First Aid for the Wards: The Really Short Version

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First Aid Board Series
USMLERx Test Bank Series
Overview

- Common Ward Mistakes
- The Team
- A Day on the Wards
- The Admission
- Key Tasks
- Survival Tips
- Getting Off to a Fast Start
- Q&A
Common Mistakes

- Not understanding roles, responsibilities, expectations
- Not seeking timely feedback
- Not using appropriate texts and references
- Not knowing how to be a team player
- Inefficient organization and execution of daily work
The Team

- Attending/Chief
- Resident
- Intern
- Sub-intern
- Nurse
- Ward clerk
- Pharmacist
- Other staff
- You
Typical Inpatient Medicine Day

- Prerounds: 7-8 am
- Work rounds: 8-9:30 am
- Work time: 9:30-11 am
- Attending rounds: 11-noon
- Conference: noon-1
- Afternoon work: 1-?
- Signing out
Typical Inpatient Surgery Day

- Prerounds: 5-6 am
- Work rounds: 6-7:30 am
- Preop prep: 7:30-8 am
- Surgery/floor work: 8-5
- Conference: noon-1
- “Afternoon” rounds: 4-5:30
- Postrounds work: 5:30+?
Taking Call

- Overnight call
- Short call
- Typically Q4
The Admission

- The “Call”
- Reviewing objective data
- Medical record review
- Interviewing the patient
- Physical exam
- Putting it all together
- Reviewing case with the resident/intern
Key Notes and Orders

- Admit orders
  - Admit to
  - Diagnosis
  - Condition
  - Vitals
  - Allergies
  - Activity
  - Nursing orders
  - Diet
  - IV fluids
  - Medications
  - Special studies
  - Labs
Key Notes and Orders

- Admission notes
  - Onset
  - Progression
  - Provocation
  - Palliation
  - Quality
  - Region
  - Radiation
  - Symptoms
  - Severity
  - Time course
Key Notes and Orders

- Progress notes
- Procedure notes
- Daily orders
- Prescriptions/DC orders
Documentation Tips

- Get everything co-signed
- Date/sign all pages
- No documentation = no reimbursement
- Illegibility = no documentation
- Use only appr. abbrev.
  - “q.d.” vs. “q.i.d” vs. “once daily”
  - To CYA, never CYOA!
Oral Presentations

- **Formal presentations**
  - 5-7 minutes (surgery: 2-3 min.)
  - Should tell a story
  - CC/HPI/PE/Labs → sets the stage
  - A&P → delivers the climax

- **Bullet presentations**
  - 1 minute
  - 15-20 facts
Daily Ward Activities

- Procedures
- Patient/family communications
- Consults
- Data collection
- Reading up on patients
- “Walking supply cart”
Survival Tips
Efficient Time and Patient Management

- Commit all tasks to a to-do list
- Prioritize tasks
- Organize tasks by location
- Maximize hospital information system
- Keep “scut” essentials on board
- Always be early!!
Organizational Aids ("Peripheral Brains")

- Clipboard
- Binders
- Data sheets
- Note cards
- iPhone/iPad/Android
Evaluations

- Critical for dean’s letter
- Know the evaluation criteria
  - Clinical performance
  - Shelf exam?
- Know who is evaluating you
- Clarify expectations
- Ask for feedback early on
Difficult Situations

- Needlesticks
- Abusive/inappropriate house officers
- Inappropriate procedures
- “Gunner” classmates
- Patient death
- Sexual harassment
Difficult Situations (cont.)

- Difficult/violent patients
- Difficult family members
- “Narcolepsy”
- Personal/family illness
Getting Off to a Fast Start
Scheduling Rotations

- Avoid most likely specialty in first/last block
- Avoid back-to-back tough rotations
- Do easy rotation before desired specialty rotations
Choosing Rotation Sites

- County
- VA
- Academic/university center
- Community/private hospital
- Outpatient clinic
Before the Rotation

- Classmates
- *FA Wards* specialty chapter
- *FA USMLE Step 2CK*
- *FA Step 1* relevant content
- *FA Wards* recommended pocketbooks/texts/software
Your “Secret Weapons”

- Enthusiasm/hustle
- Time
- Basic science knowledge
- “Low” expectations