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Assessing Peer Mentor Skill Development in Participating in a Novel Medical Student Mentoring Initiative

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Abstract

Background

Learning communities in medical schools create a bridge for senior students to engage with junior peers, providing advice and support as mentors. In this process, mentors are likely to gain skills in communication, empathy, and leadership - well received traits for residency.

Methods

We aim to elucidate an objective measure of mentor growth and development during the mentorship program. We will evaluate opinions on the program's ability to foster professional attributes including leadership, communication, and empathy; determining features that benefit them while assessing for paradigms of improvement. We will survey 24 M2-students through self-rated queries on a Likert scale. This survey will be administered to mentors at two time-points: half-way and at the end of the program.

Results

From the mid-point survey, 22 out of 24 total mentors responded. Most mentors feel satisfied with the support that they receive from the program, specifically with the time commitment while not feeling overwhelmed with their duties. Finally, mentors find an importance in building mentee confidence and helping mentees to meet their goals, but most do not feel skilled at this.

Conclusion

The survey results provide valuable insight regarding mentors' personal and professional development. We identified mentors' needs for increased support. In a follow-up study, we will assess how the program can develop educational interventions to aid mentors in developing abilities to communicate, lead, and mentor. We additionally hope to establish a rigorous quality-assessment tool to be used year-over-year in assessing program development while also defining avenues to improve mentors' professional development.