

The Changing Roles and Responsibilities of Program Directors During the COVID Crisis

Ara Vaporciyan, MD, FACS, MHPE



Both Learning and Assessing Skills are Threatened

- Pre-COVID-19 Threats
 - Increasing case complexity
 - Increased focus on outcomes
 - Rapid expansion of technology
 - Increased competition for time
 - Changing emphasis on which skills are acquired during General Surgery



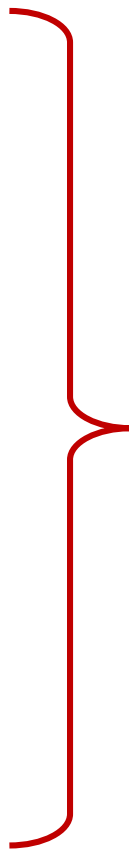
Both Learning and Assessing Skills are Threatened

- Pre-COVID-19 Threats
 - Increasing case complexity
 - Increased focus on outcomes
 - Rapid expansion of technology
 - Increased competition for time
 - Changing emphasis on which skills are acquired during General Surgery
- Post-COVID-19 threats
 - Increasing competition for time
 - Loss of exposure to cases



Both Learning and Assessing Skills are Threatened

- Pre-COVID-19 Threats
 - Increasing case complexity
 - Increased focus on outcomes
 - Rapid expansion of technology
 - Increased competition for time
 - Changing emphasis on which skills are acquired during General Surgery
- Post-COVID-19 threats
 - Increasing competition for time
 - Loss of exposure to cases



Opportunities to learn/practice
Opportunities to assess technical skill



Both Learning and Assessing Skills are Threatened

- Pre-COVID-19 Threats

- Increasing case complexity
- Increased focus on outcomes
- Rapid expansion of technology
- Increased competition for time
- Changing emphasis on which skills are acquired during General Surgery

- Post-COVID-19 threats

- Increasing competition for time
- Loss of exposure to cases



Opportunities to learn/practice
Opportunities to assess technical skill

Specifically, loss of cases that provided opportunities for **Autonomy!**



What Can be Done Now to Address this Gap in Training and Assessment?

- Retrospective measures

- Prospective measures



What Can be Done Now to Address this Gap in Training and Assessment?

- Retrospective measures
 - Review existing data on each trainee
 - Additional CCC meetings to review
 - Identify trainees' Areas at Risk
 - Communicate those Areas at Risk to
 - the relevant teaching faculty
 - the respective trainees
 - Develop a plan to address those Areas at Risk
- Prospective measures



What Can be Done Now to Address this Gap in Training and Assessment?

- Retrospective measures

- Review existing data on each trainee
- Additional CCC meetings to review
- Identify trainees' Areas at Risk
- Communicate those Areas at Risk to
 - the relevant teaching faculty
 - the respective trainees
- Develop a plan to address those Areas at Risk

- Prospective measures

- Communicate with teaching faculty regularly on trainees' progress
- Assume control of case assignments
- Provide autonomy at the case component level
- If an Area at Risk is not being addressed
 - Reconvene CCC to get consensus
 - Early discussion with the trainee
 - Consider extending training

Extending Training

- For the trainee
 - Discuss with Thoracic RC Executive Director (Chris Fox)
 - Temporary complement increase
 - Duration determined by the PD based on trainees' needs
- For the subsequent set of trainees
 - Alter rotation structure
 - More time on rotations where cases minimums were challenging
 - Explore away rotations
 - Limit or hold non-accredited fellowships
 - Continue heightened evaluation of all trainees
 - More frequent CCC evaluations
 - More frequent communication with the teaching faculty





Opportunities

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”

Paul Romer
Stanford Economist

Opportunities

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”

*Paul Romer
Stanford Economist*

- Better assessment tools of technical skills

- We rely heavily on direct observation

Unfortunately...



Fewer opportunities
Multiple observers

Simple Skills

- Continue direct observation
- Consider augmentation with...
 - Simulation
 - Component participation
 - Structured evaluations
 - Scheduled evaluation

Complex Skills

- Limited opportunities for direct observation
- Augmentation with...
 - Structured evaluation
 - Videotaped debrief and evaluation
 - Frequent dialogue with teaching faculty



Opportunities

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”

Paul Romer
Stanford Economist

- Better assessment tools of technical skills

- We rely heavily on direct observation



Fewer opportunities
Multiple observers

- Expanding virtual educational opportunities

- Incorporating trainees into virtual visits
- Virtual journal clubs, teaching sessions, case reviews etc...

Opportunities

“A crisis is a terrible thing to waste.”

Paul Romer
Stanford Economist

- Better assessment tools of technical skills
 - We rely heavily on direct observation
- Expanding virtual educational opportunities
 - Incorporating trainees into virtual visits
 - Virtual journal clubs, teaching sessions, case reviews etc...
- Leveraging virtual connectivity to increase evaluation
 - Virtual CCC meetings
 - Virtual APR, perhaps bi-APR

Unfortunately... →

Fewer opportunities
Multiple observers

Questions/Answers