Patient Exam Observation Experience

**The Task:**

Observe four radiology exams being performed during your radiology clinic rotations and document them on the log provided.  You should speak to each patient before and/or after the exam is performed to learn more about why s/he has come to us for the exam and what it was like to undergo the test. For example, was it uncomfortable, scary, easy, reassuring, long, surprising, etc? Two specific exams are required, a chest x-ray and a thoracic or abdominal CT.  The others are up to you.  If possible, go over the exam with the interpreting radiology resident or attending afterwards.

Ask one of the residents to show you where the exams are performed. Introduce yourself to the technologist and tell them why you are there.

**The Goals:**

1.  **Educate** future clinicians (and future radiologists) about **the experience the patient has** when they come to radiology for an exam.  Some surprises may be in store for you.

2. **Increase direct patient contact** on the rotation.  This adds interest for future clinicians who thrive on direct interaction with the patient, and also benefits the patient by providing additional information to the radiologist interpreting the study.  The patients also appreciate the extra attention during their wait.

3. Provide students with **an active role in assisting patient care.**  Any additional history you can get will directly help the patient.  Instead of “Eval response to tx” we will hear from you what disease the patient had that was “tx”-ed, whether they had metastatic disease, and whether they had surgery, chemotherapy, and/or radiation and when.  Although we cannot allow you to dictate a report, this is one way in which you can help care for our patients, and spend less time as a passive observer in clinic.

4. To assist in the demonstration of **how the radiology exam fits into the overall care of the patient**, and increase **understanding of SYSTEMS-BASED PRACTICE.**  The systems-based practice core competency just refers to our recognition that we all work as a team to care for our patients. We have the responsibility to not only optimize our own efforts as a team member, but to look for how we can optimize the work of the whole group for the betterment of the patient.

Feel free to ask if your information changed our interpretation.  Even if the answer is “I might have found the information in their record,” you should realize that we may or may not have had the time to find it, or may not have come across the right note.  Pertinent details are *essential* to appropriate exam interpretation!

Furthermore, if you observe any situation in which the care of the patient could have been better or a situation where it was particularly good, this is one way that you can give us that kind of feedback.