Race-Conscious Professionalism and African American Representation in Academic Medicine

Summary Provided by: Augustus A. White, III, MD, PhD

Race-Conscious Professionalism is a very important reality, necessary to address the ongoing need to maintain and advance diversity and inclusion in academic medicine. Our recent article (1) offers an analysis of the forces that shape career development as related to underrepresented individuals in our academic medical environment. We describe extrinsic and intrinsic forces that are operative in the current environment and point out reasons for addressing these factors. Having an African American presence well-entrenched, well-represented in the academic medical profession offers important advantages. It's important that physicians in their training and development be exposed to African American role models. This educational experience is important for both the underrepresented medical students as well as for those who comprise the rest of the academic medical student bodies.

There are educational and clinical advantages to having components of medical academic faculties including African Americans. Also, it's important to recognize that a good deal of the work that is done to improve health care in African American communities is provided by African American physicians who are more likely than other physicians to practice in those communities.

For nearly two centuries, African American physicians have used their professional training, their expertise and the stature it affords to address challenges facing African American communities.

Traditionally, African American physicians have contributed substantially to care in underserved communities. In addition, they have contributed educational perspectives of cultural knowledge and information to the training of medical students and residents. This article recommends that
the contributions of knowledge, community service, community action and community health care enrichments offered by these underrepresented physicians be viewed and recognized in the context of professional academic commitments for recognitions and for promotion within academic communities. Traditionally, academic advancement has been related to scientific contributions. However, it is imperative that the cultural, educational and community enrichment contributions offered by African American physicians, be recognized as items which merit academic advancement. This will provide an increase in the quantity and quality of academic contributions of African American physicians and constitute race-conscious professionalism. It should also be recognized that faculty can be given academic credit for the advancement of social justice and the reduction of health care disparities within the communities they serve both locally and nationally.

There remains a dire need for more African Americans in teaching, research and leadership positions in academic medical centers in our country. Achieving the goal of more diversity and enrichment provides role models, mentors and diversity input into the research, innovation, education and health care delivery missions of academic medical centers. The employment of the concept of race-conscious professionalism provides a vehicle for recognition of unique and important contributions and achievements on the part of African American physicians.

Considering activities and contributions in the paradigm of race-conscious professionalism, will enhance careers in academic medicine and attract more African American students to engage in academic medical careers to the overall benefit of our entire society, its patients and its health care professionals. This is a very important challenge and opportunity requires rigorous sustained efforts.


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**Spiritual Care Immersion Offers Medical Students Valuable Perspective**

Katarina N. Bergh, MDiv, staff chaplain, Spiritual Care Services

For the past two years, Harvard Medical School has offered a course designed to assist second-year medical students with the transition from academic work to clinical practice: Transition to the Principal Clinical Experience course (for core specialty rotations). Some of the modules take place at Harvard Medical School, while others are in the hospitals where the students will be based for the year.

BWH Spiritual Care Services staff lead a clinical immersion module for the course, with chaplains of different faith traditions exposing...
medical students to the diverse spiritual perspectives of BWH's patient population. This year, sessions were led by Jewish, Unitarian Universalist, Catholic and Buddhist chaplains.

Andrew Eyre, MD, a physician in the Department of Emergency Medicine and course creator, described his vision for the Spiritual Care module as:

"The goal of these experiences is to expose the medical students to aspects of medicine and the hospitals that they may have had less exposure to and to help them understand how different services and health professionals interact with each other. Given that Spiritual Services can be an invaluable, but sometimes poorly understood resource for the clinical team, we are interested in creating an experience for the students that deepens their understanding of Spiritual Services."

In the module, medical students are encouraged to explore ways in which a patient's religion or spirituality can impact the experience of illness as well as medical decision-making. Other objectives include:

- To examine how a brief physician-oriented spiritual assessment may improve clinical care
- To explore why spirituality matters to physicians in hospital settings
- To introduce the range of services provided by BWH Spiritual Care Services and the many roles chaplains play in the institution
- To clarify when a spiritual care consult is needed

The module includes case studies, question and response, and role-play based on BWH cases in which spirituality played a key role in medical decision-making and physician-chaplain collaborations were critical. After completion of the course, 100 percent of participants have indicated they would be more likely to complete a physician-oriented spiritual assessment to determine the impact of spirituality on clinical care. They also reported being more likely to create a spiritual care consult for a patient or family.

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**Upcoming Academy Events**

**Medical Education Grand Rounds:**
Best of the Best: Society of General Internal Medicine's Review of Academic Papers Most Likely to Impact Medical Education
Monday, December 4, 2017 // 4:00 - 5:30PM // TMEC 227 // RSVP

Carol Bates, MD
Associate Professor of Medicine
Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
Harvard Medical School

For more information please click here
"I know it when I see it": Evaluating Competence in the Age of Assessment
Friday, September 15, 2017
Louis N. Pangaro, MD, MACP
Professor and Chair
Department of Medicine
Uniformed Services University
For the podcast of this event click here

Are we training for collective incompetence? Three common education assumptions & their unintended impacts on healthcare teamwork
Wednesday, October 11, 2017
Lorelei Lingard, PhD
Director, Centre for Education Research & Innovation
Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry
Western University
For the podcast of this event click here

The Secret Sauce: Can a developmental MD curriculum and programmatic "Educational Alliance" help learners become truly self-regulated
Wednesday, November 8, 2017
Dawn Elise DeWitt, MD, MSc, MACO, Cert MED Ed, FRACP
Associate Dean Clinical Education, Spokane
Elson S Floyd College of Medicine, WSU
For the podcast of this event click here

2017 Medical Education Day
Abstract Award Recipients

Innovation for Graduate Medical Education
Using Simulation to Teach Transthoracic Echocardiography to Cardiology Fellows: A Study Using the Mastering Learning Concept
Nicolas Thibodeau-Jarry, MD, MMSc (MedEd); Daniel Bamira, MD; Michael H. Picard, MD, FASE

Graduate Medical Education Research
Development and Validation of a Resident Clinical Teaching Assessment Tool using Objective Structured Teaching Exercises
Jacob H Johnson, MD; Zoë Gottlieb, MD; Anna Rubin, MD; Nilay Patel, MD; Madeleine Matthiasen, MD; Ariel Frey-Vogel MD; Shannon Scott-Vernaglia MD; Arielle Medford MD; Amy Cohen EdM; Amy Sullivan EdD; Kerri Palamara, MD
Student Research
Factors Influencing Primary Care Career Choices of Harvard Medical School Graduates

Innovation for Undergraduate Medical Education
Transitions in Care Curriculum for Core 1 Students at HMS
E. Ardolino, MD; B. Armstrong, BS; J. Danziger, MD; M. Atkins, MD; A. Weinstein, MD, MPH

Innovation for Undergraduate Medical Education
Exploring a New Clerkship Experience: Hospitalist- Student Pairings
Katherine T. Johnston, MD MA MSc FACP., Amulya Nagarur, MD., Joshua Ziperstein, MD., Melissa Mattison, MD SFHM FACP., Leigh Simmons, MD.

Undergraduate Medical Education Research
How to Use Mechanism Maps in Collaborative Learning?
K. Fischer, M.D., Ph.D, MMSc; K. Huth, M.D., MMSc; AM. Sullivan Ed.D.; RM. Schwartzstein, M.D.

Who's who in the Harvard Medical School Academy

David Cohen is a clinician-educator at BIDMC. He did his undergraduate education at the University of North Carolina, medical school at the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California, residency in Internal Medicine-Pediatrics at The Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, and fellowship in Endocrinology, Metabolism, and Diabetes at Los Angeles County Hospital + University of Southern California. He sees general endocrine patients, with a focus on patients with thyroid disease and on male hypogonadism. A graduate of the Rabkin Fellowship in Medical Education, he spends quite a bit of time teaching everyone from medical students, residents, and fellows, to his patients and fellow colleagues. He has a role in the Center for Education as a Medical Education Specialist and as the Co-Director of the BIDMC Academy of Medical Educators. He is also a Core Education Faculty for the Internal Medicine residency program, and a leading educator (as both curriculum developer and teacher) in the Homeostasis 2 course of the New Curriculum at Harvard Medical School.

He grew up in Los Angeles and lived in New York City for many years, but loves living in Boston since moving here in 2013, with the healthy lifestyle, restaurants, plethora of sporting events, and easy access to skiing and beaches.

New Medical Education Pubmed Citations from Academy Members

Please note that we use an automated search system to identify new pubmed-cited medical education literature. If we have missed a medical education paper you have published, please let us know. Also, please let us know if you have published medical education materials on MedEdPortal or other sites.


