Submission Id: 4132

Title

Creating a unique virtual training experience for unmatched medical graduates during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Education and training

Presenters

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Abstract

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic presented a unique opportunity for medical education and research training, especially for the unmatched medical graduates (UMGs). At Michigan State University, Family Medicine Department a tele-geriatric research fellowship program was developed to accommodate these UMGs during the pandemic.

Objective: Provide a unique virtual research training for UMGs during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The long-term goal is to fill in the gap that is growing in the workforce in geriatric medicine.

Study Design: Qualitative study with pre and post-survey.

Setting: Virtual meetings and discussions.

Approach: Team-based approach.

Population: UMGs applying for the MATCH (residency programs).

Intervention: Virtual Zoom meetings were held on a weekly basis. Remote Research training was initiated. All learners underwent extensive research training. Different research projects were discussed. Tasks were distributed among UMGs and different research methods were applied. Data collected.

Some learners were involved in different projects. Collaboration with other institutions was established. All projects were completed and presented at national and international conferences.

Outcome Measures: The number of completed projects. The total number of medical graduates who were matched to a residency program.

Results: Two batches of UMGs were enrolled. All learners found this program to be a valuable enriching experience. Most of the UMGs expressed interest in pursuing a career in geriatric medicine. Of all the UMGs participated in this program fourteen were able to match to the residency program from the first batch (Total of 16). Twenty-four oral presentations and abstracts were accepted and presented in eleven national and international conferences and meetings.

Conclusions: The virtual research training is found to be an effective training method during the COVID19 pandemic. All UMGs reported an appreciation for the ability to complete their research projects remotely during the training period. The virtual learning experiences that have been utilized during the COVID-19 pandemic have proven their worth in enhancing UMGs' research skills. While virtual research experiences cannot fully take the place of in-person (e.g. bench-side), virtual research training can definitely add value to medical education.