- **Entity Name**

Service Line

The ACGME Survey Experience

Questions and (Interpreted) Answers

August 7, 2026

Stephen J. Falchek MD

Medical Director, Neurology

Program Director, TidalHealth Neurology Residency

Date

Agenda

1. Describe purpose of faculty and resident surveys
2. Identify the range of answers considered as “substantially compliant,” and the possible outcomes of “at risk for noncompliance”
3. Anticipate discussions with faculty and residents about surveys

D
a
t

Surveys and Accreditation

- “The mission of the ACGME is to improve health care and population health by assessing the training and enhancing the quality of resident and fellow physicians’ education through advancements in accreditation and education.”
- A major part of this is in obtaining information and feedback for the purpose of ***continued accreditation*** **of** ***existing*** residency programs.

Surveys and Accreditation

- The NEXT Accreditation System (NAS):
  - Used by RRCs for every established program annually
  - Designed to identify ***potential*** problems with compliance
  - Screening tools to identify ***outlier programs:***
    - ADS annual updates, Clinical experience/case logs, board pass rates, scholarly activity, attrition/ratio changes, data omission, **resident/fellow and faculty surveys**
  - Surveys monitor education and **give early warning of *potential* noncompliance**
  - Programs identified as outliers are flagged for further review, up to and including site visit



Surveys and Accreditation

- Important points:
  - This is not a forum for grievances, but unresolved grievances logically impact survey responses
  - Survey window is February through April
    - 70% of faculty and residents must respond if > 4 faculty/residents; else 100%
    - Late responses not accepted; Inadequate response rate = *data omission*, an outlier risk factor
  - Surveys have multiple choice response options ranging from **never/not at all** to **always/very much**
    - Only one selected (extreme) answer for each question passes muster for NOT being a potential outlier!
  - **Program administrators are prohibited from "coaching" residents on survey answers!**

Faculty Surveys

- Some basic facts:
  - Program administrators cannot see the survey questions!
  - The survey questions are not posted online for pre-planning
  - Survey results are strictly confidential
  - However, they tend to be topically consistent year to year, with revisions.
    - Big change has been elimination of some “DEI” type questions.
  - “No accreditation decisions will be made based solely on the survey results…” however they are central to flagging “outliers” for further review!



Faculty Surveys

- Resources
  - Satisfied with professional development and education
  - Workload exceeded residents'/fellows' available time for work
  - Participated in faculty development and/or scholarly activities to enhance professional development
  - Skills in:
    - Education
    - Fostering own well-being
    - Fostering resident/fellow well-being
    - Contributing to an inclusive clinical learning environment
    - Practice-based learning and improvement
    - Quality improvement and patient safety



Faculty Surveys

- Professionalism
  - Faculty members act unprofessionally
  - Residents/fellows comfortable calling supervisors with questions
  - Process for confidential reporting of unprofessional behavior
  - Satisfied with process to deal confidentially with problems and concerns
  - Personally experienced abuse, harassment, mistreatment, discrimination, or coercion
  - Witnessed abuse, harassment, mistreatment, discrimination, or coercion

Faculty Surveys

- Patient Safety and Teamwork
  - Information not lost during shift changes, patient transfers, or the hand-off process
  - Effective teamwork in patient care
  - Interprofessional teamwork skills modeled or taught
  - Effectively emphasizes culture of patient safety
  - Residents/fellows participate in clinical patient safety investigation and analysis of safety
- Events
  - Know how to report patient safety events
  - Process to transition patient care and clinical duties when residents/fellows fatigued



Faculty Surveys

- Faculty Teaching and Supervision
  - Sufficient time to supervise residents/fellows
  - Faculty members committed to educating residents/fellows
  - Program director effectiveness
  - Faculty members satisfied with process for evaluation as educators
- Educational Content
  - Residents/fellows instructed in cost-effectiveness
  - Residents/fellows prepared for unsupervised practice
  - Learning environment conducive to education
- Overall evaluation of program



Resident/Fellow Surveys

- Faculty and administrative staff do not see the questions…
  - But we do receive tabulated, “de-identified” answers
  - Small programs will typically NOT receive their trainee survey results until 4-5 years of surveys have been amassed, to protect respondent confidentiality
  - But a program can very well be cited for survey responses before then!
    - Citation will reference survey responses in categories without specific details e.g. “Potential noncompliance with X common program requirement"
    - Based upon “crosswalk” of survey questions



Resident/Fellow Surveys

- Topics addressed by the questions. Same as faculty surveys:
  - Professionalism
  - Resources
  - Patient safety and teamwork
  - Events
  - Faculty teaching and supervision
  - Educational content
  - Overall evaluation of the program

Resident/Fellow Surveys

- Some common causes for citations:
  - “Non-physician” obligations
  - Other learners
  - Education: Patient care duties
  - Protected time for didactics/structured learning
  - Confidentiality and ease of access to:
    - Mental health support
    - Complaint process
  - Mentor accessibility/supervision
  - Professional behavior of faculty
  - Teamwork and communication
  - Evaluation and Feedback

The Trainee Survey Crosswalk

SURVEY REPORT DESCRIPTION	COMMON PROGRAM REQUIREMENT(S)
Resources	
Education compromised by non-physician obligations	6.12.a. The learning objectives of the program must be accomplished without excessive reliance on residents to fulfill non-physician obligations. (Core)
Impact of other learners	1.10. Other Learners and Health Care Personnel The presence of other learners and other health care personnel, including, but not limited to residents from other programs, subspecialty fellows, and advanced practice providers, must not negatively impact the appointed residents' education. (Core)
Appropriate balance between education (e.g., clinical teaching, conferences, lectures) and patient care	4.10. Curriculum Structure The curriculum must be structured to optimize resident educational experiences, the length of the experiences, and the supervisory continuity. These educational experiences include an appropriate blend of supervised patient care responsibilities, clinical teaching, and didactic educational events. (Core)
Faculty members discuss cost awareness in patient care decisions	4.9.e. Residents must demonstrate competence in incorporating considerations of value, cost awareness, delivery and payment, and risk-benefit analysis in patient and/or population-based care as appropriate. (Core)
Time to interact with patients	4.10. Curriculum Structure The curriculum must be structured to optimize resident educational experiences, the length of the experiences, and the supervisory continuity. These educational experiences include an appropriate blend of supervised patient care responsibilities, clinical teaching, and didactic educational events. (Core)
Protected time to participate in structured learning activities	4.11. Didactic and Clinical Experiences Residents must be provided with protected time to participate in core didactic activities. (Core)
Able to access confidential mental health counseling or treatment	6.13.c.1. Residents must be given the opportunity to attend medical, mental health, and dental care appointments, including those scheduled during their working hours. (Core) 6.13.e. [The responsibility of the program, in partnership with the Sponsoring Institution, must include:] providing access to confidential, affordable mental

Suggestions for Best Survey Outcomes

- Time to answer surveys
  - Should not be rushed or under duress!
- Plan for “next year’s” survey starting at the beginning of the academic year!
- Anticipatory guidance:
  - Regular meetings with faculty and residents
  - Focus on entire year of programming
    - Celebrate successes
    - Constantly remind of planned improvements, even if a ways off…
    - Celebrate teamwork, small wins = big satisfiers
  - Review areas that commonly come up on survey, but are not day to day operations
    - Method for reporting concerns
    - Services available for faculty and residents
    - Discuss work and fatigue
    - Emphasize confidentiality

More Suggestions for Best Survey Outcomes

- Forward identification of problems
  - From a curious standpoint, ask about survey question categories at meetings starting 10-12 months ahead of survey window
- Emphasize academic productivity definition frequently
  - Not just publications and posters
  - Oral presentations, grand rounds, journal clubs, reading and preparing cases
  - Solicit input for department posters at meetings; include residents/fellows in article writing ideas
  - Build an “academic commons” community
- Show that you care…
  - About both faculty **AND** resident well-being…
  - AND not just for the sake of “looking good”…



Sample Survey Questions

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER THESE SURVEY QUESTIONS?

HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE INTERPRETED?

Answer verbally or in the chat

- Are you satisfied with the training you receive in faculty

NOT AT ALL	MINIMALLY	SOMEWHAT	VERY

- Do the residents receive training on how to report patient safe

NO	I DON'T KNOW	YES

TidalHealth.

Sample Survey Question

- Let's compare responses and discuss
- Scan the QR code
- How would you answer this survey question?



Additional Sample Questions

Based on the information received and discussions, how would you now answer these survey questions?

- How satisfied are you with the time allotted for teaching residents?

UNSATISFIED	SOMEWHAT UNSATISFIED	SOMEWHAT SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED

- Is there a way to report concerns about the program confidentially?

NO	I DON'T KNOW	YES

TidalHealth.

More Questions?

