

**APPD RESEARCH TASK FORCE**  
**SURVEY POLICY**  
Adopted July 13, 2005

**INTRODUCTION**

Program Directors (PDs) are key leaders in pediatric education and along with the APPD can provide valuable information and insights into graduate medical education, training, and other aspects of pediatrics. Many researchers, survey, and marketing parties realize the potential for PDs to provide information and access to trainees. Thus, APPD and members are often solicited to complete surveys with variable quality and little appreciation for the time and other demands of programs. However, the APPD Research Task Force, APPD leadership, and many members hope to elevate the science of medical education studies, develop internal reports, and more actively participate in the survey process. Thus, this draft is an attempt to provide some structure to this process.

**PURPOSE**

The main goals are: (1) to improve the quality of research involving PDs, residents, and medical education; (2) to prioritize important issues and facilitate the process for important studies; and (3) to respect time constraints and make data collection more efficient.

Ultimately, this is merely a process to utilize APPD resources and expertise to facilitate research. This process will not seek to officially endorse or mandate participation. Each member/PD ultimately may choose to agree to participate, although we will use APPD resources to encourage participation. On the converse, we will not seek to restrict surveys or contact with members/PDs outside of this process; however, we will discourage this and may attempt to limit access to member contact information and data.

**OVERVIEW: SURVEY TYPES**

We envision different types of studies with (in general) decreasing priority and attention.

- (1) **Periodic survey data**—basic names, address, contact information, and potentially some basic program size/region/demographics. Should be done in conjunction with basic APPD membership data, possibly augmented by existing ACGME data and not an additional survey. Frequency could be annually, or alternate basic and expanded versions each year.
- (2) **APPD leadership surveys**— Surveys developed by leadership to address key APPD issues. This could be in conjunction with Periodic Surveys or extra/separate surveys.
- (3) **APPD internal/member-sponsored surveys**— Surveys developed from PDs or members as a lead author or co-author. These may be generated by individuals, or potentially in response to a Request For Proposals call to stimulate research in a particular topic area as requested by the Leadership or Research committees.

- (4) **External Partners Organizations**—Organizations that are members of the Federation of Pediatric Organizations (FOPO) periodically desire input from PDs on issues related to medical education.
- (5) **External/unsponsored surveys**— Surveys developed without any PD input or participation. These may be generated by individuals, or potentially in response to a Request For Proposals (RFP) call to stimulate research in a particular topic area as requested by the Leadership or Research committees. These will be the lowest priority unless in response to a RFP.

\*Note: Some APPD requests are brief, less formal polls on pressing issues, which require more immediate input and consideration. This policy does not apply to these brief polls (such as the 2-5 question web-based APPD surveys that ask for input).

### **OVERVIEW: PROCESS**

- Researcher (or member) contacts APPD national coordinator using a basic form for intent to survey or to request contact list.
- APPD Office reviews basic intake form for completion of form/details. Form will be due the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, with a review and response goal within 3-4 weeks. We want to respect the timeframe of survey turn-around, and do not wish to make a lengthy process.
- Prior to submission to research task force, we will **require** use of local IRBs (even for exempt surveys) to review the ethics, confidentiality, privacy aspects of the research as part of their proposed survey and process, **and require documentation of IRB approval/exemption**. We will not serve as an institutional review board (IRB) equivalent.
- Members of the APPD Research Task Force will organize the review. Goal is to identify 5 to 10 APPD members who will rotate on monthly or quarterly assignments depending on the volume of surveys. While we will encourage APPD leadership to serve as reviewers, any PD that is an APPD member can potentially serve as a reviewer.
- APPD Office submits form and survey to one primary Research Task Force reviewer (assigned on a schedule). The primary reviewer will then solicit 4-5 reviewers. The first 2-3 to confirm will review and comment to the primary reviewer. This may be done via email, or ideally a set conference call (just scheduling first 3 available members to reply).
- The primary reviewer will prepare a brief summary with recommendation to approve / revise / deny and any significant suggestions/comments. The goal of the review is to triage, offer suggestions, and also suggest sampling frame and any other significant limits, yet not get too involved in revision/resubmit cycles unless significant issues

with length. We intend to limit making too many editorial or style suggestions and focus on appropriateness of content, number/type of programs needed to survey, and length.

- Primary Reviewer will submit the form and recommendation to the APPD administration to communicate back to researchers.
- For approved survey projects, APPD staff could then potentially assist in providing some basic demographics and contact information, as well as in conducting a web-based survey. We discussed whether to offer lists free, at cost, or for a charge. For now, probably at cost, and consider future Calls for Proposals or ways to stimulate and solicit surveys.
- After the first and second years of implementing this survey policy, members of the Research Task Force and APPD Leadership will review whether the survey policy should explicitly define a limit on the number of surveys and amount of APPD staff resources to provide to approved survey projects.

#### PROCESS NOTES

- Items needed:
  - Intake form
  - Review committee
  - Review process/criteria and form
- Expect process to take 4 weeks for intake/processing and review. May need to revisit this depending on volume.

**APPD Survey Proposal Checklist**

- Cover page (Attachment 1) including the following:**
  - Project Title**
  - Principal Investigator**
  - Co-Investigators**
  - Investigator who is member of the APPD (if applicable)**
  - Contact information**
  
- Abstract (not to exceed one page) (Attachment 2)**
  
- Specific Aim(s)/Research Question(s):**
  
- Significance for Pediatric Residency Training:**
  
- Survey Instrument (Attachment 3)**
  
- IRB (Attachment 4)**
  - Approved**
  - Exemption**
  
- How will APPD membership be surveyed (electronically, standard mail, fax, combination)?**
  
- Please state the scope of programs needed for this survey. Would a subset of programs be adequate for your survey or are all members of APPD needed? If all, please justify.**
  
- Describe how survey data will be used? (Publication, thesis, etc)**
  
- How will results be shared with APPD membership?**
  
- If data from this survey is published, will the identities of respondents/programs be kept confidential?**