Behind the Mask II: The Impact of COVID-19 on Developing Professional Identity in First-Year Medical Students

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Introduction

Professional Identity Formation (PIF) is a dynamic process of learning to "think, act and feel like a physician", integrating relevant knowledge, skills, values, and behaviors with their unique identity and core values.

We explore the impact of COVID-19 on PIF in a cohort of first-year medical students'

Methods

Participants:

12 first-year students at Penn State College of Medicine's University Park regional campus.

Masks:

Paper mâché masks and art supplies were provided. The "ideal physician" was depicted on the front, and self identity on the back.

Survey, Reflection:

Adapted from the Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS) and the Impact of Event Scale (IES). Written reflections complemented the survey and masks.

Results

Mask 8

Mask 4

Mask 10

Survey Items	Adapted From	Mean	Standard Deviation
Medical school is the most important part of my life.	AIMS[a]	3.40	1.43
I believe that I think, act and feel like a physician at this point in my medical training.	AIMS[a]	5.00	1.41
Starting medical school in the midst of a pandemic has strengthened my resolve in becoming a physician.	AIMS[a]	2.70	1.25
Thought about COVID when I did not mean to.	IES[b]	3.10	2.18
I had trouble falling asleep or staying asleep because of pictures or thoughts about COVID that came to mind.	IES[b]	4.50	2.12
Pictures about COVID popped into my mind.	IES[b]	4.50	2.12

[a]Legend: 1: strongly agree, 2: agree, 3: somewhat agree, 4: neutral, 5: somewhat disagree, 6: disagree, 7: strongly disagree

[b]Legend - 1: Definitely true, 2: True, 3: Somewhat true, 4: Not at all, 5: Somewhat untrue, 6: Untrue, 7: Definitely untrue

TIME Framework

Domain	Example
Attitudes	"Hope," "Be kind," "Love"
Personal Characteristics	"Passion," "Lead," "Curiosity"
Duties, Responsibilities	"Dedicated," "Sacrificial," "Duty"
Habits	"Desire to understand how a person's ideals affect their health," "Learn," "Care"
Relationships	"Listen," "Ask," "We Are"
Perception, Recognition	'Making hard choices," "Just," "Do right by the patient"
COVID-19	Mask, Syringe, Virus

Discussion

Key Findings:

Students are optimistic that medical education will return to normal,

Students exhibited tremendous resilience, grit, and perseverance during the pandemic.

Limitations:

Small sample size

Rural, regional campus.