

Allergy and Immunology Continuing Education Program for Advanced Practice Providers (APPs)

Specialty clinics may consider developing needs assessments for their APP teams to explore their unique learning needs, and guide selection of APP continuing education topics in order to advance the clinical care they provide



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Purpose

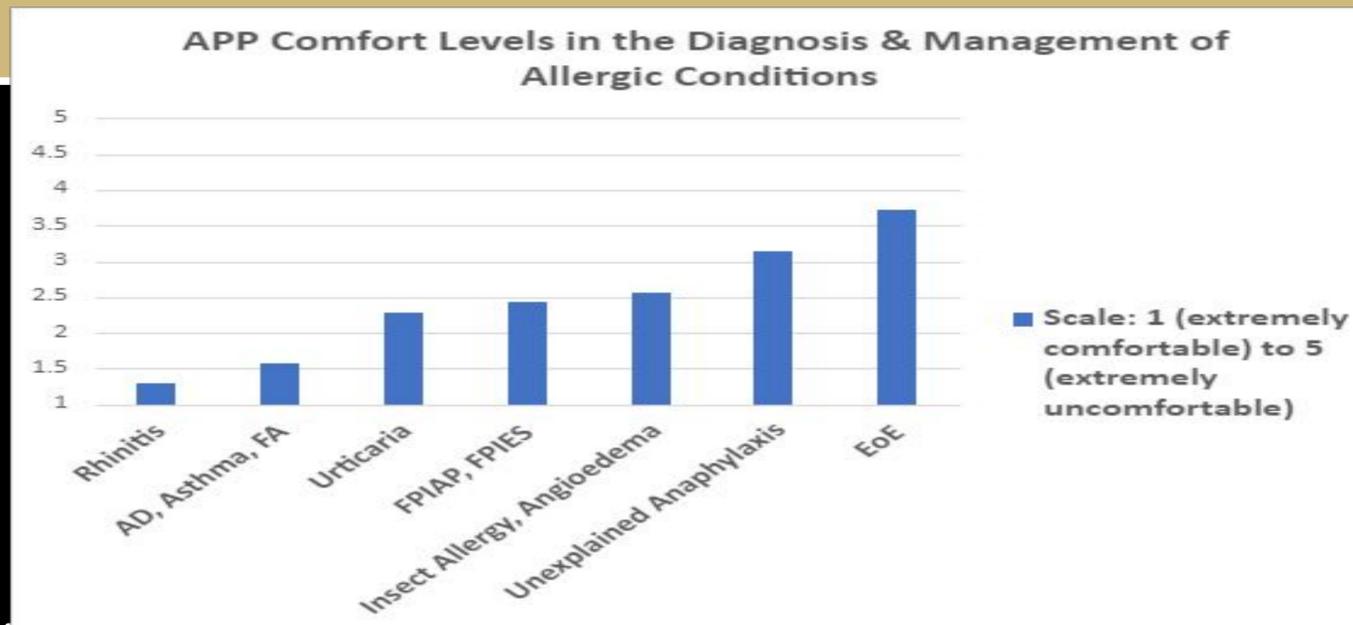
To explore the learning needs of APPs and develop an educational program to advance the clinical care they provide by remaining up to date on current best practices.

Background

Allergy APPs expressed a desire for an education and case discussion forum tailored to their learning needs and patient population. Prior research has established the majority of nurses' preferred learning styles are visual and sensing (Mangold, 2018), therefore an Allergy APP learning curriculum was developed with an emphasis on certain allergic conditions, practical clinical pearls, treatment algorithms, and pictures/diagrams.

Methods

To determine which conditions should be the focus of the education program, seven allergy APPs completed an assessment on comfort levels with diagnosis and management of common allergic conditions via a 5-point Likert scale. Responses ranged from extremely comfortable (1) to extremely uncomfortable (5). Formal monthly didactics and case-based learning discussions on conditions APPs felt least comfortable managing will be held monthly. Presentations will be developed and led by an APP with a physician mentor.



Results

Conditions APPs felt most comfortable managing included rhinitis with a mean score of 1.29, atopic dermatitis, asthma and food allergy, all with individual mean scores of 1.57. Conditions with the greatest knowledge deficit included insect allergy and angioedema (mean scores of 2.57), unexplained/idiopathic anaphylaxis (mean 3.14), and EoE (mean 3.71).

Conclusion

The needs assessment identified areas of deficit to better inform curriculum development targeted at allergy APPs. We hypothesize that with the education program APPs will become more skillful and competent in the initial diagnostic evaluation and basic management of complex patients and non-routine diagnoses.