

Developing coaches to support learners' longitudinal development

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Abstract

Background

Worldwide, medical schools are moving to assessment approaches that recognise the importance of longitudinal development and relationships in learning and assessment. Learning coach roles are increasingly being implemented to support students in reflective practice and goal setting. While several models of learning coaches have emerged, professional development for people in these roles remains critical. This workshop offers space to discuss the training and support for coaches who are tasked with supporting the longitudinal development of learners.

Why is the topic important for research and/or practice?

Though coaching and mentoring relationships are a feature of programmatic assessment (Torre et al., 2021), implementing the learning coach role can be challenging. Previous authors have reported that tensions can arise for both learners and coaches, when coaches are responsible for both providing developmental support and contributing to high-stakes decision-making (Loosveld et al., 2023). In our own experience, it can be challenging for coaches to navigate the intersections of pastoral care, developmental support, and advice regarding progress. When developing learning coach models, questions arise regarding the required level of knowledge coaches need about the program, including its underpinning philosophies, assessment design, and student support mechanisms. This is particularly relevant when considering the role of the coach in clarifying expectations and managing tensions. Cross-institutional dialogue is therefore warranted to address these questions and advance faculty development for learning coaches.

Workshop format, including participant engagement methods

Our workshop is designed to promote and facilitate sharing of experiences on the role, expectations, and professional development of learning coaches. This discussion is intended to expand insights on the complexities of the role, and develop strategies for supporting and enhancing the role of learning coaches.

10mins – Acknowledgement of country, introductions and aims of workshop

20mins – Introduction to complexities of the learning coach role, including evidence and sharing of workshop facilitators’ experiences

45mins – Sharing of experiences in groups, supported by guiding questions.

15mins – Reporting back and discussion of lessons learned

Who should participate

This workshop is intended for Ottawa attendees who are contemplating or implementing coach programs and/or hold responsibility for staff development or student support

Level of workshop (beginner / intermediate / advanced)

Intermediate/advanced

Take-home messages / workshop outcomes / implications for further research or practice

By the end of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Consider the complexities of a learning coach role
- Identify key considerations when designing faculty development for coaches in their own context
- Develop strategies for supporting learning coaches to navigate the complexities of the role

Maximum number of participants

60

References (maximum three)

Loosveld, L. M., Driessen, E. W., Theys, M., van Gerven, P. W. M., & Vanassche, E. 2023. Combining support and assessment in health professions education: Mentors’ and mentees’ experiences in a programmatic assessment context. *Perspectives on Medical Education*, 12(1), pp. 271-281.

Torre, D., Rice, N. E., Ryan, A., Bok, H., Dawson, L. J., et al. 2021. Ottawa 2020 consensus statements for programmatic assessment 2: Implementation and practice. *Medical Teacher*, 43(10), pp. 1149-1160.