

Abstract: Purpose: Community clerkship sites are an essential part of medical students' education in the family medicine rotation. This study will assess the differences in student clerkship satisfaction by comparing rotations in community practices to those in university clinics. Design: Cross-sectional survey assessing the correlation between student satisfaction with clerkship site and the site characteristics. Methods: Descriptive data for 12 sites included in this study will be gathered by the medical student education director. An evaluation given to each student at the end of the 4-week family medicine clerkship will be reviewed and associated with data collected on site characteristics. These will be compared to the clerkship satisfaction ratings at the university site to identify site characteristics that are most desirable for clerkship students.

Educational goals and objectives for the PEER session

1- Assess the correlation between the students' satisfaction and the characteristics of the clerkship sites. 2- Identify the difference between the community sites and the university sites in three different domains: preceptor, clinic and patient population. 3- By finding a correlation we will be able to enhance the students experience in the community site by using selective criteria to recruit community locations or by providing additional training to community preceptors to increase student interest in family medicine.

Introduction/background for the project

Medical students' clinical experience evaluations are important to determine the effectiveness of the clerkship sites. Community clerkship sites impact the educational as well as the practical experience of medical students. According to existing literature, community sites provided a better opportunity for students to do more procedures, treat lacerations, sprains, strains and chronic diseases than university sites where the majority of cases were for health maintenance and pregnancy care (Greer, Schneeweiss & Baldwin, 1993). However, students' OSCE and STFM examination performances did not differ by whether their clerkship was located in a community or a University site (Prislin, Fitzpatrick & Radecki, 1998). However, faculty evaluations of student performances were attributed to different levels of student-

faculty interactions by site location (Prislin, Fitzpatrick & Radecki, 1998). While few studies have assessed the impact of community sites on the students' learning experience, none have assessed the correlation between the students' clerkship evaluations and the site characteristics. In this study, we will focus on the students' evaluation of the community sites in comparison with the University site to examine the associations between site specific characteristics in preceptor, clinic and patient domains.

Project description (curricular design)

Hypothesis: Students' satisfaction with clinical experiences will be positively correlated with preceptor characteristics and uncorrelated with clinic organization or patient characteristics. Descriptive data regarding each of the 12 sites included in this study will be gathered by the medical student education director. This questionnaire will cover three different domains: 1) Preceptors' characteristics such as board certification, languages spoken, and number of providers involved with students education. 2) Clinic characteristics such as physical location of teaching, use of electronic medical records and inpatient ward inclusion. 3) Patient characteristics: ethnic groups, types of illness and patient age. An evaluation form will be given to each student at the end of the 4 week family medicine clerkship including ratings of overall clerkship, the community site, and the preceptor. Twelve community and one university site will be compared. A total of 40 students' data will be included in the study.

Challenges to successful completion of this project

Challenges to this study are minimal since evaluation forms are completed by the family medicine clerkship director during offsite visits and students are required to complete their own evaluation forms upon the completion of the rotation. Such factors ensure the cost effectiveness, ease of execution and timeliness.

Implications for other schools and future directions

A correlation between the site survey items and student satisfaction can provide a useful tool for other schools to recruit appropriate community sites that would

enhance the students' experience during the family medicine clerkship. Also this might be used as a guide for community preceptors faculty development.

What is new or innovative about the content of this proposed session?

Examining the characteristics that students define as important in a community and University site is a new concept that has not yet been explored in the empirical literature on medical student education. Most studies in the literature compared residency clinics to community clinics and only assessed the impact on the student. Our goal will be to examine the reasons for student satisfaction with a community clerkship and compare the results to those found within the University site. A search on Pubmed did not yield any results on this topic.