am "satisfied with feedback"
- In each of the 2 years prior to AC₂T implementation our ACGME mean rating significantly below national mean by 0.4
- Response rate > 98%: 2017= 139/141; 2018=163/167
- Post AC₂T education feedback item ratings:
  - Year 1 improved to .20 below national mean | Response rate 99% [168/170]
  - Year 2 increased another .20 reaching the national mean | Response rate 85% during pandemic [152/179]

Data & Analysis

- ACGME administered resident/fellow survey results for our sponsoring institution vs national mean plotted over 4 years:
  - AC₂Tionable feedback is associated with dramatic improvement in feedback ratings over a 2-year period

Conclusions

- Brief, focused training on AC₂Tionable feedback elements were associated with improved feedback ratings over a 2-year period
- Approach is easily generalizable and feasible for other programs
- Refresher sessions with inclusion in new resident/fellow and faculty onboarding essential to sustain approach
- Focusing learner and faculty development on key elements of actionable feedback is associated with dramatic improvement in feedback ratings

Say thanks after feedback
- Ask for more actionable feedback
- Learned that a particular communication style I was using was viewed as intimidating
- Gained insight into what is helpful / not helpful in regard to my educational approaches. Helped me revise / make changes in my educational approaches.

Standard Deviation From National Mean for Item “Satisfied with Feedback” Pre/Post AC₂T

-0.4 -0.4
-0.2 -0.2
-0.0 0.0
-0.2
-0.4
-0.4
-0.6
-0.8
-1.0
Pre 2017  Pre 2018  Post 2019  Post 2020

Representative Comments: “I...”

- Say thanks after feedback
- Ask for more actionable feedback
- Learned that a particular communication style I was using was viewed as intimidating
- Gained insight into what is helpful / not helpful in regard to my educational approaches. Helped me revise / make changes in my educational approaches.

Conclusions

- Brief, focused training on AC₂Tionable feedback elements were associated with improved feedback ratings over a 2-year period
- Approach is easily generalizable and feasible for other programs
- Refresher sessions with inclusion in new resident/fellow and faculty onboarding essential to sustain approach
- Focusing learner and faculty development on key elements of actionable feedback is associated with dramatic improvement in feedback ratings