A National Survey of US Medical Schools: Current Status of Academic Support

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Research and Innovation Abstracts

Oral Presentation

Research

Results of a national survey of US medical schools regarding academic support (AS) will be presented. The emphasis to matriculate diverse medical students, and the more recent focus on obtaining strong scores on the USMLE, Step 1 for successful residency matches, has put increased importance on supporting students. 107 schools participated in this study. A summary of the changes in AS support over the last 5 years and in-depth analysis of results will be presented.

Purpose: To learn about prevalence and practices of academic support (AS) at AAMC affiliated medical schools in the US

Methods: A survey was expanded from a 2004 study by Saks and Karl about medical school academic support programs. Survey items asked about structure of the academic support program, level of service, academic support providers, funding, tutoring, USMLE board preparation services, and changes in the past 5 years. The survey was distributed by email to student affairs deans or academic support providers in 137 medical schools at AAMC affiliated medical schools in the US.

Results: 107 schools provided sufficiently complete survey responses (response rate 78%). Almost all schools reported providing AS in the first three years of medical school; 89% reported doing so in M4; overall more students access AS in M1 and M2 than in M3/M4. 88% of schools reported having a tutoring program: The availability of tutoring is high in M1/M2 (97/91%), and lower in M3/M4 (54/41%). Of the 250 AS providers identified, 40% were reported with an EdD or PhD degree, 24.8% MD degree, 26.4% Master’s degree, and 9% are trained at the Bachelor’s degree level. 78% of schools provide USMLE, Step 1 board prep support for all medical students, 18% reported no board prep activities, and 4% provide support only for students who failed Step 1. A summary of the many changes in AS support over the last 5 years, and more in-depth analysis of results, will be presented.

Discussion/Conclusions: The emphasis to matriculate diverse medical students, and the more recent focus on obtaining strong scores on the USMLE, Step 1 for successful residency matches, has put increased importance on supporting students (Guerrasio et al., 2014; Prober et al, 2015). As was true in the studies by Saks and Karl (2004) and Hinman et al (2009), there continues to be great variability in existing programs. Current results indicate that a growing number of schools are employing more and better trained practitioners to provide services. Further work is needed to identify “best practices” in this evolving field.

Mid-career

References:


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