

Color-Coded Competency Based Training

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Learner Audience: Anesthesia residents and attendings in ACGME training programs.

Background: The ACGME requires competency-based resident education. Most teaching faculty were not trained in a competency-based fashion, but are now asked to teach in this format.

Needs Assessment: Traditional teaching methods need to be modified to incorporate competency-based teaching and learning into the curriculum. A thorough understanding of the competencies is necessary in order for this transition to be successful.

Hypothesis: The use of color-coded posters and index cards for each competency will promote the understanding of each of the core competencies and will facilitate competency based teaching. Offering prizes adds some fun to the learning process.

Curriculum Design: A "Competency of the Month" was chosen by the Program Director. The definition of the chosen competency was posted on colored paper throughout the clinical sites for attending and resident review. Matching color-coded "Competency of the Month" index cards were distributed to residents and faculty. Each index card listed the name of the competency, name of the resident and attending, and an abbreviated definition of the competency, along with a required task to be completed related to that competency. The cards also provided space to document intraoperative teaching points and the resident's performance in that competency. The chairman encouraged the completion of the cards. The attendings with a certain number of cards received points towards a bonus. The faculty and residents who completed the required number of cards by the end of the month received a small prize, which was also color coded.

Outcome: The "color-coded competency of the month" posters and cards improved the understanding of each of the core competencies by both the attendings and residents and facilitated the implementation of competency-based resident teaching. In addition, our surgical and nursing colleagues were educated as well since the "competency of the month" was posted throughout the operating rooms.