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11 A Simple Intervention Increases Retention Rates of Medical Student Daily Evaluations During a Fourth Year Elective Rotation in Emergency Medicine

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Background: The majority of fourth year medical students' grades are determined by daily evaluations based on their shift performance. Asynchronous rotating schedules between students and attendings pose a unique challenge to evaluation adherence. The retention rates of student evaluations among both paper and electronic evaluations are low and sporadic ranging from 54-75% in previous studies.

Objectives: To increase the effectiveness of daily student evaluation retention rates through a simple envelope intervention. While not a novel idea, to our knowledge, the change in retention rates after such an intervention has never published.

Methods: We conducted a prospective study, evaluating the effect of a simple intervention on shift evaluation retention during two six-month periods, over two consecutive years (July-December 2010-11). Prior to intervention the paper evaluation was completed and returned by the physician. Following the intervention, the attending returned the evaluation within an envelope to the student, who placed it into a collection box. Quality data was recorded to measure the impact of the intervention for the 1330 daily shift evaluations among 136 students.

Results: During the control period, 64 students returned 550 evaluations with a median return rate of 8.6 evaluations per rotation, 61% of possible monthly evaluations. Throughout the intervention period, 72 students returned 980 evaluations, with a median return rate of 13.7, 97.8% of potential evaluations per rotation. The control and intervention groups return rate was found to be statistically significant ($U=31$, $Z=10.198$, $p=0.000$).

Conclusions: The simple intervention of shifting responsibility of evaluation retention from the physician to the student lead to a significant increase in retention rates. The dramatic improvement in retention rate of daily shift evaluations should lead to a more complete and fair evaluation of a student's performance during a 4th year rotation.

Figure 1. Median Medical Student Evaluations.

*First bar: Pre-intervention 2010, Second bar: Post-intervention 2011

