2024-2025 Golden Stethoscope Nomination

Nominated for: Outstanding Patient/Provider Communication

Name of Nominee Dr. Roberto Silva

Dr. Silva, or as one sweet, very small older lady called him, “ Dr. Sito ” , exemplifies fantastic patient/provider communication. He gives a level of individual attention to each and every patient that we should all aim to emulate. He always took the time to deeply understand each patient and their lives, and treated each patient with dignity, respect, and nonjudgment. I could see his patients relax over the course of the visit and I never saw anyone leave in more distress than they had when they came in.

He is a fantastic educator, as myself and the rural students can attest, and he emphasizes teaching in his practice of medicine as well. His patients in the primary care setting often had chronic illnesses or were following up on new diagnoses, often ones delivered by a rushing provider with little time for education. Regardless of what they came in for, Dr. Silva would take the time necessary to explain exactly what was going on. The visit wouldn ’ t end until it seemed that the patient fully understood their condition.

He not only cares for the individual patients but for the whole community. He is beloved by his very loyal patients at the Denver Health Park Hill Family Medicine Clinic. He has seen many of his patients for years and often sees members of the same family. On my first day of preceptorship, he explained the history of the neighborhood and how it informs the patients he sees in clinic. By knowing the community well, he was able to communicate with patients realistically and in a way that acknowledged potential barriers. Additionally, about half of the patients we saw were Spanish-speaking. Watching the way his patients would light up when he was able to speak to them in their own language inspired me to practice my own Spanish.

He has a careful and calm way of practicing medicine that clearly developed during his time as a rural practitioner. During a vasectomy, he told me that some people can do them in 15 minutes. However, in a rural setting, a mistake could mean an emergent helicopter ride to a larger city instead of a mere trip down the hall of the hospital. The medicine I saw was deliberate and ongoing. He was not rushing to make fixes or to see immediate results; instead, he was planting seeds in a garden. I have no doubt his patients appreciated his emphasis on doing a good job instead of rushing through the visit. He always seemed guided by giving the best care to the person in front of him.

It is unfortunate that the DOCS preceptorship program is so short, because I really valued the time I got to work with Dr. Silva. His patients, the Park Hill community, and all of the students fortunate enough to be taught by him are incredibly lucky to be crossing paths with such a dedicated educator and kind person. I feel grateful to have met many of his patients and to observe his practice of medicine. I believe that so much of the impact of medicine comes from how we listen and speak to patients. Dr. Silva exemplified effective and compassionate communication, and I hope to someday care for patients in a similar manner.

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