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Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians

Research Day

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Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians Research Day

The fifth annual Pennsylvania Academy of Family Physicians (PAFP) Research Day was held this past April in Philadelphia at the Hotel Atop the Bellevue. PAFP is the Pennsylvania chapter of the American Academy of Family Physicians, the 75,000 member national association of family doctors. One goal of the conference was to expose more medical students to research in family practice. Jefferson's Department of Family Medicine has been involved since the first research day in 1990, but in the last two years, a more visible presence has been evident. This is due, primarily, to the JMC students who have made presentations. Since 1993, at the request of the PAFP, medical students who work with family medicine faculty on research projects have been invited to present their findings. Nine Jefferson students have presented at the PAFP research day on topics such as specialty choice, home visits, dementia, practice management, community medicine, asthma, and living wills.

In addition to the students' presentations, fellows from Jefferson and other institutions, academic medicine physicians, and community practitioners also made presentations.

The keynote address on qualitative research (ethnography participant observation, interviewing) was delivered by William Miller, MD, who also gave a workshop on the same topic. Dr. Miller is currently on the faculty of the University of Connecticut and has written extensively on qualitative methodology in primary care research. Additional workshops were held on questionnaire development and on research consultation. Alan Adelman, MD, spoke on outcomes-based research at the program's dinner. The fifty-five participants closed the meeting with lunch and the awards presentations. The four JMC student presenters (Stephanie Archer, Deborah Bentz, Catherine Stepanski, Karen Thomas) were all recognized with awards. The May/June issue of *Keystone Physician*, and PAFP bimonthly newsletter, carried an article about the conference and the award winners.

Using data from a cohort of hospitalized asthmatic patients, Stephanie Archer studied the relationship between the timeliness of post-discharge follow-up and subsequent resource utilization. Christopher V. Chambers, M.D. was her mentor.

Karen Thomas worked with Dr. Robert Perkel on an assessment of patients and physicians regarding advance directives. The study findings came from interviews held with both groups during the time patients were at Jefferson for outpatient visits.

Both Catherine Stepanski and Debra Bentz worked under the guidance of Janice E. Nevin, MD, MPH, to assess the health care needs and strengths of an under-served community in North Philadelphia called Ludlow. The project was part of a community medicine summer internship experience.

About the Author:

James J. Diamond, PhD, is Director of the Greenfield Research Center in the Department of Family Medicine, Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University.