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Title

Training a diverse physician workforce: a survey of alumni of a medical education program focused on underserved populations

Priority 1 (Research Category)

Education and training

Presenters

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Abstract

Context: Concerns about declining diversity among medical students have emerged due to the Supreme Court's 2023 ruling against race-based affirmative action in college admissions. Medical schools must now eliminate race or ethnicity considerations, making it imperative to develop innovative approaches to preserve recent progress. Notably, California has been navigating this landscape since it banned affirmative action in 1996. The University of California recognized this imperative and has supported the Programs in Medical Education (PRIME). At the University of California Los Angeles, the PRIME Leadership and Advocacy (PRIME-LA) program prepares medical students to be leaders and advocates in clinical care, research, or policymaking for marginalized communities. Objective: This study examines specialty choice and practice location characteristics for PRIME-LA graduates. Study design and Setting: We conducted a cross-sectional survey of PRIME-LA graduates during 2013-2022. Data collection took place between June of 2023 and May of 2024. Outcome measures: The survey included demographic characteristics, specialty choice, training status, and practice location characteristics. Descriptive statistics were calculated using R version 4.2.2. Results: The response rate was 46% (77/168). The majority of respondents were female (70%). 19.5% of respondents identified as Asian, 15.6% identified as Black, and 44.2% of respondents identified as Latino/a/x. Family Medicine was the most common specialty among alumni respondents (29.9%). Of all respondents, 50.6% selected primary care specialties including family medicine, pediatrics, and internal medicine. 45.5% of survey respondents were in training (residency or fellowship) and 54.5 had completed their training. Most alumni were currently training or practicing in California (76.6%). 81.9% of alumni reported practicing in an underserved area and 76.6% reported providing clinical care for underserved populations. Conclusion:

Graduates of the PRIME-LA program are diverse, serve underserved populations, and have high rates of choosing primary care. This mission-based medical education program is an important model for effectively addressing physician workforce gaps in underserved and marginalized communities.

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