Steppingstones: Helping Early Career Pediatric Hospitalists Find Their Footing

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BACKGROUND
• The AAP emphasizes early career faculty engagement and connection to optimize professional fulfillment
• CU Pediatric Hospital Medicine has grown 145% in 6 years. In Denver, 68% are early career faculty
• Early career support is missing for this large group
• The impact of a career development (CD) curriculum on professional fulfillment, autonomy, and connectivity for early career pediatric hospitalists is unknown

OBJECTIVE
To assess interest in, and develop, implement, and evaluate a CD curriculum for early career pediatric hospitalists.

METHODS
• Needs assessment of early career faculty (N=24)
• Develop yearlong, interactive program (“Steppingstones”) including 6 seminars + professional portfolio creation
• Evaluate pre/post validated indices measuring fulfillment, autonomy, connectivity for early career pediatric hospitalists is unknown

RESULTS
Needs Assessment:
• 75% response rate
• 89% felt empowered to pursue career passions. However:
  • 24% were unsure about pursing academic promotion
  • 46% of those seeking promotion were unsure of their end goal
  • CD was the top-rated need (61%) within faculty development, yet:
    • Only 16% felt current offerings were “very good” or “excellent”
    • 94% reported interest in participating in a program
    • Creating an up-to-date professional portfolio and clearer career vision as top motivators to join

OBJECTIVE
To assess interest in, and develop, implement, and evaluate a CD curriculum for early career pediatric hospitalists.

RESULTS (CONT’D)
Curriculum Implementation:
• 9 early career pediatric hospitalists participating (first cohort Fall 2021)
• Seminar topics selected based on results of needs assessment: “most valuable” and/or “lowest current competency”
• Interactive seminars emphasize self-reflection & small group discussion
• As of March, 3 of 6 seminars & portfolio components completed

Table 1: Sample Responses to “What was the most helpful aspect of this session?”

“Discussions with other colleagues and Q&A opportunity with [my section head].”

“Dedicated time to craft my own mission and vision statements.”

“I enjoyed thinking and writing my career goals. This is a worthwhile endeavor as an academic physician.”

“The career development plan portion and breakouts with a peer—loved speaking out loud about my values and goals.”

CONCLUSIONS
• Career development support is needed among early career pediatric hospitalists
• Steppingstones is a promising means to promote career development among early career pediatric hospitalists
• We will build on early successes as we deliver remaining sessions & recruit 2nd cohort

FUTURE STEPS
• After curriculum completion, reassess validated indices to assess impact on fulfillment, autonomy, & connectivity
• Apply Steppingstones framework to support early career faculty in other specialties & institutions

REFERENCES
2. Image: https://diygardenstepping01.tumblr.com