Interactive Pre-clerkship Module: Communication with Underserved Patients who have Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

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Introduction
As with other underserved populations in medicine, patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) can receive a lower standard of care when providers are unsure how to communicate with them and their support person. Our goal is to improve patient interactions across specialties for all ages of patients with IDD. This prompted us to design a module to teach students communication skills early in their medical education.

The interactive component of our module engages students in a topic that can be tough to remember amidst the flood of information in pre-clerkship years. The details and finesse required in the art of medicine can be difficult to teach. Videos and quizzes in a compact format will help students retain information long-term. Students may also access the module as they move through clerkship years and beyond, providing a consolidated resource for learners.

IDD Introduction
• Section one convinces students this lesson applies to them, regardless of specialty interest
• Immediate questions after every section keep students engaged and maximize lesson retention

History and Physical (H&P) Tips
• Specific questions strengthen an H&P for patients with IDD
• Introducing one template exposes pre-clerkship students to different note styles
• Using terminology consistent with the IDD community, gives students the language to be confident in new patient interactions

Understanding Washington State
• Expose students to major departments they will work with in the future
• Providing context for pre-clerkship learners while avoiding excessive depth of information
• Establishes a consolidated resource for students to reference in future clinic days, across the Washington State University 4 unique learning communities

Conclusion
Our goal in creating this module is for medical students to effectively communicate with and care for patients with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. In the future, to measure effectiveness, we will survey students on their perceived communication ability before and after taking the module. We also anticipate surveying students, preceptors, patients and families during clerkship years to compare the communication ability of students who utilized the module to those who did not. We hope to improve health equity for underserved populations by creating an approachable module that focuses on communication.

Note: This module was created by students, for students. It stems from a passion to create better outcomes for a population that is often overlooked. There are many patient populations that students are passionate about given their past experiences. We can capitalize on this to curate additional modules that will help provide the tools necessary to care for underserved patient populations across specialties. The modules may be updated by future students as the need arises. Our module, and others like it, have the potential to become a valuable, compact, learner-appropriate resource for clerkship years.

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References