IMPROVING OUR FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT DURING MENTORED CLINICAL PRACTICE

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MY BACKGROUND

Teaching
MSc Advanced Manipulative Physiotherapy
MSc Exercise and Sports Medicine (Football)

Research
Doctorate focused to advanced musculoskeletal practice
Clinical reasoning focus to clinical trials
E.g. post lumbar spinal surgery

Clinical
Consultancy re examination of complex presentations in private practice
AIM OF THE SESSION

Analyse the key features of effective formative assessment to enable student development during their mentored clinical practice experience

- Formative assessment is key to enabling deep learning (Rushton, 2005)
ASSESSMENT

Paradigm shift from a testing to assessment culture (Gipps, 1994)

Two types of assessment:

• Summative assessment
• Formative assessment
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

The process of assessment is a learning experience
Usually not included in the formal grading of work
Includes all activities which provide information to be used as feedback to modify performance

Many examples that we use for the mentored practice component of programmes

Half way review is one example......
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Following evaluation of the student’s performance, feedback is the central feature

(Black and Wiliam, 1998)
ROLE PLAY

Student
Clinical mentor

Context:
You are at the mentored practice halfway point.
The clinical mentor is providing feedback on their evaluation of the student’s performance at this point of the mentored practice.
The student is failing at this stage.

Key issue contributing to the fail:
- Ineffective patient examination process
  - Breadth of hypotheses being considered
  - Planning of physical examination
  - Handling skills
WHAT HAPPENED?

From mentor’s perspective?

From student’s perspective?

Did it work well?
FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Feedback is the central feature  
(Black and Wiliam, 1998)

Feedback is the most powerful single effect on achievement
Feedback provides information about the existing ‘gap’
The gap is between the actual level and the reference level of performance
Information is only feedback if it is used to alter the gap
KEY ISSUES FROM THE STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Accurate perception of gap
Motivation to address gap
Interpretation of feedback
Individual model of self-esteem

Good feedback
• Encourage students to self-assess to encourage reflection
• Begin with positive comments, encourage students to identify their own areas for development/improvement
• Discuss strategies for development/improvement
KEY ISSUES FROM THE TEACHER/MENTOR PERSPECTIVE

Method and manner of feedback
Individual feedback is better than group
Task centred feedback is better than goal centred
Progress is inhibited if the gap is too wide
Experience of mentor is crucial, enabling automaticity of some tasks and emphasis on feedback
Feedback must be individualised and planned carefully
GOOD FEEDBACK

- Agree with any co-examiner your strategies for, and content of feedback
- Ask student how they thought they had performed - reflective
- Use of open questions can be valuable
- Importance of wait time after questions
- Illustrate your points with specific examples
- Use the learning objectives / outcomes to structure feedback
- Use the marking criteria to inform feedback
- Ensure balanced feedback - give specific examples of both positive and negative aspects of performance
- Integration of evidence to support your analysis
- Summarise key points at end
- Allocate a time limit to providing verbal feedback to ensure key messages are clear
- Follow up key messages with another form of feedback – written, auditory etc
KEY MESSAGES

Formative assessment is essential to learning
Feedback is the central component of formative assessment
Planning feedback is an important part of the assessment process
Negative feedback can inhibit learning
Good feedback will enhance learning and the student experience
Standardisation across students is important
Preparation and flexibility is central to your success as a mentor
KEY READING
