A peer-evaluation program to improve the quality of fellow-written inpatient consultation notes

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The Problem

- Poor information exchange during inpatient consultations between primary teams and consulting teams can result in delayed diagnoses, inadequate follow up, or duplication of services
- Subspecialty trainees do not receive formal instruction in how to provide an effective consultation
- Consultation notes are variable in quality and often do not meet the needs of the referring provider or the patient

Project Goals and Objectives

Goal: Improve quality of initial inpatient, fellow-written consult notes

Objectives:

- Enhance an existing peer evaluation program (figure 1) that uses the "Quality of Consultation Assessment Tool" (QCAT), by proving more timely data and increasing visibility among fellowship directors
- Achieve greater (i.e. >80%) fellow participation
- Attain a minimum score of 80% in the "Communication" and "Education" QCAT domains

Project Plan

- Recruit divisional QCAT champions, responsible for increasing fellows’ participation and presenting results & areas for improvements to their peers
- Host a kick-off event for QCAT champions to officially recognize their work and brainstorm ways to increase their colleagues’ participation
- Ask fellows to evaluate fewer notes at more regular intervals (i.e. monthly instead of quarterly), thereby providing more frequent feedback to fellows and fellowship directors

Results / Progress to Date

- Fellow participation increased from 27% in 2010-2011, to 54%-63% in the most recent 2 quarters of 2011-2012 (figure 2)
- No improvements were observed in “Education” and “Communication” quality scores (figure 2)

Next Steps

- We will further enhance this program in the following ways:
  - Partner with fellowship administrators to increase trainee participation in the peer evaluation program
  - Generate face-to-face discussions with fellows about note quality and note components
  - Take advantage of the electronic medical record change at UCSF to customize consultation templates to emphasize "high quality" fields, including those pertaining to "Education" and "Communication"

Special thanks to: Leanna Zaporozhets, Zac Martin, the 2011-2012 QCAT divisional champions, RedCAP, and the UCSF KL2 program.