"X-COVER"- a Learning Framework and Acting-Internship Preparation Curriculum to Approach Common On-Call Conditions

Purpose:

The Acting Internship (AI) is a culminating experience in medical school where students receive greater autonomy and patient care responsibility.[1,2,3,5] Important skills to advance during the AI include 1- recognizing and triaging patients with emergent conditions ("sick vs not"), 2- time management, 3- recognizing one's limitations and asking for help, and 4- communicating effectively between teams.[2] Effective cross-cover- answering questions and writing orders for patients, not under the immediate care of the provider- requires these four skill domains. As such, cross-cover is an integral required but most often new experience during the AI. Existing curricula on cross-cover are currently targeted to students at the end of medical school.[1,2,6] However, as students perform cross-cover during their AI's, a curriculum specific to cross-cover may be needed earlier.

Objectives:

We developed a curriculum with a systematic approach to triaging and managing cross-cover calls introducing a cognitive framework that integrates the aforementioned prioritized AI skill domains, with the goal to improve learners' confidence as they begin an Acting Internship.

Methods:

We created the "X-COVER" mnemonic, a cognitive framework to approach cross-cover:

X-COVER:

- Call Triage and Help (Do you need to see the patient now and do you need to escalate and call your resident and/or attending?)

- Orders now (stabilizing and diagnostic orders are needed)

- Verify Information (What additional information do you need from the handoff or from the chart)

- Examine (will you examine the patient?)

- Rx and Reassess (what is your treatment, monitoring, and follow-up order plan)

We developed a 110-minute case-based small group session for third-year students at the University of Colorado prior to beginning their AI's where learners apply the X-COVER approach to manage eleven cases summarizing common Cross-Cover conditions. Pre- and Post-Learner confidence levels in triaging, providing cross-coverage, and identifying a patient with an emergent condition will be assessed.

Results:

These sessions will be delivered to 145 students on March 21 and March 22, 2023. Evaluation data will be available to present at the symposium.

Conclusion:

The unique approach of using the cognitive framework of X-COVER applied to common overnight nursing call cases has the benefit of guiding students through a systematic approach and equips the learner with a mental tool that can be utilized in the future. This, in turn, may more adequately prepare the student for their respective AI rotation through having a readily available mental tool and increasing their confidence in their ability to triage and manage overnight calls. The cognitive approach incorporates multiple domains within the AAMC's EPA toolkit.[7] Utilization of the X-COVER framework paired with example cases may be an effective curriculum tool in preparing medical students for the overnight cross-cover portion of their respective AI rotations.