

## Tales from Clinical Rotations

### What Student Feedback from Clinical Experiences Says About Our Profession

Melanie Giusti, MHI, MLS(ASCP)<sup>CM</sup>  
Elizabeth Hertenstein, MS, MT(ASCP),SBB

### About Us!

- Melanie Giusti
- Clinical Coordinator, Distance Learning Program
- Elizabeth Hertenstein
- Clinical Coordinator, On Campus Program
- Course Instructor, Advanced Clinical Practice



### Learning Objectives

- Identify methods used to collect student feedback about their clinical rotation experiences
- Summarize common areas of concern/interest about clinical experiences
- Discuss ways to share feedback with clinical sites

### So Why This Session? How Did We Get Here?

- Stories shared on social media
- Student stories from rotation experiences
- Reminiscing about our own experiences



What does this say about us, as professionals?

### Professionalism – According to the Education Program

- What is a professional? What are professional behaviors?
- From: *The 10 Characteristics of Professionalism*
  1. Appearance
  2. Demeanor
  3. Reliability
  4. Competence
  5. Ethics
  6. Maintaining your poise
  7. Phone Etiquette
  8. Written Correspondence
  9. Organizational Skills
  10. Accountability

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/10-characteristics-professionalism-greg/>

### Professionalism – According to the Education Program

- What do we teach our students about what it means to be a professional and professional behaviors?
  - Dedication to the profession
  - Staying Involved
  - HIPAA
  - PPE
  - Respect
- Additional instruction given prior to clinical rotations
  - Attendance policies
    - Calling in, who to call, when to call, calling in vs email
  - Social media and cell phone policies for sites
  - Dress Codes
  - Posture/body language
  - Actively participate - Ask questions
  - Taking initiative

**During Your Practicum Professional Behavior**

- Display a positive and professional attitude.
  - No foul language ☹️
  - Remember that you are representing the University of Cincinnati and the MCS Program!
- Remain neutral and do not get involved with conflicts between employees or with cliques.
  - Could have negative effect on employment opportunities if participate in office politics.

**Have you heard?**

**During Your Practicum Professional Behavior**

- Adhere to HIPAA guidelines and maintain patient confidentiality.
  - Be mindful of social media postings, photos not allowed!
- Be respectful and demonstrate initiative – ask questions
  - Be an active participant in your education!!!
  - Must like it when questions are asked
  - Be respectful to tech when they cannot answer; don't question the tech's ability or performance

**During Your Practicum Professional Behavior**

- Work safely
  - Adhere to all laboratory safety rules
  - Always use PPE
- Accept responsibility for mistakes and work to improve your performance
- Be respectful of comments and feedback.
  - If no feedback is offered; ask for feedback on your performance. Remember, you are a potential hire!

Sound familiar?

## Clinical Rotation Time!

- During clinicals – Reality Check!
  - Observational learning occurs
    - Behaviors of techs
  - Social cues
  - Do these behaviors correlate with what their education program has taught them?
- Student activities
  - Activity Log/Journal
  - Reflective Essay
  - Ongoing communication with program faculty

## Post Clinical Rotation

When back in Academia – **Feedback** takes place

- Survey/Evaluation of clinical experience
- Discussion about clinical experience
  - What tests did you perform?
  - What instrument did you use?
  - What was your overall impression of the facility?
  - What was the most interesting, surprising or unique item you saw or experienced?
- A few students are reluctant to speak about anything that was "wrong"
  - Don't want to speak poorly of others
  - May jeopardize possible future employment
  - Just decided to "let it go"
  - Need prompting to get the conversation started

## Crossroads

- "Do As We Say, Not As They Do"
- Are We Out of Touch with the Lab?
- What does this feedback say about us as a profession?

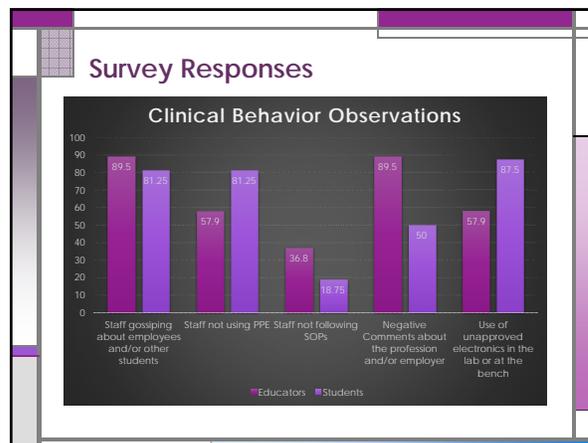
## Survey for Educators & Students

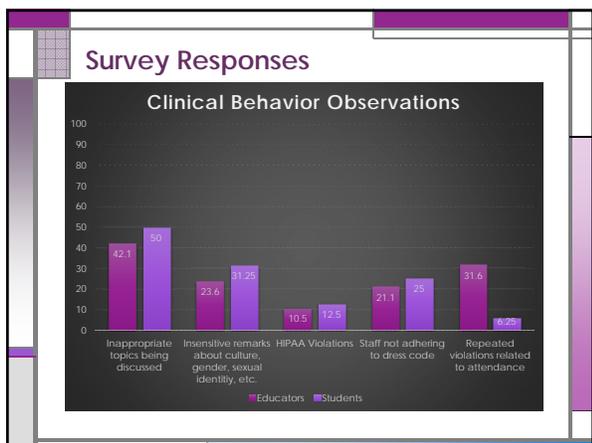
Created a brief survey about some common "Unprofessional Behaviors" and whether students report exposure to/observe these during clinical rotations.

**Educators: Have your students ever reported the following during their rotations?**

**Students: Did you experience or witness any of the following during your clinical experiences?**

- Staff gossiping about employees and/or other students
- Staff not using PPE
- Staff not following SOPs
- Negative Comments about the profession and/or employer
- Use of unapproved electronics in the lab or at the bench
- Inappropriate topics being discussed
- Insensitive remarks about culture, gender, sexual identity, etc.
- HIPAA Violations
- Staff not adhering to dress code
- Repeated violations related to attendance





### Examples?

*Educators: Can you describe a situation in which the student experienced an unprofessional event or behavior during their rotation? (for example, techs not wearing PPE, use of cell phones when it's against lab policy, etc.)*

Microbiology lab supervisor (with 30+ years in the lab and at one time a "safety supervisor") that stood in the lab using his personal cell phone to look up information from the internet during ID rounds each day while handling culture plates.

Asked why student was so smart but did not go into engineering major but medical laboratory science.

### More Examples from Educators

Discriminatory treatment toward a black student

Heard techs "bad mouthing" the profession and have been asked, "Why are you spending your time and money to go into a dead-end job?"

Negative remarks toward other employees and previous program students.

### More Examples from Educators

Techs using their cell phone while pouring off serum & loading the chemistry analyzer rack onto the instrument, ungloved throughout. When questioned by the student, replied "Been doing this for 30 years, back when we use to mouth pipette. Let them fire me!"

Bullying

Preceptor wet her pants while at work & she put her underwear in the micro incubator to dry

### Examples

*Students: Can you describe a situation in which you experienced an unprofessional event or behavior during your rotation?*

Almost no one wears lab coats

Microbiologists didn't wear gloves when handling plates

Lots of cell phones in the lab

Drinking from water bottles at the bench

### More Examples from Students

Unprofessional behavior from one of the techs - she was condescending, rude and belittled me. Everything I tried to do wasn't good enough.

The phlebotomists, including the manager, were making fun of patients - even when they were only 30 ft away

Some comments that made me feel unsafe disclosing my sexual orientation

### More Examples from Students

- A tech went around asking coworkers if they would rather have gonorrhea or a baby...
- So much gossiping!
- Ignorance about gender identity
- Tech talking about their lover and their "relations" the night before

# SHARE YOUR STORIES!

### What should we do with this information?

- Sharing feedback can be sensitive
  - Don't want to alienate the site
  - Keep in good standing with site
  - Don't want to point fingers
    - Only get one side of the story

- "You don't share this kind of information because the squeaky wheel gets replaced, not oiled."

### What do you do with this Feedback?

DO YOU COMMUNICATE THESE ISSUES/OBSERVATIONS TO THE CLINICAL SITE?

Response	Count	Percentage
Yes	13	72%
No	5	28%

### Sharing Student Observations/ Feedback with Clinical Sites

- Information can be shared:
  - One on one conversation with Lab Manager during site visit
    - Lab Manager can bring it up at a Lab/Staff meeting
  - Can ask the student if (s)he feels ok to bring it up to the Lab Manager
  - Can share in a general session such as Advisory Board Meeting or other meeting with all sites
  - Send a general announcement to all sites about the "good and the bad" at the end of rotation period.

- "Information from clinical surveys that I have our students complete, is compiled and shared anonymously with our advisory council members, who coincidentally are the lab directors/managers."

### Impact on the Future

- These are the experiences students are having
- How will this impact their opinion of the profession?
- How will this impact their future employment sites?
- Are employers aware of what students are being exposed to?
- What can we, as educators and laboratory professionals, do to ensure positive clinical experiences?