

BACKGROUND

- The internal medicine in-training exam (ITE) is modeled after the blueprint of the American Board of Internal Medicine Certifying Exam (ABIM-CE) & is a well validated self-assessment tool that enables training programs and residents to evaluate their performance.
- ITE also has been shown to predict the likelihood of passing the ABIM-CE on the first attempt.

OBJECTIVE

- To assess if the weekly participation in a structured online question bank assignment improves resident's ITE score and first-time pass rate on the ABIM-CE.

METHODS

- Inclusion: Internal medicine residents who scored below 30th percentile on ITE.
- Exclusion: PGY-1 residents.
- Intervention:
 - Selected residents met with a dedicated core faculty who discussed the exam scores and identified specific areas that needed attention.
- An initial pre-test from Medical Knowledge Self-Assessment Program (MKSAP-16) comprised of questions from general medicine and all sub-specialties was administered.
- Over the next 6 months, the residents were then assigned to complete 50 MKSAP-16 questions weekly (1200 MKSAP-16 questions, total).

PROPOSED FURTHER STUDY

- At the end of 6 months, a post-test was given, consisting of the same MKSAP-16 questions from the pre-test.
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- The scores of the PGY-2 residents on the subsequent ITE, and the PGY-3 resident's ABIM-CE pass rates were assessed.

PROPOSED FURTHER STUDY

- All residents, irrespective of ITE scores, will participate in regular monthly MKSAP-17 tests.
- In an attempt to improve completion of assignments, the highest scorer in each PGY-level will be rewarded each month.
- For residents at risk (<30th percentile), timely submission will count towards their professionalism competency.
- Completion rates will be reported at the Clinical Competency Committee (CCC) review meetings and concerns will be remediated as determined by the CCC.

RESULTS

- A total of eight residents (five PGY-3 & three PGY-2) participated in the study.
- One of the three PGY-2's (33%) scored a higher percentile in the 2016 ITE.
- One of the five PGY-3 participants (20%) passed the ABIM-CE on first attempt.
- Of note, when timeliness and overall completion rates of assignments were analyzed for individual participants, only those who consistently turned in question assignments on time over the 6 months showed improvement (25%).

CONCLUSION

- Residents who participated diligently were successful.
- Hence, we decided to reward residents for participation and timely submission.
- Improved enthusiasm by residents and timely compliance with assignments will enhance their structured study patterns and increase the likelihood of improved scores on the IM-ITE and success on the ABIM-CE.

DISCUSSION

- Several studies have demonstrated that structured question bank assignments have improved residents' performance on the IM-ITE, and subsequent first-time pass on the ABIM-CE.
- Our intervention did not yield the expected outcome.
- On review, the residents who did not fare well on the ITE & ABIM-CE were the 75% who defaulted on regular timely submission of the required assignments.
- A major limitation was resident involvement and commitment to completing the assigned tasks.

REFERENCES

1. Grossman RS, Fincher RM, Layne RD, Seelig CB, Berkowitz LR, Levine MA. Validity of the in-training examination for predicting American Board of Internal Medicine certifying examination scores. *J Gen Int Med.* 1992 Jan-Feb; 7(1): 63-7.
2. Drake SM, Qureshi W, Morse W, Baker-Genaw K. A time-efficient web-based teaching tool to improve medical knowledge and decrease ABIM failure rate in select residents. *Med Educ Online.* 2015 Oct 30; 20: 29221.