

Patient Perceptions on Transfer of Care Using the Entrustable Professional Activities EPA Model

Klara Deskovic DMD, Gabriela Lagreca DMD, DDS, MBA, FACP



Tufts
UNIVERSITY

School of Dental Medicine

Introduction

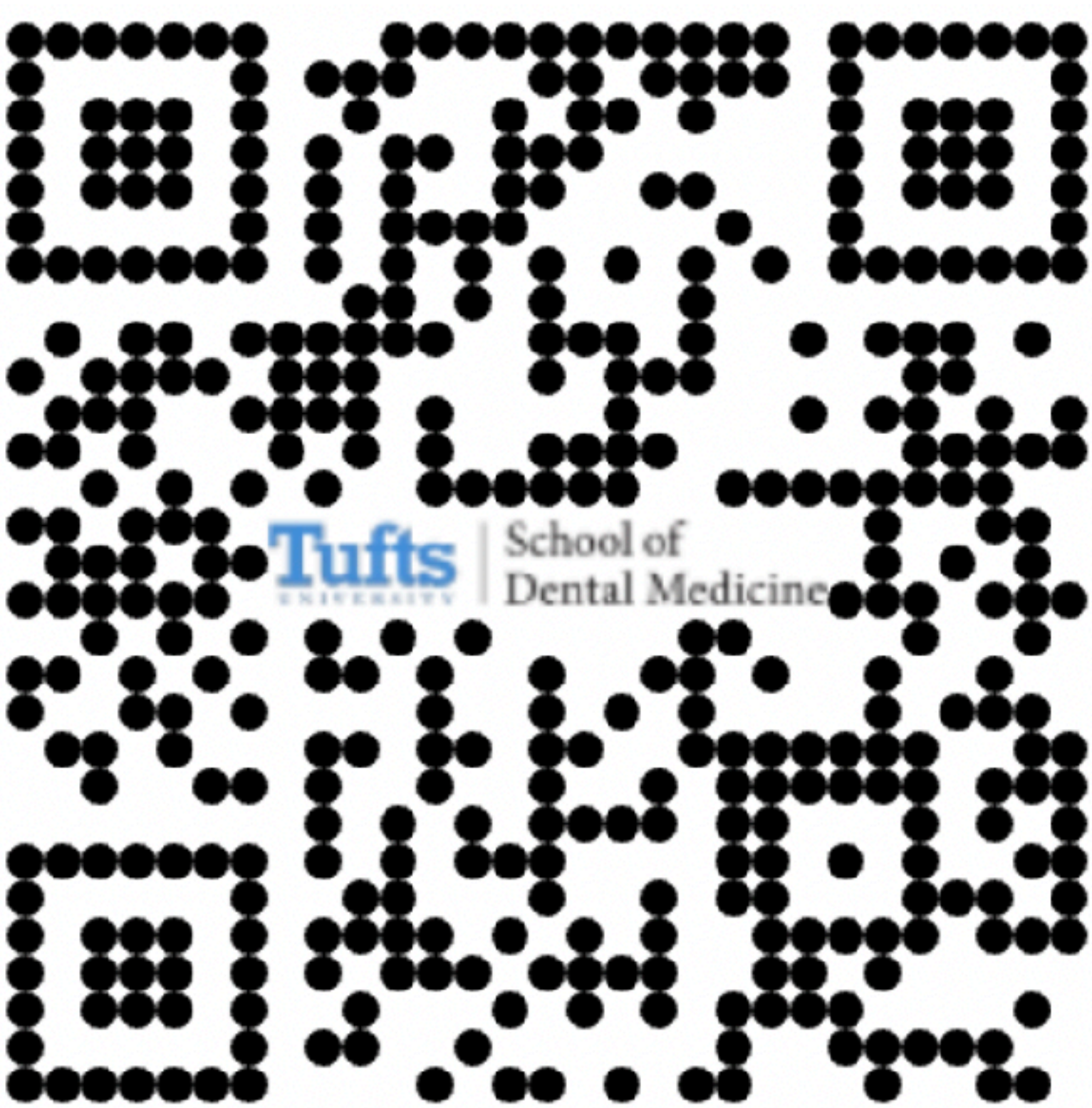


Figure 1. Entrustable Professional Activities Framework

This study uses EPAs (figure 1) to evaluate residents' skills in transferring patient care from the patient's perspective in the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine Postgraduate Prosthodontics program.

Methods

Fourteen patients were recruited for this study. Inclusion criteria: patients who were transferred in the middle of treatment at least once. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and recorded for each participant. Interview topics encompassed their views on the transfer process, perceptions of the resident initiating the handoff, and the resident receiving the case. The data was de-identified, transcribed, coded, and analyzed with the assistance of Nvivo12 software. All data was reviewed by two members of the research team.



Results

A thematic analysis was conducted, 27 codes were identified (figure 2), and classified on eight themes, including: the transfer process, knowledge, communication, professionalism, faculty supervision, organization, emotional intelligence, and diversity. The most commonly mentioned theme was the transfer process, and the least repeated was organization (figure 3).

Professional	Unprofessional
Organized	Unorganized
Patient	Impatient
Competent	Inexperienced
Accommodating	Unaccommodating
Faculty	Lack of supervision
Empathy	Diversity
COVID	Scheduling issues
Good communication	Waiting for new resident
Patient uninformed	Changes in treatment plan
Length of treatment	Transfer appointment
Language & Understanding	Alternative transfer method
Next steps explained	Knowledgable about the case
Duplicating work	

Figure 2. Codes as reported by patients



Figure 3. Themes shown as word cloud .

Discussion & Significance

The CODA requirements for prosthodontics programs include mastery of prosthodontics principles, management of complex clinical conditions, application of biomaterials, etc. Studies on higher education have shown that the use of competencies as an assessment tool is critical for hand skills and procedure mastery; however, while competencies are crucial for procedure mastery, they do not accurately represent, measure, or assess residents' soft skills such as communication, professionalism, and organization (figure 4). Orofacial Pain is the only dental specialty in the US that has developed and incorporated 10 EPAs as part of its standard of care.



Figure 4. Competencies for PG Prosthodontics Graduates + EPA's

Conclusions

Most patients appreciated the handoff occurring in the clinical setting, with both residents present simultaneously. This helped better understand the upcoming steps and future treatment directions. Improving communication and standardizing the handoff process may enhance the patient experience and trust building between the patient and the new provider.



References

Contact

klara.deskovic@tufts.edu