



IPE update

Published quarterly by the Institute for Physician Evaluation | Autumn 2003



CLINICAL SKILLS ASSESSMENT NOW AVAILABLE AT IPE!

The Institute for Physician Evaluation (IPE) is pleased to announce the availability of a Clinical Skills Assessment, an important enhancement to the battery of IPE assessment modalities. A Clinical Skills Assessment measures a physician's history-taking, physical examination and patient communication skills.

The Clinical Skills Assessment mirrors a physician's typical workday in a clinic. The physician will examine 11 "standardized patients," people trained to act like real patients. The physician is expected to establish rapport with the standardized patients, elicit pertinent historical information from them, perform focused physical examinations, answer questions and provide counseling where appropriate. After each exam, the physician records pertinent history and physical examination findings, lists diagnostic impressions and outlines plans for further evaluation if necessary. The cases cover common and important situations that a physician is likely to encounter in a general ambulatory clinic. Standardized patients are selected to represent a broad range of age, racial and ethnic backgrounds.

The Clinical Skills Assessment is now available through the IPE as an optional modality that may be added to the standard one-day or two-day IPE assessment protocol. Currently available at the Philadelphia location of the IPE, the Clinical Skills Assessment will soon be available in Atlanta also. For more information about the Clinical Skills Assessment please contact Andrea Ciccone at 215-590-9772.

A RESOURCE FOR PHYSICIAN CLINICAL COMPETENCE EVALUATION

The Institute for Physician Evaluation (IPE) provides unique assessment services for evaluating physician clinical competence. A combined initiative of the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) and the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), the IPE provides an array of assessment tools for the comprehensive evaluation of currently licensed or previously licensed physicians.

IPE assessment services are utilized by medical licensing agencies, medical associations/societies, physician health programs, hospitals, managed care organizations, malpractice insurers and individual physicians. In many instances, physicians are referred to the IPE because of clinical competence concerns raised by patient complaints and/or quality of care investigations. Other common referrals for assessment include physicians who have been out of practice for some length of time for various reasons (this might include health issues, substance abuse problems, or personal family leave) and who want to resume practice. Additionally, physicians who are considering changing their practice (for example, from surgery to general practice) are candidates for the IPE.

The IPE offers multiple methods of assessment focusing on three major aspects of competence: medical knowledge, clinical judgment and reasoning and case management skills. This protocol may be supplemented by an optional, full-day clinical skills assessment that evaluates communication and interpersonal skills, as well as data gathering proficiency.

IPE assessment outcome reports provide thorough analysis of the physician's performance on each standardized testing modality. The IPE assessment tools provide profiles of an individual's strengths and weaknesses, which are necessary to guide educational planning and remedial skill-building when needed. The objective information provided by an IPE assessment about a physician's clinical competence can be helpful to those organizations making critical licensure and privileging decisions. For more detailed information about the IPE please visit our website at <http://ipe.nbme.org> or call 888-348-0928.

DEEP IN THE HEART OF NAMSS

The National Association of Medical Staff Services (NAMSS) held its 27th annual conference and exhibition in San Antonio, Texas, September 29 through October 3, 2003. The Institute for Physician Evaluation provided an exhibit at the conference and had the opportunity to interact with many medical staff services professionals, credentialing specialists, healthcare administrators and risk managers.

Many of the conference attendees who visited the IPE exhibit booth expressed interest in the assessment services provided by programs like the IPE, noting that such services could be very useful in making decisions about how to help physicians who are showing signs of deteriorating clinical competence and in evaluating the clinical competence of applicants for hospital privileges who have been out of practice for several years.

NAMSS supports credentialing and regulatory compliance to advance the delivery of quality healthcare.

The IPE update is published quarterly by:

Institute for Physician Evaluation

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