

Striving to Optimize the Training Experience in a Family Medicine Residency Program

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Problems

- Low morale among residents, attendings and staff at the family medicine residency program at UB - Erie County Medical Center (ECMC) track.
- Residents requesting more teaching.
- Some physicians, in general struggle with burn-out and lack of wellness. Physicians are well trained for their careers, but not so well trained for various aspects and challenges of life.

Goals:

1. Strengthen team building and morale
2. Improve teaching and teaching methods
3. Incorporate life skills training to help residents be successful and satisfied with their lives as well as their careers

Explanation of the Project

Develop and implement active learning and team building activities into the family medicine residency program at UB/ECMC site.

How did you foster a constructive team climate?

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Check-in and Life Skills Training

Outpatient Rounds

Monthly fun and learning

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Check-in and Life Skills Training (~ 1 hr. during Thursday afternoon teaching sessions)

Check-in: Residents and I sit in a circle and share what's going on our lives – personally and professionally.

This is followed by a presentation and discussion about various **life skills**, such as;

- Satisfaction and the Four Levels of Happiness (12/9/21)
- Personality profiles (1/20/22) – DISC / Lion, Otter, Golden Retriever, Beaver
- Relationships and the Five Love Languages (3/3/21)
- Parenting (4/14/22)
- Tips and Advice From Senior Residents to Junior Ones (5/26/21)
- Other topics for future sessions: Negotiating Contracts to Work in a Group Practice, Leadership, Volunteer Opportunities, Malpractice, Preventive Maintenance for House and Car, Personal Finance, Managing a Private Practice, Others

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Outpatient Rounds

What? Brief presentations about various outpatient topics given by faculty or residents followed by discussion

When? Tuesdays, 1:00 – 1:30 pm, starting 2/4/21

Where? In the preceptor room, while waiting for patients to be roomed for afternoon clinic

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Monthly Fun and Learning

Orientation / Introductions (7/15/21)

- Staff intro's, Name Game, Round Robin Ping Pong, animal balloon workshop

Community Medicine Field Trip (7/22/21)

- People Against Trafficking of Humans - support for women & teens rescued from human trafficking
- Save the Michaels of the World - support for those with addictions)
- Good Neighbors Health Care - free clinic
- Vive - homeless shelter for asylum seekers

Group Cycle Boat in Buffalo Harbor (9/2/21)

- mostly fun, learned a little about Buffalo history

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Monthly Fun and Learning

Wilderness Medicine Field Trip at Akron Falls Park (10/14/21)

BBQ, team competitions, discussion about Wilderness Medicine, hike to Akron Falls.

“Accidents” happened along the way that required teams to implement their newly learned wilderness medicine skills - snake bite, near drowning, passing out, wrist and ankle fracture, severe leg laceration with lots of gushing ketchup)

COM-unity Plan to Build Community

Monthly Fun and Learning

Holiday Party with residents, faculty and staff (12/23/21)

Lunch, Head Hoops team competitions, White Elephant gift exchange

Cross-country Skiing (didn't happen) followed by presentations and discussions on hypothermia, frostbite, and high altitude illness (1/20/22)

Lunch and Basement Games at my home followed by a talk on headaches and an OB Jeopardy game (3/3/22)

White Water Rafting (weekend in April)

Kayaking and Paddleboarding (5/26/22 - weather permitting)

What conflicts/challenges arose? How did you resolve?

Challenge	Solution
Leading (I'm not a lion)	"Are you willing to lead?" Commitment (I'm a golden retriever)
Planning (I'm not a beaver)	"Do you want people to have fun?" (I'm part otter)
Scheduling conflicts. Usually a few residents absent for each event (due to vacation, wellness days, or busy rotations). Couldn't get faculty to participate.	Try to work around the conflicts. Strive for progress, not perfection. Transitional year. New faculty. Will try harder to encourage faculty participation.
Changing behaviors / "Toxic Preceptor Room"	3 main contributors: Talked to one and he resigned. Another resigned. One left.

What was the impact of your project for you, your department, and community (ECMC Family Health Center)?

- It helped me to develop a plan and then incorporate curriculum and activities into the residency program which has started to boost morale, team-building, and education.
- I need to give residents a survey residents to see if above is true and also to ask for their feedback and suggestions for next year.

What did you learn from the academy?

- Personality profile
- Need to choose to lead or not
- Dealing with conflict

What might you do differently in the future?

As Assoc. Program Director and Interim Medical Director . . .

Increase engagement -> Increase participation -> Improve morale, team-building, education (clinical & life skills), clinic operations -> Optimize work quality & enjoyment

- Engage residents, faculty and staff more in meaningful QI and clinic improvement projects
- Engage and faculty and staff more and encourage them to help plan the curriculum/activities and then maybe they'll participate more
- Have consistent, bimonthly provider meetings
- Have consistent, quarterly STAR meetings (Staff, Attendings & Residents)
- Engage residents more in planning the curriculum and activities

Thank you all!

*“Humility is not putting yourself down.
It’s lifting others up.” - unknown*