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Conflict Management

Strategies for the Preceptor

Introduction to PBSG-ED Series

This special series of modules is dedicated to enhancing the educational skills of busy clinical teachers. The modules provide continuing education in a case-based format that makes judicious use of the most recent and best education evidence available. Starting from real-life examples of teaching and learning situations, the modules have been designed to promote discussion with colleagues around challenging issues/dilemmas that are likely to arise when working with learners. Their purpose is to foster reflection and provide opportunities to refine skills – preparing the way for selected changes that can improve teaching and learning.

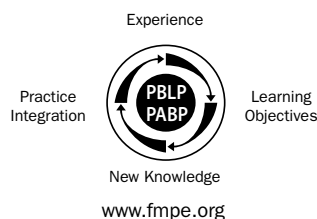
Conflict management is considered a systematic, ongoing process aimed at simultaneously discouraging dysfunctional conflict and encouraging processes for resolution that produce mutually acceptable outcomes for two or more groups in conflict. Conflict between teachers and learners seems to be common and complex, and generally unacknowledged by both parties.¹⁻³ The hierarchy historically associated with healthcare training is often cited as a prime reason for conflict. Nevertheless, there are also a significant number of other possibilities and unique characteristics inherent in each supervisory relationship. Because of the potentially negative impact of conflict on learners, teachers, the learning environment and patient care, it is imperative that both teachers and learners have practical strategies for managing conflict.

This module was developed to provide clinical teachers with:

1. A definition of conflict management, and counselling advice on handling dysfunctional conflict for a mutually optimal outcome.
2. An understanding of the factors contributing to conflict and the resulting negative impact on the well being of learners and teachers, as well as the learning environment and patient care.
3. Practical strategies for managing conflictual situations that might arise in clinical teaching settings between:
 - a) learners and their teachers
 - b) learners and patients and/or the patient's families
 - c) learners and other healthcare professionals/learners

Developed in collaboration with:

The Foundation for Medical Practice Education
La Fondation pour l'éducation médicale continue



 PROGRAM FOR
FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

McMaster
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Postgraduate Medical Education

EDUCATIONAL MODULE

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Case Example:

Marlene, nursing student An elderly woman with severe dementia is admitted to hospital with a serious infection that is responding well to antibiotic therapy. Since her admission, the patient's daughters have been using a stop watch to determine the length of time it takes for healthcare staff to respond to the call bell after it is activated. They have complained to Marlene, a senior nursing student, indicating that they expect a response to the call bell within three minutes. The daughters' comments have included complaints about the RNs that are on that floor. Marlene seeks help from her preceptor on how to deal with this conflict.

- What conflicts does Marlene have to deal with in this situation?
- How can Marlene's preceptor help her to navigate them successfully?

SAMPLE
Not for Use