A Student Mentorship Program Improves The Medical Student Experience Through Frequent and High-Quality Feedback

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BACKGROUND
Traditionally, medical students applying for a residency position in emergency medicine (EM) will complete clerkships in emergency medicine during the summer and/or fall of their fourth year.

During these clerkships, medical students are often in an unfamiliar environment and may hesitate to seek performance feedback. Medical students often cannot receive real-time or interval feedback during their rotations that they can incorporate during their time in the emergency department (ED).

There is a need for programs that allow students to have access to feedback and support throughout their rotations so that they can continue to build on their skills in EM. By pairing students with a dedicated resident mentor, we aim to increase medical students’ access to rapid feedback and improve the overall quality of EM clerkships.

METHODS
This quality improvement study was performed by surveying rotating medical students before and after their four-week EM clerkship.

Both surveys contained the same five items to assess the impact of the mentorship program on the students, and the post-rotation survey contained additional items meant to gauge the quality and characteristics of the mentorship program.

To conduct a statistical comparison, survey responses used a Likert scale converted to corresponding numerical values (1 to 7, with 7 being the most positive response). Median scores were compared using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. A p-value of <0.05 determined a statistical difference between the Likert scores.

RESULTS
All rotating medical students who completed an EM rotation, participated in the student mentorship program, and intended to apply for an EM residency position were included in the study.

20 out of 21 students completed both the pre and post-rotation surveys. Four out of five survey items achieved statistically significant differences.

When surveyed after the rotation, students felt that they received more frequent feedback: 7 (6-7) versus 5 (4-6), p=0.0027; received higher-quality feedback: 7 (6-7) versus 5 (5-6), p=0.0061; knew how to identify someone for questions/concerns: 7 (6-7) versus 6 (6-7), p=0.0313; and were more comfortable working in the emergency department: 7 (6-7) versus 6 (5-7), p=0.0181.

CONCLUSIONS
Student mentorship programs can have a positive impact by improving the learning experience available to medical students, providing a more welcoming environment, and improving the quality and standardization of clinical rotations offered nationwide.

This study found that students paired with a dedicated resident mentor reported a statistically significant increase in the frequency of feedback, quality of feedback, and comfort in the emergency department.

REFERENCES