

Achieving greater student sustainability by using competencies to monitor and coach the professional growth and development of pre-clerkship medical trainees

Cathleen C. Pettepher and Neil Osheroff

Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, Nashville, Tennessee USA

Introduction/background:

Clinicians require skills and attitudes beyond medical knowledge. However, because of the heavy focus on medical knowledge during pre-clerkship training, programs often struggle to design experiences and assessments that prepare students for all aspects of clinical work. One approach to addressing this issue is to incorporate competency-based assessment schemes into the pre-clerkship curriculum. While maintaining the importance of medical knowledge, competency-based strategies allow a more holistic view of student development and can be used to provide coaching for learners in a variety of domains. They also provide students with rich feedback across all aspects of their performance and establish a roadmap that encourages learner development and sustainability.

Purpose and outcomes:

This workshop will benefit curricular leaders, administrators, and faculty who are involved in health professional student education and assessment. Attendees will leave with practical strategies for implementing milestone-based learner assessments.

Issues for exploration:

This interactive workshop will explore the advantages and challenges of incorporating qualitative milestone-based competency assessments across the medical curriculum, discuss differences between “competencies” and “competence,” describe the learning settings, milestone language, and feedback that enable the use of competencies, and discuss how competency-based assessment enhances student sustainability.

Workshop activities:

The workshop will begin with an interactive discussion that explores the advantages of qualitative milestone-based competency assessments over quantitative knowledge-based assessments alone. Attendees will then break into small groups and discuss approaches for integrating novel activities into their curricula that could be used to observe specific student behaviors and apply milestone-based assessments. Participants will share these strategies and develop milestone language for specific competency domains.