

TIPS FOR FACULTY ON RESIDENT PATIENT SAFETY INCIDENT DISCUSSIONS

Margarita Lam Antoniades QI Education Lead, DFCM

BEFORE THE SESSION

Create scheduled protected time for recurring resident patient safety incident discussions

Invite residents to bring forward a case prior to the session

If relevant, consider inviting interdisciplinary team members to participate—with consent of the resident involved

If possible, schedule the session with learners and faculty with pre-established supportive relationships; alternatively, consider facilitators not in a position to evaluate the residents

Choosing a case

- Start with small, non-threatening cases to build comfort. e.g., a mislabeled specimen.
- A “near miss” or “good catch” can be an effective choice, as it is less emotionally challenging
- Avoid cases where there was a lack of knowledge or clinical judgment
- If residents are struggling to find cases, share examples from previous discussions or from your own practice

Choose a facilitator for the discussion. This can be a faculty member or a resident with faculty support.

DURING THE SESSION

Facilitation tips

Choose a physical space that ensures privacy.

Assign a resident scribe to complete the tool.

Ensure you have a clearly defined problem before you start analyzing it.

Use the tool flexibly to support learning (the discussion is more important than filling out boxes).

Avoid overemphasizing category selections in the cause-and-effect diagram; causes often fit multiple categories and some categories may not be applicable.

Foster psychological safety

At the onset, outline a framework for the discussion:

- All that is discussed is to remain confidential.
- The discussion is NOT tied to academic evaluation.
- This is NOT for cases that involve a resident performance issue.
- This discussion focuses on improving systems (both personal and broader) and not on attributing blame.

Role model by sharing your own experiences.

Acknowledge and normalize difficult emotions that may be associated with these incidents.

Support learners in re-framing failure as an opportunity for learning and system improvement.

AFTER THE SESSION

Ensure residents have appropriate support if they have been triggered by the discussion (e.g., faculty wellness adviser, local resident support helpline).

Consider collecting completed tool forms to allow central identification of opportunities for improvement in processes related to residents at your site.