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## Lessons Learnt: Pilot of Mid Rotation Feedback

Tabassum Zehra and Shazia Sadaf

### ABSTRACT

The Aga Khan University went through an external review of its undergraduate medical education in December 2006 based on the accreditation guidelines by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME). The external review panel comprised of international and local experts which developed a comprehensive report on its findings with regards to LCME standards of accreditation. In the final report of the external review one of the areas highlighted as not meeting the standards of LCME was documentation of formal mid-rotation feedback of the students by the faculty in AKU clerkships through years 3 to 5. A four hour faculty development workshop was organized by the Department of Medicine in collaboration with the Department for Educational Development to emphasize the role of feedback in improving student's performance, improve faculty's skill in giving effective feedback, and to come up with recommendations for documenting the formative feedback process. A mid-rotation feedback form was designed to facilitate the documentation process. Faculty members who participated in the workshop took a lead in piloting this form and reported the areas that could be further improved upon to facilitate the process of timely and effective feedback.

**Key words:** *Feedback. Medical education. Mid rotation. Clerkship.*

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In medical education the paths to excellence are few, but many routes can lead to difficulty.<sup>1</sup> Feedback is an important educational construct. It is immediate information and a two-way process. Providing comments on observations and giving insight about the learner's performance provides guidance in enhancing his/her future performance towards meeting or exceeding course/rotation/clerkship expectations. Feedback from teachers to students in the process of assessment is a prime requirement for progress learning. The Aga Khan University (AKU) undergraduate programme has a system of formative feedback for clerkship rotations. A mid-rotation evaluation followed by feedback is done halfway through the rotation and a final evaluation at the conclusion of the rotation.<sup>2-6</sup>

The Aga Khan University (AKU) Medical College offers a 5-year undergraduate programme leading to the degree of Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery. The programme is designed to provide students with appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours necessary to understand and influence factors that affect the health of individuals and of communities. An external review of its undergraduate programme was conducted in 2003 where experts (national and international) reviewed its curriculum. AKU went through a second time external review of its undergraduate medical education in December 2006.

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The external review was based on the accreditation guidelines by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME).<sup>5</sup> The LCME accredits complete and independent medical education programs. LCME was founded in 1942 to unify the separate accreditation activities of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) and the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association (AMA). The LCME makes periodic evaluations of medical education programs in the United States and its territories.<sup>5</sup>

The final report of the external review stated that the AKU's MBBS program was meeting most of the LCME standards. One of the areas highlighted as not meeting the LCME standards (ED 30, ED 31) was documentation of formal mid-clerkship feedback to students during clinical clerkships.<sup>5</sup> LCME standards (ED 30, ED 31) states that: 'The directors of all courses and clerkships must design and implement a system of formative and summative evaluation of student achievement in each course and clerkship'.

A four hour faculty development workshop on "feedback: principles and practices" was organized by the Department of Medicine in collaboration with the Department for Educational Development, Faculty of Health Sciences, AKU the purpose of which was ensuring compliance of the LCME standard. The aim of this faculty development workshop was to improve the skills of the faculty in giving effective feedback to students in response to the needs identified by the Department of Medicine, a division heavily involved in medical student and resident teaching as to "how" to provide feedback and who should do it.

Six open-ended questions were administered to the workshop participants at the start of the workshop. These questions were related to the challenges faced,

**Annexure 1**

Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_ No. \_\_\_\_\_

The Aga Khan University Medical College, Karachi.  
Year 5 Clerkship-MD rotation students continuous assessment.

Rotation: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_ To: \_\_\_\_\_

Competency		Grade			Comments on overall performance
<b>Professionalism</b>					
A. Professional and ethical behavior	US	S	G	Ex	
B. Interpersonal skills	US	S	G	Ex	
<b>Reporter</b>					
C. Knowledge (basic and clinical)	US	S	G	Ex	
D. History taking	US	S	G	Ex	
E. Physical /mental state examination	US	S	G	Ex	
F. Written records and notes	US	S	G	Ex	
G. Oral presentation skills	US	S	G	Ex	
<b>Interpreter</b>					
H. Interpretive skills / diagnostic ability	US	S	G	Ex	
. Clinical judgement	US	S	G	Ex	
<b>Manager</b>					
J. Continuity of care / responsibility	US	S	G	Ex	
<b>Educator</b>					
K. Self-directed learning / initiative / motivation	US	S	G	Ex	
L. Educates the patient	US	S	G	Ex	

\* Written comments are necessary under a separate letterhead, in either case if a student demonstrates unsatisfactory or excellent performance.  
Note: Attributes which are not assessed during the rotation should be marked na (not assessed) or (not applicable) depending upon the objectives of the rotation.

Feedback given to student: Y\_\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of consultant: \_\_\_\_\_

response of the students to the feedback, timing of feedback, importance of identifying learning objectives for the clerkship and recommendations for providing timely feedback. An instrument already in use by the Department of Surgery at AKU for giving mid-rotation feedback was shared with the participants acceptability for use in the Department of Medicine (Annexure 1) and any modifications they may like.

Responses to questions were grouped to identify themes. Time constraints were identified as the main challenge (50%), while 20% respondents were concerned as to the effect of negative feedback on a student's behaviour. Fifty-five percent responded that they have formal end-of-clerkship written feedback while 20% wrote that mid-rotation verbal feedback was being done regularly in their specialties. The majority (86%) recommended that there should be a process for formal scheduled mid-rotation feedback which is documented identifying the learning needs of the students for improvement and is revisited at the time of end of rotation feedback to ensure that the learning needs have been met.

In future, there will be orientation sessions for the faculty and the students and faculty development workshops

targeting effective feedback skills. Timely compilation of the feedback form and documentation of the results will be ensured to provide maximum benefit to the students and to provide them ample time for remediation.

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