

BALANCING EDUCATION AND SERVICE IN PEDIATRIC RESIDENCY TRAINING: RESULTS OF A NATIONAL SURVEY

Jennifer C. Kesselheim MD, EdM, Debra Boyer MD, Children's Hospital/Boston Medical Center, Boston, MA

Purpose: To elucidate definitions of service from both pediatric program directors and residents, and to establish each cohort's assessment of the balance of service and education in their own training programs and in case vignettes. **Methods:** We conducted a multi-site cohort study of pediatric trainees' (N=800) and program directors' (N=37) perceptions and definitions of service, using a region-stratified sample of 2-3 participating pediatric residency programs from each of the 8 regions within the Association of Pediatric Program Directors. **Results:** Surveys were completed by 37 PDs (100%) and 387 trainees (48%). All (100%) PDs believe that service can, in the absence of formal teaching, be considered educational and a large majority of residents agreed (326, 87%). Although 62% of PDs responded that clinical education is rarely/never compromised by excessive service obligations, only 37% of residents agreed ($p=0.017$). Similarly, when asked how often rotations provide an appropriate balance between education and service, 94% of PDs responded Extremely/Very Often while only 68% of residents agreed ($P=0.005$). Residents were significantly more likely than PDs to endorse definitions for service that included volunteer work (82% vs. 59%, $P=0.002$), going above and beyond for a patient (91 vs. 78%, $P=0.017$), and routine patient care activities (91 vs. 72%, $P<0.001$). For 6 of 12 case vignettes, trainees' gave median service ratings that were significantly higher than PDs ($pd\ 0.032$).

Discussion/Conclusions: Medical educators and trainees hold mismatched impressions of their training programs' balance of service obligations with clinical education. Specifically, trainees more frequently report an overabundance of service. Both groups acknowledge that service activities can be educationally valuable although the groups' definitions of service are not fully aligned. Interpretation of ACGME survey data and curricular refinements should account for the numerous definitions of service and the perceived educational value of service activities.