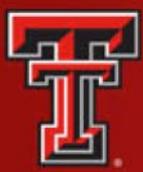




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# **Remediation of the Struggling Medical Learner Introduction**

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First Some Background...



# The Need For Remediation: Facts

- All medical learners struggle at some point along their educational journey.
- This impacts their education and professional success.
- As educators our role is to help them reach their maximum potential.
- Unfortunately most programs struggle with these trainees and seek for any guidance but there is very little available in the educational environment.



Furthermore, deficiencies do not improve without intervention...



# Remediation

- Defined as the help required by a learner who needs more than the standard curriculum to achieve competence in all of the essential domains.
- Challenging because it takes time and energy.
- Successful remediation can be effectively achieved if approached with focus, confidence, and hope.
- The numbers of learners in need of remediation is likely to increase over time for a variety of reasons.



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Everyone's Fear...



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THE *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER

# Blind Eye

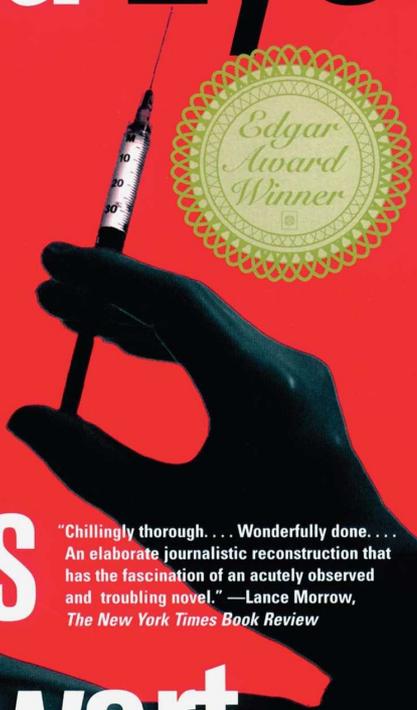
THE TERRIFYING  
STORY OF A  
DOCTOR WHO  
GOT AWAY  
WITH MURDER

UPDATED BY  
THE AUTHOR

James  
B. Stewart

AUTHOR OF *DEN OF THIEVES* AND WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

"Chillingly thorough. . . Wonderfully done. . .  
An elaborate journalistic reconstruction that  
has the fascination of an acutely observed  
and troubling novel." —Lance Morrow,  
*The New York Times Book Review*





# The Need For Remediation: Facts

- Some times the word “remediation” brings a negative meaning. We prefer the term “Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)”
- National survey internal medicine program directors, 2000
  - 7% will need remediation
- American Board of Internal Medicine
  - 8 to 15% have significant areas of learner difficulty
- General Surgery
  - Up to 1/3 the residents need remediation



# Identification and Diagnosis of Trouble Areas

- 1999 P. J. Olmesdahl and medical students: challenges
  - Volume of work
  - Learning methods and strategies
  - Time management
  - Inadequate study time
- 2000 and G. Paul et al and medical students: challenges
  - Organizing large amounts of information
  - Integrating large amounts of information
  - Time management
  - Test taking
  - Test anxiety
  - Stress or anxiety not associated with testing



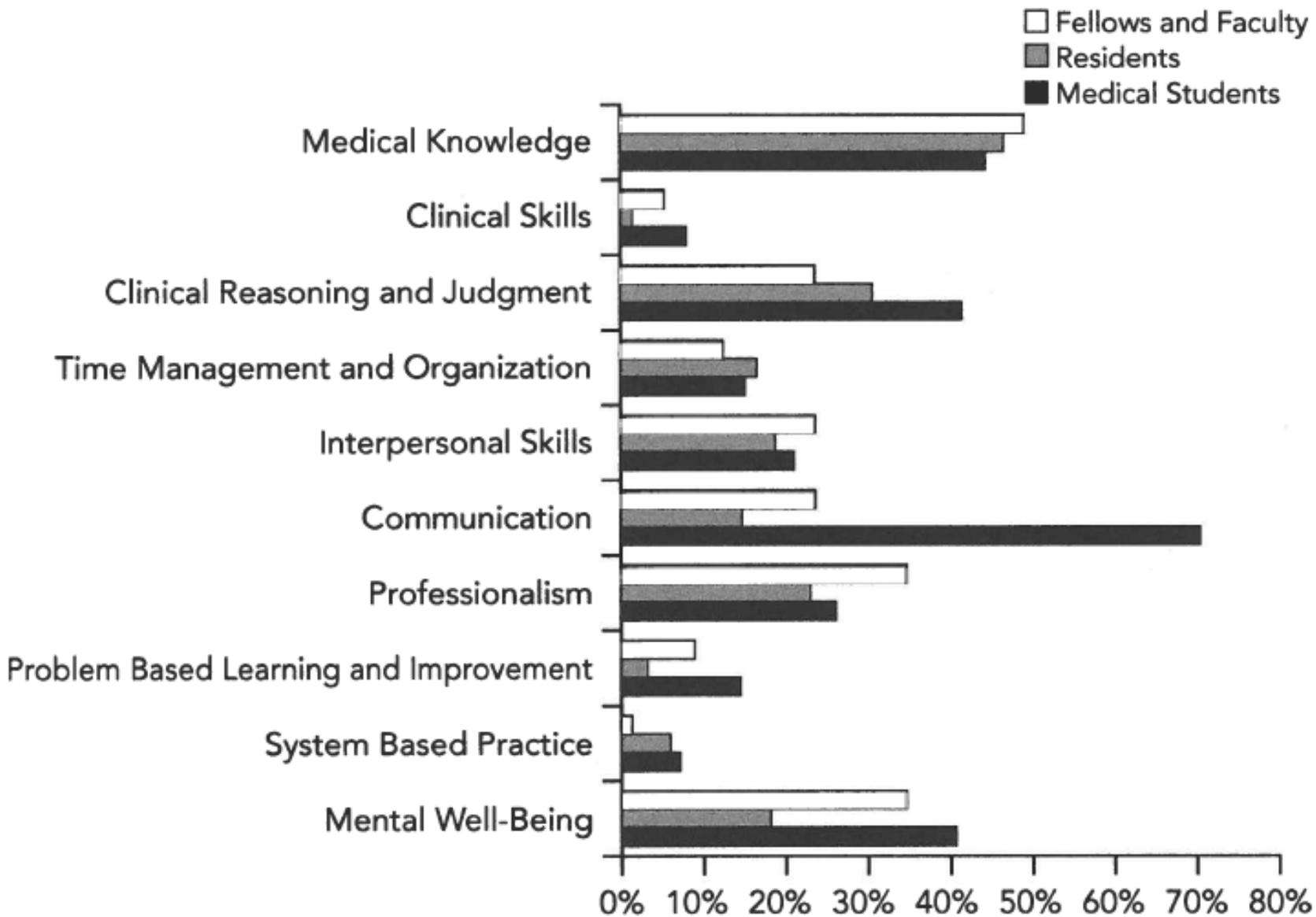
# National Survey of Internal Medicine Residency Program Directors Regarding Problem Residents

**Table 1.** Frequency of Apparent Deficiencies and Underlying Causes in Problem Residents

|                                                          | Half of the Time or More Frequently, % |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Apparent deficiencies                                    |                                        |
| Insufficient medical knowledge                           | 48                                     |
| Poor clinical judgment                                   | 44                                     |
| Inefficient use of time                                  | 44                                     |
| Inappropriate interaction with colleagues or staff       | 39                                     |
| Provision of poor or inadequate medical care to patients | 36                                     |
| Unsatisfactory clinical skills                           | 31                                     |
| Unsatisfactory humanistic behavior with patients         | 23                                     |
| Excessive and unexplained tardiness or absences          | 21                                     |
| Unacceptable moral or ethical behaviors                  | 15                                     |
| Underlying causes                                        |                                        |
| Situational, personal, or professional stresses          | 42                                     |
| Depression                                               | 24                                     |
| Cognitive dysfunction                                    | 8                                      |
| Other psychiatric illness                                | 5                                      |
| Substance abuse, other than alcohol                      | 1                                      |
| Alcohol abuse                                            | <1                                     |



However...





# Identification/Reporting

- The “rumor mill” is remarkably accurate at identifying who is in need of remediation.
- Often there are findings in their application documents of the potential to become a struggling learner.
- Often programs do not have a systematized way of reporting underperforming learners.
- It is critical to identify individuals who may be suffering psychiatric conditions, but should avoid “crossing the line”



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# Framework



# Framework for Diagnosing an Area of Difficulty

**TABLE 3.2** Using the ACGME competencies to build a framework for the diagnosis of the struggling medical learner.

| ACGME Competencies                         | ACGME Competencies "Plus"                  |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1. Medical Knowledge                       | 1. Medical Knowledge                       |
| 2. Patient Care                            | 2. <i>Clinical Skills</i>                  |
| 3. Interpersonal Skills and Communication  | 3. <i>Clinical Reasoning and Judgment</i>  |
| 4. Professionalism                         | 4. <i>Time Management and Organization</i> |
| 5. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement | 5. Interpersonal Skills                    |
| 6. Systems-Based Practice                  | 6. Communication                           |
|                                            | 7. Professionalism                         |
|                                            | 8. Practice-Based Learning and Improvement |
|                                            | 9. Systems-Based Practice                  |
|                                            | 10. <i>Mental Well-Being</i>               |

} Patient Care



# Framework

- Need to collect information from the trainee to narrow the differential or clarify the concerns.
- You should ask direct questions but state clear what is your intent.
- Avoid being judgmental when obtaining the information.
- Be systematic about evaluating his/her skills in each competency.
- Do not leave the interview without evaluating all the areas of potential need for improvement.
- Redirect your learner when he or she starts blaming others for the deficiencies.
- Treat mental well-being the same way as other competencies.



# Framework

- Do not forget to assess the learner's level of insight
- In addition to the interview it is likely you will need to collect additional information from:
  - Direct observation
  - Presentations by the trainee
  - Chart documentation
  - Available patient and procedure logs.



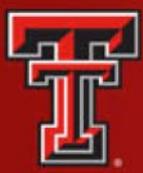
# Evaluation: Documentation of Findings

|         | DDx | For | Against | Additional Info |
|---------|-----|-----|---------|-----------------|
| Case #: | a.  |     |         |                 |
|         | b.  |     |         |                 |
|         | c.  |     |         |                 |



# Evaluation Strategies

- Clinical reasoning and judgment case
  - Chest pain case presentation
- Interpersonal and communication skills evaluation
  - Direct observation of patient interaction at the clinic
- Multiple issues case
  - Case of a oncology patient who dies in the hospital
- Basic foundational skills assessment
  - Intern with poor comments about his performance



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# The Evaluator



## Responsibilities of the Evaluator

- To give feedback
  - Norm-based
    - Peer comparison
    - In general is discouraged
  - Criterion-based
    - Milestones evaluation
      - Evaluation scale:
        - » Cannot perform
        - » Performed consistently and could supervise juniors
        - » Aspirational
- At the start of the rotation, clarify with the learner and reiterate your expectations
- Properly document the deficiencies when they are present
- Notify the appropriate individuals when you are concerned about when the learner is behind



Still a Common Problem...



# Documentation

- Challenge: Its hard to write “negative” comments
- Tips
  - Be descriptive rather than judgmental
  - State if performance improved during the interaction time period.
  - You are entitled to give your opinion



Remember the ACGME-CMP  
effective Jul 2019 require annual  
faculty development activities as  
educators.



# Summary

- Remediation is an essential component of the educational process.
- A systematic approach is most effective.
- Programs are required to train faculty to properly fulfill their academic function.



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