Feedback Case One: LEARNER

You are a third-year Harvard medical student doing two weeks of your Neurology clerkship at Children’s on 9 North. This is your second clerkship, after Medicine, and you have just finished two weeks of adult neurology and now it is your first Friday on pediatric neurology.

You did well on your Medicine clerkship, receiving Honors, but you want to become an adult neurologist so you hope to receive a High Honors in this clerkship. On your Medicine clerkship, you were expected to do an entire history and physical on every new patient that you were assigned, and your resident once gave you the compliment that you were very thorough.

Since you haven’t done any pediatrics, you don’t feel comfortable with the pediatric neurologic exam. It is difficult to get the kids you examine to do what you need them to. You feel more comfortable on rounds because every night you have been reading about the diagnoses of the patients on the service, and you have made sure to ask an advanced question about each one during rounds so that your attending knows you have been reading. You just admitted a 3-year-old boy with new onset ataxia and did a thorough history that took you nearly two hours. You couldn’t get him to cooperate with finger-nose-finger and he didn’t want to walk. When you presented him on rounds today, you suggested he might have ataxia-telangiectasia because you saw a case of that presented in neuropathology conference.

Your 9 North senior said on Monday that today would be “Feedback Friday” so you arrange to meet after rounds.

Feedback Case One: TEACHER

You are the 9 North senior on at a busy time of year; the census has been at least 10 patients most days. You were glad to hear that there would be a third-year Harvard medical student on the team as you enjoy teaching and, honestly, you were hoping that the student would help with workflow. Today is Friday of your first week together.

The medical student is very eager and asks lots of questions on rounds; he/she is clearly reading. However, he/she doesn’t seem to get the “big picture” and jumps to conclusions with obscure diagnoses. For example, you just admitted a 3-year-old boy with new onset ataxia, and the medical student did not ask about recent illnesses or toxic exposures, but jumped to the conclusion of ataxia-telangiectasia. Moreover, the student did not assess dysmetria or do a gait exam, even though his/her history and exam took nearly two hours.

You said on Monday that today would be “Feedback Friday” so you arrange to meet after rounds.

Feedback Case One: OBSERVER

The learner is a third-year Harvard medical student doing two weeks of his/her Neurology clerkship at Children’s on 9 North. The teacher is the 9 North senior. Today is the first Friday of their time working together and was designated in advance as “Feedback Friday.”

Please observe the feedback interaction between this teacher and learner, and then provide your feedback to the teacher. What were the challenges? What strategies were successful?

Points to consider:

* Collaboration or conflict?
* Vague or specific?
* Actionable?
* Judgmental or nonjudgmental?
* Who did how much of the talking?

Feedback Case Two: TEACHER

You are an epilepsy fellow currently on service with an adult neurology junior resident. The service has been very busy. He/she has been diligent about the work of the day including notes and orders, but seems disinterested on rounds even though he/she says he/she wants to go into epilepsy.

You have a 2-year-old girl on service with severe epileptic encephalopathy and global developmental delays who is nonverbal and G-tube dependent. She has been inpatient for 15 days due to seizure exacerbation with gastroenteritis. She is now having two self-resolving seizures per day, compared to her baseline one seizure per day, and otherwise medically ready for discharge. Her parents feel strongly about staying until she is back to baseline because they report her seizures cause her to be scared. The patient’s nurse pulls you aside during rounds with a concern that while pre-rounding, when the parents expressed this concern to the junior resident, he/she muttered, “What’s the point?” within their earshot.

Feedback Case Two: LEARNER

You are a PGY-3 adult neurology resident rotating on the Epilepsy service at Children’s. Even though you want to go into epilepsy, this has been a frustrating experience. You feel that all you do is scut even though you are a PGY-3, while the fellow and attending get to review interesting EEGs and make all the management decisions.

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You were on call last night and spent much of it struggling alone with the unfamiliar computer system to prep her discharge; you know that a Children’s resident is in-house for ED call but you didn’t want to bother them with logistical issues that you feel like you should be able to figure out on your own. You spent the rest of the night responding to seizure alarms, so you got no sleep. This morning, while pre-rounding on this 2-year-old patient, her parents told you they feel strongly about staying until she is back to her baseline seizure frequency because they think her seizures cause her to be scared. You found yourself wondering aloud “What’s the point?” and hope that no one heard you. You can’t wait until rounds are over so you can go home and sleep.

Feedback Case Two: OBSERVER

The learner is a PGY-3 adult neurology rotator on the Epilepsy service. He/she is post-call. The teacher is the epilepsy fellow. A patient’s nurse approached the fellow during rounds with a concern about an interaction with the patient’s family.

Please observe the feedback interaction between this teacher and learner, and then provide your feedback to the teacher. What were the challenges? What strategies were successful?

Points to consider:

* Collaboration or conflict?
* Vague or specific?
* Actionable?
* Judgmental or nonjudgmental?
* Who did how much of the talking?