Precepting Challenges:
Tips for Managing and Preventing Difficult Learning Situations
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What to expect during the program...

- **Presentation:**
  - 25 minutes - How to prevent and manage difficult situations

- **Panel Discussion/Q and A:**
  - 25 minutes
    - What is your experience with precepting challenges and difficult learning situations?
    - What have you learned?
    - What questions do you have?
To submit questions for the panel discussion...

- Use the question function on the GoToWebinar Control Panel to submit questions at any time during the presentation
  - Questions will be presented by the moderator to our panel for discussion
  - We will get to as many questions as possible during the question and answer segment
- Technical questions?
Precepting Challenges: Tips for Managing and Preventing Difficult Learning Situations

PRESENTATION
Precepting Challenges and Difficult Situations: Why do they occur?

- **Preceptor**
  - Limited teaching skills; underprepared
- **Student/Resident**
  - Unskilled in communicating with patients or providers
  - Inadequate knowledge base
  - Adequate knowledge but technically unskilled
  - Undiagnosed learning disability
- **Either**
  - Mismatched teaching/learning styles, poor attitude, communication skills, impaired or ill, insecure, undergoing significant life event, etc

Common Precepting Challenges

- Learner questions preceptor content or recommendations
- Learner has a limited ability to self assess
- Learner has difficulty accepting feedback
- Group dynamics are poor
- Learner has little or poor motivation
Precepting Challenges

- Questioning content
  - Show open-mindedness; invite learners to explore the evidence
  - Skill-based activities: share your experience
- Limited ability to self assess
  - Requires insight into strengths and limitations
  - Risks setting up mismatched assessments between learner and preceptor
  - Ask the learner to explore how others felt about the interaction or experience (e.g., patient, etc)
  - Closely tie your observations to specific objective incidents
Precepting Challenges

- Difficulty accepting feedback
  - Invest in your relationship; focus on mentoring
  - Give positive feedback
- Group dynamics
  - Address proactively
  - Look for clues to what is going on
  - Be transparent with learners
- Lack of motivation
  - Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation
  - Identify the source of poor motivation
  - Discuss objective behaviors that communicate intangible attitudes (e.g., tardiness = poor attitude)
Challenges can Become Problems
How to anticipate and prevent problems...

- Step 1: Know yourself as a preceptor:
  - What type of student most annoys you?
  - Who are you most likely to clash with?
  - What type of student do you have no idea what to do with?
  - What quality do you value most in students?
How to anticipate and prevent problems...

- Step 2: Stay alert for early signs of an issue

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement; nothing can be done without hope.”

HELEN KELLER, Optimism
How to anticipate and prevent problems...

- Watch for your own tendencies to ignore or shrug off a negative experience or interaction
  - “Glass half empty”
  - Avoid using a “wait and see” strategy as the only strategy to prevent a problem

- The earlier you begin to look critically problem, the more likely it is that you resolve it.

Step 3: Diagnose the issue

- What is really going on?
- Is it a true knowledge deficit?
- A learning disorder?
- A personality clash?
- An attitude problem?
Problem

Knowledge or skill deficit

- Not taught
- Teach or help the student learn
- Why?
  - Learning issue?
  - Comprehension?

- Not understood
- Give expectations
  - Establish accountability

- Not prepared
- Show students what you want them to achieve

- Student doesn’t know what they don’t know
- Cultural?
  - Values?
  - Expectations?

- Personality clash

Problem

Knowledge or skill deficit
  - Not taught
    - Teach or help the student learn
  - Not understood
    - Why? Learning issue? Comprehension?
  - Not prepared
    - Give expectations Establish accountability

Attitude
  - Student doesn’t know what they don’t know
    - Show students what you want them to achieve
  - Personality clash
    - Cultural? Values? Expectations?

Knowledge or skill deficit

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Attitude
  - Student doesn’t know what they don’t know
  - Personality clash

Why?
  - Learning issue?
  - Comprehension?

Give expectations
  - Establish accountability

Teach or help the student learn

Attitude

Student doesn’t know what they don’t know

Show students what you want them to achieve

Personality clash

Cultural? Values? Expectations?

How to respond appropriately to an existing problem...

- **Step 4: Triage the problem**
  - **Ask yourself:**
    - Is the learner’s action putting patients at risk?
    - Is the learner’s action affecting relationships in your practice site?
    - Can the problem be solved during the experience?
    - Is the problem beyond your control as a preceptor?
    - Does the problem have any legal implications?
  - **Take immediate action to protect patients, staff, and learners as necessary.**
How to respond appropriately to an existing problem...

- **Step 5: Communicate, communicate, communicate**
  - Allow learners to express their perspective
  - “Perception vs Reality”
  - Put behavior in context of patient care
  - Explain potential outcome of behavior
  - Be objective:
    - Include a specific example of an action or behavior with documentation if possible.
    - Focus on behaviors that can be changed instead of personal characteristics
How to respond appropriately to an existing problem...

- Choose your words carefully
  - “It may be helpful if...”
  - “It appears that...”
  - “It would be useful to...”
  - “I’d like to suggest trying...”
  - “Next time, I’d like you to try this...”
  - “If this continues, I fear that a patient may be harmed...”
  - “I’m concerned about what may happen if we don’t make a change...”
How to respond appropriately to an existing problem...

- **Step 6**: Partner with the learner to develop a **PLAN** for improvement
  
  - **Ask the learner:**
    - “What might be done to improve XYZ?”
    - “How do you think we should handle this?
    - “What would you like to see happen now?”
  
  - Outline specific consequences if goals are not met
  
  - Bring in the Office of Experiential Programs or Residency Program Director for support if needed
Specific Behavior: “I noticed that you took a lot of notes during her medication history and didn’t have much eye contact with the patient.”

Outcome (context of patient care): “You’ve talked about how you’re quiet and a bit shy. However, to be able to take care of your patients you need to know what’s going on with them.”

Goal (what you want student to achieve): “Having good eye contact, smiling, and asking about their interests and activities helps establish rapport.”

Plan (Objective, assessable): “With the next patient, I’d like you to NOT take notes during the first 5 minutes of the visit. Instead, focus on eye contact with the patient. Ask two questions about their home life and ask follow up questions to any issues raised.”
What to do if things don’t improve...

- Stay in close contact with the College of Pharmacy or Residency Program Director
  - Is there a history of similar issues with the learner?
  - What are your options?
  - What action is appropriate for the situation?
  - What documentation is needed to halt progression?
- Document a midpoint evaluation, each step of the problem, and any discussion regarding its progress and/or resolution
- Communicate clearly with the learner regarding accountability and consequences
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What is your experience with precepting challenges and difficult learning situations?

What have you learned?
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What have you learned?
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Thank you for joining us!

- APhA’s Academy of Pharmacy Practice and Management and Special Interest Groups
- Information on viewing a recording of today’s program will be sent out by email
- Questions? kweitzel@cop.ufl.edu
- If you want to learn more about SIGs...go to www.pharmacist.com
Welcome, Kristin!
kweitzel@cop.ufl.edu
(Kristin_Weitzel_1)

Welcome!
Welcome to the APhA e-Communities.

Please explore the new features and enhanced interface, which include:

- Update your profile to include a photo or avatar
- Add a signature that will display with your posts
- Easily manage how you would like to receive notifications of posts
- Quickly see which groups you subscribe to have new discussions

Now Available: The Immunizing Pharmacists e-Community, featuring discussion of the latest news and practice information to make your immunizations successful.
Welcome, Kristin! kweltzel@cop.ufl.edu
(Kristin_Weitze_1)

Available Groups
You are now a member of Pharmacy Faculty.

APhA e-Communities

APhA e-Communities provide an on-line forum for discussion and collaboration.

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APhA-APPN Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

A SIG is an interest based member group that is led by a volunteer coordinator and co-coordinator and provides a forum for APhA members to network with the profession by addressing emerging issues, learn about advances in pharmacy practice, and promote the role of the pharmacist in enhancing...
Thank you for joining us and have a great day!