A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY OF ASSESSMENT ANCHORS IN PGME: FORTHCOMING OPPORTUNITIES AND ONGOING TENSIONS

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Background

- Workplace-based assessment (WBA) tools typically rate items on scales with descriptive anchors
  - Quality
    - Ex. Poor, Fair, Good, etc.
  - Against a standard for a level
    - Ex. Below expectations, Meets expectations, Above expectations, etc.

- WBA tools with traditional anchors have problems
  - Reliability
  - Restricted use of scale
Background

- Newer WBA tool anchors are construct-aligned with the concept of competent, independent performance
  - Entrustment anchors
    - Ex. O-SCORE rating scale anchors
- Research demonstrates that WBA assessment tools using entrustment anchors are more reliable
  - Why?
Objective

■ To explore the experience of assessment anchors for both faculty and residents
Methods

- Constructivist grounded theory guided data collection and analysis

- Two-phase study design
  - Phase one participants had not used WBA tools with entrustment anchors
  - Phase two participants had used WBA tools with entrustment anchors

- Semi-structured interviews

- Data were analyzed iteratively over the course of one-year
Participants

- 22 participants
  - PGY 1, 2, 3, 4
  - 2 – 26 years experience supervising residents

- Specialties
  - 12 different specialties
    - Procedural (n=6)
    - Non-procedural (n=16)

- Phase one (n=12)
  - 6 faculty
  - 6 residents

- Phase two (n=10)
  - 5 faculty
  - 5 residents
Results – Theme One

- Entrustment anchors are concrete and defensible

- … the strengths are that it has clear anchors. It’s very transparent in terms of what you’re seeing.

  (Phase one – faculty)
Results – Theme Two

- Entrustment anchors promote better feedback conversations

- “Okay, well what do I need to do to be independent?” It sort of allows you to, not just like have a discussion about it, but come up with a plan of action and be more objective in the feedback that’s being given.

  (Phase two – resident)
Results – Theme Three

- Entrustment anchors make it possible to use the entire scale

- ... it’s okay for me to rank them at the left-hand end of the scale. And that’s not bad, right. So that automatically kind of takes the badness out of the lower end of the scale out of it.

  (Phase two – faculty)
Results – Theme Four

- Entrustment anchors work in multiple contexts
  - Trainees at all levels
  - Procedural & non-procedural
  - Direct & indirect observation
■ Entrustment anchors “leave a gap” in assessment information
  - Do not provide information about how a trainee is doing relative to their peers
  - Do not provide information about how a trainee is performing versus an expected trajectory

■ … you don’t want to be below your peers, I think that for me is more important than being above my peers. So, like I want to be in line with everyone else moving forward, because if there’s clear gaps that I’m not meeting that’s what I want to work on. So, yeah definitely that part is missing from entrustability scales.

  (Phase two – resident)
Results - Summary

- Entrustment anchors have advantages over traditional anchors which make them easier to use
  - Concrete & defensible
  - Promote better feedback conversations
  - Enable use of the entire scale

- Entrustment anchors work in multiple contexts

- Entrustment anchors do not provide normative information
Discussion

- Perceived advantages of entrustment anchors may assist in understanding why WBA tools using these anchors have better reliability.

- Understanding the experience of using these anchors contributes to developing the necessary faculty development initiatives that must accompany the use of these new WBA tools.

- Use of these anchors leaves a gap in information that must be managed in a program of assessment that uses WBA tools with entrustment anchors.
Discussion

- Limitations
  - Single site study where only one type of entrustment anchor used

- Future work
  - Other sites
  - Comparison to other styles of entrustment anchors
Questions