Excellence in Communication and Emergency Leadership (ExCEL): A Simulation-Based Curriculum for Pediatric Residents
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Pediatric residents are often the first responders to resuscitations and must efficiently and effectively manage multidisciplinary teams caring for critically ill patients. Residents receive Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) training at the start of their residency and a refresher two years later; however, research has demonstrated that skills and confidence decline quickly over time. The ExCEL curriculum was developed to address these concerns. Specific areas for improvement include team leadership and communication skills, timely and accurate rhythm recognition, and performance of quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation. This curriculum was implemented at our institution in July of 2015 and combines high-fidelity simulation and small group learning opportunities for pediatric and medicine-pediatrics residents (PGY 1-4) two times per month. Simulation of pediatric cardiac arrest cases focus on teamwork, medical management, and procedural skills using rapid-cycle deliberate practice and debriefing. The small group sessions incorporate case-based learning, active commitment exercises, and hands-on practice of technical skills. Preliminary findings reveal that participating residents demonstrate increased competence in both clinical decision-making and procedural skills during unannounced mock resuscitations. They show increased comfort with team leadership and communication during these simulations, and report the same during true pediatric resuscitations. This is the first curriculum focused on communication and leadership in emergency situations at our institution. Since implementation we have received positive feedback from the participants and seen significant improvement in resuscitation situations, as listed above.