

Strengthening the Delivery of Feedback in Medical Institutions by Establishing Feedback Culture

Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava, Prateek Saurabh Shrivastava¹

Medical Education Unit Coordinator and Member of the Institute Research Council, Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth—Deemed to be University, Ammapettai, Nellikuppam, Chengalpet District, Tamil Nadu, India, ¹Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth—Deemed to be University, Ammapettai, Nellikuppam, Chengalpet District, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

The training imparted to medical students is quite vast and complex, and a lot is expected from them at the end of the overall training. Considering that each student differs from another, it is important to understand that a number of approaches should be adopted to ensure that they continue to learn. Feedback is an integral component of the medical education delivery process and it aids the students as well as teachers in performing better while discharging their roles. Even though the feedback carries immense significance in the teaching-learning or assessment process, it is not being widely practiced in different settings. In order to ensure successful implementation of a feedback culture, we have to pay attention to three interdependent aspects, namely the teacher, the student, and the environment. To conclude, feedback is an essential tool to facilitate learning among medical students. However, this will essentially require us to establish a culture of giving feedback to students in the medical institution and capitalize on each of the learning opportunities for the benefit of students and teachers.

Keywords: Feedback, medical education, student

INTRODUCTION

The training imparted to medical students is quite vast and complex, and a lot is expected from them at the end of the overall training. Considering that each student differs from another, it is important to understand that a number of approaches should be adopted to ensure that they continue to learn.^[1] In continuation, student-centered learning (active learning) has been advocated to ensure deep learning, instead of conventional teacher-centered learning. In addition, teachers should look for various ways that can help the students perform better and attain the desired competencies.^[1] Feedback and reflection have been acknowledged as two of the key strategies that should be encouraged in every medical institution, as they help the student to know not only their strengths but also the areas that need improvement.^[1,2]

FEEDBACK IN MEDICAL EDUCATION

Feedback is an integral component of the medical education delivery process and it aids the students as well as teachers

in performing better while discharging their roles.^[2] It has been always acknowledged as a bidirectional interaction, wherein both teachers and students express their views to each other for the sake of mutual improvement.^[3] The feedback delivered to students should be specific, descriptive, and timely, and it should be given keeping set standards in mind and with an intention to ensure improvement. Further, the feedback has to be relevant, objective, and measurable, and its effectiveness immensely depends on the relationship between the student and the teacher.^[1-3] As already mentioned, the delivery of effective

Address for correspondence: Dr. Saurabh RamBihariLal Shrivastava, MD, FAIMER, PGDHHM, DHRM, FCS, ACME. Professor, Department of Community Medicine, Shri Sathya Sai Medical College and Research Institute, Sri Balaji Vidyapeeth (SBV)—Deemed to be University, Thiruporur—Guduvancherry Main Road, Ammapettai, Nellikuppam, Chengalpet District 603108, Tamil Nadu, India. E-mail: drshrishri2008@gmail.com

Submission: 01-Feb-2022 **Accepted:** 20-Feb-2022 **Published:** 30-Jun-2022

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

For reprints contact: WKHLRPMedknow_reprints@wolterskluwer.com

How to cite this article: Shrivastava SR, Shrivastava PS. Strengthening the delivery of feedback in medical institutions by establishing feedback culture. Med J Babylon 2022;19:304-6.

Access this article online

Quick Response Code:



Website:
www.medjbabylon.org

DOI:
10.4103/MJBL.MJBL_25_22

feedback helps the medical students enhance their learning potential at different points in training, and it thus gives opportunities for the teacher and students to improve their learning and performance in assessments.^[1-3]

The feedback given to the learners plays an important role in enhancing learning, and it makes them understand their learning status and where they eventually want to be in order to attain the learning competencies.^[2,3] The students tend to reflect on their performance based on the given feedback and move forward toward the path of improvement in knowledge and refinement of skills. In addition, the given feedback helps the student acquire critical thinking, clinical reasoning, and decision-making and problem-solving skills, which are quite crucial in the making of a competent medical graduate.^[1-4] From the teachers' perspective, they can seek feedback from the students to know about the areas that need to be improved in the teaching domain.^[2,3]

ESTABLISHING A CULTURE OF FEEDBACK

Even though the feedback carries immense significance in the teaching-learning or assessment process, it is quite an alarming observation that it is not being widely practiced in different settings.^[4] More often than not, the component of giving feedback is being irregularly adhered to and many of the learning opportunities are missed just because of the fact that not much importance is given to it.^[5] There is a need to take effective steps to establish a culture of feedback in the organization so that each and every learning opportunity in the newly implemented competency-based undergraduate curriculum is optimized for the benefit of the involved stakeholders.^[4-7]

The entire process has to begin with the conduct of a faculty development program, wherein medical teachers are sensitized about the need, scope, and utility of feedback, and the different ways in which it can be given.^[4] The Medical Education Unit of the institution can organize a series of training programs, wherein these aspects of the feedback are highlighted, not only with the help of didactic sessions, but also with the help of role plays and other interactive teaching-learning approaches. This sensitization of faculty members should also go hand in hand with orienting institutional heads about the importance of feedback, so that adequate support extends from their side as well.^[4,6]

This has to be followed by the identification of at least one to two faculty members from each subject in every professional year, and all of them should sit together to enlist various learning opportunities wherein feedback should be given to the students.^[5,7] All these opportunities (such as post-formative assessment, classroom interactions, informal assessments, during practical, in small group teaching sessions, mentor-mentee sessions,

self-directed learning sessions, etc.) should be entered into a mastersheet after they have been approved by all and then circulated to all the departments.^[5-7] Further, we cannot ignore the component of sensitization of students, as they should have a positive outlook for receiving feedback from teachers about their performance.^[5]

ADDRESSING THE INVOLVED STAKEHOLDERS

In order to ensure successful implementation of a feedback culture, we have to pay attention to three interdependent aspects, namely the teacher, the student, and the environment.^[5] As far as teachers are concerned, they should practice the art of delivering feedback, and this essentially includes dealing with the students who are reluctant to approach them to know about their performance.^[1,3] The teachers should also anticipate the comfort level of students and deliver feedback (areas that need improvement) in a constructive manner.^[3] From the students' perspective, they have to be first made aware of the behavior to seek feedback and the ways in which it will help them attain the learning competencies.^[2] In addition, students can be trained about receiving feedback and utilizing the same for personal improvement rather than getting disheartened.^[2] Finally, it is crucial that the delivered feedback is administered in a nonthreatening environment, wherein students' interest is kept in mind and they are treated in a dignified manner.^[4,7]

CONCLUSION

To conclude, feedback is an essential tool that is used to facilitate learning among medical students and to assist them in attaining the desired competencies. However, this will essentially require us to establish a culture of giving feedback to students in the medical institution and to capitalize on each of the learning opportunities for the benefit of students and teachers.

Contribution details

SRS contributed to the conception or design of the work, drafting of the work, approval of the final version of the article, and agreed for all aspects of the work.

PSS contributed to the literature review, revision of the article for important intellectual content, approval of the final version of the article, and agreed for all aspects of the work.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

REFERENCES

1. Thrien C, Fabry G, Härtl A, Kiessling C, Graupe T, Preusche I, *et al.* Feedback in medical education: A workshop report with

- practical examples and recommendations. *GMS J Med Educ* 2020;37:Doc46.
2. Bing-You R, Hayes V, Varaklis K, Trowbridge R, Kemp H, McKelvy D. Feedback for learners in medical education: What is known? A scoping review. *Acad Med* 2017;92:1346-54.
 3. Kelly E, Richards JB. Medical education: Giving feedback to doctors in training. *Bmj* 2019;366:l4523.
 4. Kalra J, Mahajan R, Singh T. Preparing for feedback in context of competency based medical education undergraduate training in India. *South-East Asian J Med Educ* 2020;14:1-9.
 5. Ramani S, Könings KD, Ginsburg S, van der Vleuten CPM. Twelve tips to promote a feedback culture with a growth mind-set: Swinging the feedback pendulum from recipes to relationships. *Med Teach* 2019;41:625-31.
 6. Kraut A, Yarris LM, Sargeant J. Feedback: Cultivating a positive culture. *J Grad Med Educ* 2015;7:262-4.
 7. Bing-You R, Ramani S, Ramesh S, Hayes V, Varaklis K, Ward D, *et al*. The interplay between residency program culture and feedback culture: A cross-sectional study exploring perceptions of residents at three institutions. *Med Educ Online* 2019;24:1611296.