

Formalizing Professionalism and Soft Skills Training in Residency

Hands On Session



University of Colorado
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Case Study Discussion with Panel Members



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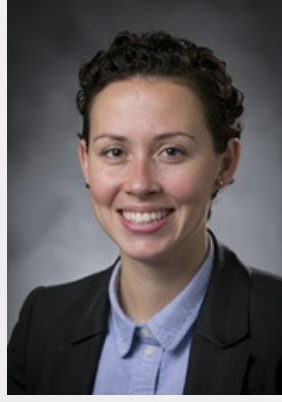
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What is a Case Study?

- ▶ Method of teaching
- ▶ Uses realistic situations to teach skills and behaviors
- ▶ Active learning
- ▶ Trainees come up with the answers, as opposed to being told

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Medical Physics
Leadership
Academy Cases
Subcommittee!*

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Charge Develop and maintain a case library for the Medical Physics Leadership Academy (MPLA) and its program offerings in business administration and leadership development.

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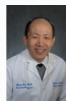
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The Task at Hand

Goals:

- ▶ Showcase one method that can be easily used
- ▶ Apply professionalism and soft skills concepts being taught to residents

Instructions:

- ▶ Brief overview of the situation
- ▶ Discuss what's happening
- ▶ No one right answer

Abridged AAPM MPLA Case Summary

- ▶ Newly graduate resident in a solo physicist position
- ▶ Little training at new clinic
- ▶ Beam-matched linacs going down more frequently (staff judging inexperience?)
- ▶ Clinic does not transfer patients from the down machine to the matched machine
- ▶ Solution: transfer patients
- ▶ Working long hours, yet has responsibilities at home
- ▶ Senior therapist, “patients value individualized care, hospital measures continuity of care, and therapists value responsibility to patients over long working hours”
- ▶ Physician, “normally working late anyway”

Abridged AAPM MPLA Full Case Narration

- ▶ Angela is a newly graduated physics resident recently started working as a solo physicist.
- ▶ There was very little training at the new clinic before the previous physicist retired.
- ▶ The clinic treats 50 patients per day on two beam-matched linacs, and lately the linacs have been going down more frequently.
- ▶ The new physicist worries that the staff is judging her inexperience with troubleshooting these particular linacs.
- ▶ The increase in downtime has increased the working hours for staff and for the physicist.
- ▶ This is primarily because the clinic does not transfer patients from the down machine to the matched machine, and instead waits until the down machine comes up to finish treating.
- ▶ The physicist sees the solution to transfer patients to the matched machine when the other is down. This is a straightforward solution that just makes sense.
- ▶ The physicist is in a high demand position, covering a busy brachytherapy program in addition to external beam, and the physicist constantly works very long hours. However, there are important responsibilities at home that can't be ignored. This solution can help to reduce those extraneous working hours.
- ▶ On a day a machine goes down, the physicist catches the senior therapist in the hallway in between the therapist's patient appointments. The physicist presents the solution, but the therapist says "We can't change because this is how things are done here. We can't switch machines because our patients value individualized care and the therapists that they know. Furthermore, continuity of care is formally measured by the hospital administration, so we don't want to receive poor reports. And, the therapists value their responsibility to their patients over their desire to go home early."
- ▶ The physicist then approaches the physician who is reviewing a plan with a dosimetrist. The physician shrugs and says that they're normally working late contouring anyway.
- ▶ What should the physicist do?