



Ann Fam Med 2024;22:71-72. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.3089>

STFM OFFERS SUPPORT AND RESOURCES TO NEW AND TRANSITIONING RESIDENCY LEARNING NETWORKS

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Family Medicine Program Requirements that went into effect in July 2023 encourage family medicine residency programs to participate in learning collaboratives/networks. Learning networks “enhance population care across regions by sharing best practices to deliver high-quality patient care.”¹

In December 2022, the American Board of Family Medicine (ABFM) Foundation awarded the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) a 10-month (January through October 2023) grant to inform and provide leadership for future development of residency learning networks. Specifically, the grant provided funding for STFM to:

1. Conduct a Summit to gather input on needs for residency learning networks and perspectives on various types of and structures of successful learning networks
2. Create an Action Plan for developing infrastructure for residency learning networks
3. Implement Residency Learning Network Leadership Training for faculty, PDs, and/or APDs who had an interest in leading Residency Learning Networks.

About the Learning Networks Summit

Thirty-three individuals met at a Summit, April 6-7, 2023, in Denver, Colorado to clarify needs and generate ideas for an infrastructure for STFM-supported residency learning networks. The Summit was chaired by Corey Lyon, DO, Program Director, University of Colorado Family Medicine Residency Program. Participants included organizational representatives, learning collaborative representatives, program directors, faculty, coordinators, and residents.

The Summit included a panel discussion on program needs; presentations on 8 existing learning network models; and activities, facilitated discussion, and breakout groups to define the level and type of support needed by family medicine residency programs.

General takeaways from the Summit:

- Because learning networks aren't a citable ACGME requirement, the messaging about the benefits of joining a network are important.
- There are many benefits to joining a learning network; programs should be participating.

One of the key questions posed to Summit participants was whether STFM should devote resources to supporting learning networks. The response was a resounding “yes.” However, participants were less interested in STFM running/coordinating networks than in STFM providing support for networks.

Through a series of group activities, participants agreed that STFM should serve as a “central resource connecting programs to existing learning networks and providing resources (infrastructure and potentially staffing) to support the development of new networks. As part of this, STFM would host regular meetings of learning network leaders to support cross pollination of best practices across learning networks.”

About the Learning Networks Leadership Training

In April of 2023, STFM put out a call for applications for Residency Learning Network Leadership Training for faculty, program directors, and/or assistant/associate program directors who had an interest in leading residency learning networks. Forty-seven individuals applied; 23 were accepted; 21 confirmed.

Training took place through a full-day workshop and supporting sessions at the 2023 STFM Conference on Practice and Quality Improvement.

Topics covered in the training included:

- Learning collaborative models and definitions
- Effective leadership
- Change management
- Defining and measuring outcomes
- Facilitation: recruitment, creating agendas, role assignments, collaborative communication, documenting findings, etc
- Accessing resources
- Securing funding

All participants indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the training, and in aggregate participants noted increased confidence in their ability to (1) make the case to their leadership to get protected time to lead a residency learning network; (2) measure outcomes of a residency learning network; (3) create a sustainable governance structure for a residency learning network; (4) implement a data collection and storage strategy for a residency learning network; (5) get funding for a residency learning network; and (6) provide leadership for a residency learning network.

About the Action Plan and Next Steps to Develop Family Medicine Residency Learning Networks

Based on the outcomes of the Summit, STFM developed an action plan to train and support leaders of residency learning networks. STFM is in the early stages of a project to:

- Educate and engage residency programs not currently participating in learning networks
- Provide infrastructure and support to new and/or transitioning residency learning networks
- Create online resources to support learning networks
- Develop leaders of residency learning networks

This work is also being funded by the ABFM Foundation and chaired by Corey Lyon, DO.

The following support opportunities will be made available to new and transitioning residency learning networks over the next several months:

- In-person Residency Learning Network Leadership Training for faculty, program directors, and/or assistant/associate program directors who have an interest in leading Residency Learning Networks
- 1:1 consults with STFM staff to develop learning network governance structure, goals and objectives, and communication strategies
- Coaches, who will offer expertise on network structure, data collection/management, agenda planning, and sustainability
- Speakers for residency learning network in-person and virtual faculty development
- Time and space to convene at STFM conferences
- Online resources, including a guide to running a residency learning network, a directory of family medicine learning networks, and a workbook for documenting goals, objectives, evaluation strategies, and governance structures
- An STFM Collaborative for residency learning network leaders

All opportunities and resources will be posted at stfm.org/residencylearningnetworks.

Mary Theobald, STFM

References

1. ACGME Program Requirements for Graduate Medical Education in Family Medicine. Accessed Nov 7, 2023. https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/programrequirements/120_familymedicine_2023.pdf



Ann Fam Med 2024;22:72-74. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.3086>

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF FAMILY MEDICINE RESEARCH: THE 2023 NATIONAL FAMILY MEDICINE RESEARCH SUMMIT

October 30, 2023 was a historic day for the discipline of family medicine, with a momentous gathering of over 140 visionaries, innovators, and leaders in the field of family medicine for the National Family Medicine Research Summit. This summit was the culmination of several years of visioning, led by Dr Irfan Asif in his role as ADFM Research Development Committee Chair, and a full year of active planning and discussions with many individuals and groups, including partnership with the executive committees of NAPCRG and ADFM,

as well as deep engagement with the elected and executive leadership of the 8 major national family medicine organizations who comprise the Family Medicine Leadership Consortium (FMLC): AAFP, AAFP-Foundation, ABFM, ACOFP, AFMRD, ADFM, NAPCRG, and STFM.

The initial stages of this process were to create a series of goals and objectives for a strategic plan for expanding research in the discipline using as much inclusive input as possible, including many meetings with various partners, a series of interviews and focus groups, and an engagement survey. More about the initial process can be found in "Toward a Unified and Collaborative Future: Creating a Strategic Plan for Family Medicine Research,"¹ and more about the context and reasoning behind the need for this plan and Summit are described in, "A Milestone for Promoting Research in Family Medicine."²

The strategic planning process undertaken by these Family Medicine leaders has crafted a vision for research that is nothing short of transformational. It envisions research that is "whole-person, family, and community centered and improves health by enhancing health promotion, improving care for chronic diseases and advancing healthcare delivery, while including cross-cutting themes of health equity, technology, and team science."

The blueprint for this vision involves 3 key strategic priorities and 5 objectives under each:

1. Pathways and Mentorship Programming: Creating a robust system to mentor and guide emerging researchers in family medicine.
2. Funding and Advocacy Efforts: Ensuring sufficient resources and support for groundbreaking research in the field.
3. Infrastructure Development: Building the necessary infrastructure to facilitate cutting-edge research initiatives.

Under each of these priority areas are a series of 5 objectives. The priorities and objectives of the plan are shown in Table 1.

Following the review of this plan by the FMLC organizations, a Summit Planning Committee was given the task of creating an agenda for the October 30th Summit that would help move these priorities forward with possible action steps for each objective. After several months of planning, the final Summit agenda embraced innovative approaches to participatory engagement and each of the 3 priority areas had a breakout group, which each had 3 rounds of discussion throughout the course of the day. These discussions utilized liberating structures, specifically, the 1-2-table-all format, to give all participants a chance to speak. Following this group brainstorming, each round of discussion ended with real-time prioritization of action steps, followed by immediate polling.

This collaborative approach resulted in the development and prioritization of action steps aligned with the objectives