

Behavioral and Social Medicine: A Core Curriculum for Primary Care

Objectives:

1. To teach residents essential communication and interpersonal skills so that they have a framework for obtaining information from patients in an efficient, flexible, sensitive manner.
2. To further refine these communication skills so that they can be applied in a variety of more challenging clinical scenarios and with a broad range of patients.
3. To teach residents how to diagnose and treat common psychiatric and behavioral disorders and when to refer.
4. To enhance the understanding of the social, political and cultural aspects of medicine and how this impacts on the doctor-patient relationship and on their interaction with patients.

The curriculum will be covered in a series of blocks over two years, leaving some room for repetition of the core topics every year. Each block will generally cover two months (6 sessions) with one session each month devoted to discussion of videotapes. Italicized topics to be offered on an every other year basis –bold topics will be presented yearly in some form, although not simply repeated.

Block One—Doctor and Patient

1. Structure and Function of the Medical Interview
2. Communication Skills/Empathy
3. Dealing with Difficult Patients
4. Clinical Negotiation
5. Patient Education and Adherence
6. Delivering Sad/Bad News
7. Managed care and the Doctor/Pt. Relationship
8. Physicians Feelings: Recognition and Use
9. Boundaries in the Doc./Pt. Relationship
10. Physician Family of Origin

Block Two—The Context of Medical Practice

1. Race, Ethnicity and Class in Medical Practice
2. The Cross Cultural Interview
3. Overview of specific cultural/ethnic groups
4. Medical interpreters

5. Family Systems Approach
6. Gay and Lesbian Health Care
7. The Aging Patient
8. Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Block Three and Four—Mental and Behavioral Disorders in Primary Care

1. Depression and Anxiety Disorders
2. Alcohol and Substance Abuse
3. Sexual Dysfunction/Taking a Sexual History
4. Dementia/The Mental Status Exam
5. Eating Disorders
6. Obesity
7. Smoking
8. Somatization and Somatoform Disorders
9. Sleep
10. Personality Disorders
11. The Psychotic Patient
12. Crisis Management

Block Five—Death and Dying/Ethics

1. The Dying Patient
2. DNR Discussions
3. Bereavement
4. Assisted Suicide/Withdrawal of Care
5. Pain Management
6. Terminating with patients

Block Six—Special Topics

1. Domestic Violence
2. Mistakes in Medical Practice
3. Chronic Illness
4. HIV/AIDS
5. Stress and Disease
6. Physician Well Being
7. Sexuality and Professionalism
8. Adult Survivors of Abuse