

# Medical School Admissions: Capturing the Underrepresented Minority Student Experience

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# Medical School Admissions: Capturing the Underrepresented Minority Student Experience

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## Background

Currently, a mismatch exists between the race and ethnicity of the physician workforce and the patients it serves. The federal government, the AAMC, individual medical schools, and other organizations are addressing this mismatch by focusing on increasing the numbers of URM students that matriculate into medical school. However, it is unclear how URM students experience the medical school admissions and enrollment process or what they perceive as facilitators or barriers in this process.

## Purpose

To address this knowledge gap, this study utilizes a grounded theory approach to explore the medical school admission experiences of a sample of URM students.

## Research Questions

What facilitators and barriers do URM students perceive in medical school admissions?

## Methodology

**Participants:** URM medical students from the Student National Medical Association (SNMA) and the Latino Medical Student Association (LMSA)

**Procedure:** Following qualitative grounded theory methodology, the study includes collection, analysis, and verification of data using a three stage process.

Phase 1: 1-1 interviews and development of a semi-structured focus group protocol.

Phase 2: Focus groups. and development of a theoretical model

Phase 3: Member check feedback sessions to verify the emergent theoretical model

## Potential Implications

Study findings may support or augment conceptual models of student college access and choice - particularly those that highlight differences in the decision-making process across different racial and socioeconomic groups – as applicable to the medical school decision-making process.

May result in practical recommendations to improve the admissions process to better serve URM students.

## Challenges & Opportunities

- Participant recruitment
- Evolving definition of “URM”
- 1-1 interviews vs. focus groups

