My Preceptor Doesn’t Give Feedback!

How can I improve my skills?

By Lauren Trillo, MMS, PA-C

Physician assistant students require timely, effective feedback. However many students report never receiving this type of guidance during their rotation. One factor is that students don’t always realize they are receiving feedback. The best way for students to realize they are getting feedback is to tell them you are giving it to them.

Another factor is preceptors often mistake written student evaluations as providing feedback. Feedback differs from a written student evaluation in that it is formative and not summative. The goal of formative assessment is to provide an opportunity for ongoing learning and improvement in a low risk environment, whereas summative assessment provides an overall evaluation based on goals and objectives and is high risk due to the graded component. Here are some tips and tricks on how to provide students with feedback.

Feedback should be:
1. Conducted in a private setting face-to-face
2. Timely and frequent — given soon after the behavior occurs
3. Given in small doses
4. Focused on specific skills and/or behaviors
5. Descriptive and clear
6. Nonjudgmental

For more information, visit the providing effective feedback section of our preceptor resources page at http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/pa-program/preceptors/resources/

References:

Clinical Year Corner

As of July 1st, 2017, the UW PA program transitioned from being a part of the Department of Family Medicine and Community Health to the Department of Academic Affairs in the School of Medicine and Public Health. With this transition comes a new process for our Clinical Adjunct Assistant Professor and Preceptor appointments. If you are interested in an appointment or for more information contact:

Rosa Retrum at rretrum@wisc.edu

Contact Us

University of Wisconsin–Madison
Physician Assistant Program
Health Sciences Learning Center
750 Highland Avenue, Room 1278
Madison, WI 53705
Phone: (608) 263-5620
Email: paprogram@wisc.edu

Photography (unless noted):
UW SMPH Media Solutions
Preceptor Q&A

Jacqueline Kazik, MA, PA-C, DFAAPA

Ms. Kazik graduated from the UW-Madison PA Program in 1985. In July 2017, she became the program director for Concordia University. Prior to her time with Concordia, she gained experience as the academic coordinator for Marquette University, adjunct faculty at UW-Madison and Concordia, and helped start Carroll University’s PA program. Her clinical experience includes, emergency medicine, family medicine and women’s health. She also has years of experience as a preceptor for PA students.

Q: How did precepting prepare you for your new position as program director for Concordia?

Precepting students allowed me to see firsthand where students were in their training. Precepting really is teaching, pure and simple. However, the experiential nature of it means that, as a preceptor, you have a huge impact on learning. Seeing growth in the student’s ability during their rotation with you — that’s the beautiful reward in preceptorship! As a PD now, I have the ability to assist my clinical coordinator in issues that arise because I’ve been there, in the trenches. I can understand the viewpoints of the student, the preceptor and the clinical coordinator. That is valuable knowledge that can only be learned through experience.

Q: What advice do you have for preceptors who are interested in transitioning to academia?

If you are not a preceptor, become one; that is a good starting point. Contact a program near you and volunteer to “guest lecture” in your areas of expertise. As you gain experience in the classroom, and in precepting students, you gain insight into the rewards and the difficulties of faculty life. If your interest is in a clinical coordinator position, contact the clinical coordinators at schools in your area and ask to meet. Also visit the PAEA website and take a look at the resources and information available for those who want to transition to academia.

“She is an excellent teacher with so many experiences and stories to share. Jackie is what made this rotation great.”
- UW PA Student

Feedback? Contact Lauren Trillo, MMS, PA-C at (608) 263-5199 or ltrillo@wisc.edu