The Challenges of Medical School as Told Through Narrative

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The Challenges of Medical School Told Through Narrative

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Goals

• To give students a forum to speak about their experience in medical school
• To share medical student experiences with faculty, community, and future students
• To facilitate understanding between students and their educational community and comradery between students across years

<table>
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<th>Metric</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>14 out of 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of in-person interviews</td>
<td>5 out of 14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Range</td>
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<td>Average number of words</td>
<td>721 words</td>
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<td>Range</td>
<td>207-2092 words</td>
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</tbody>
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Results

• 14/15 SELECT medical student c/o 2015 participants
• Themes included finances, selection of specialty, classwork, and discrepancies between expectations and reality of mentors
• 14/14 students worked through their challenges when given an open-ended platform

2014-2015 Timeline

Jun
• Proposal Submitted

Jul
• Proposal Narrowed with advisor

Aug - Oct
• Background Research

Oct
• Consent created and sent

Nov – Jan
• Interviews held and Transcribed

Jan
• Data analyzed and paper written

Background

• Narrative medicine has been used as a technique to promote self-awareness among medical students as a means to help them become more well-rounded physicians.1

Methods

• Six month project timeline
• Asked students, “What was your greatest challenge in medical school?”
• Qualitative analysis of themes and patterns within interview text

“"I think that the challenging experience in med school for me was running into an attending whose viewpoints dictated the direction of care that he gave.”

Conclusions

• Students share common challenges
• Narrative can be an useful tool to work through problems of both personal and systemic nature for SELECT medical students

Discussion

• Best way to word question: open-ended or specific?
• Next steps: Seek feedback from participants and co-investigators, explore specific types of experiences in depth

REFERENCES:

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