Stanford School of Medicine

Guidelines for Optimal Resident Interactions

Residents should:

1. Introduce students and provide a description of their role to patients, families, and other health care staff.
2. Inform students of expectations and their role in the group at the beginning of a rotation.
3. Include students so they feel like active members of the team.
4. Encourage students to take "ownership" of their patients.
5. Give students an appropriate amount of responsibility in caring for patients.
6. Discuss with students how to present themselves professionally; this includes dress, demeanor, language, punctuality, etc.
7. Provide appropriate and constructive feedback based on observed student interactions with patients and other members of the health care team.
8. Be patient with students.
9. Encourage questions.
10. Be accessible to students.
11. Give specific feedback frequently.
12. Give praise and thanks liberally.
13. Make sure tasks assigned to students have learning value.
14. Focus on teaching pertinent physical findings.
15. Lead by example. Residents are important role models for students.
16. Treat all health care providers (nurses, therapists, administrative assistants, techs) with respect at all times.
17. Observe patient confidentiality at all times.
18. Show empathy and compassion for patients and families, both in their presence and when discussing patients with colleagues.
19. Always behave in a respectful manner with honor and integrity.
20. Teach cultural sensitivity and follow ethical principles.
21. Share a "pearl" daily.
22. Explain the purpose behind ordering labs, studies, or consults.
23. Admit when they don't know the answer.
24. Teach something about each patient everyday.

Guidelines for Resident Interactions to be Avoided

Residents should not:

1. Take credit for students' work.
2. Talk disrespectfully about other healthcare providers (i.e., ancillary staff, other medical specialties).
3. Use inappropriate language.
4. Introduce students as "Doctors."
5. Make negative or disparaging comments about students in front of other students or patients.
6. Interrupt or joke during student presentations.
7. Have confrontations in front of patients and families.
8. Reprimand students in a publicly humiliating fashion.
9. Say "You should know that by now."
10. Compare different students' knowledge in front of other students.
11. Ask questions in a belittling manner.
12. Have unfair expectations of students' medical knowledge or ask questions beyond the scope of students' knowledge.
13. Send students on menial errands that have no learning value.
14. Allow interactions with pharmaceutical representatives to defer from practicing evidence-based medicine.
15. Make sexual advances or references to students.