

Faculty Development for the Future: How Education Fellowships and Advanced Degrees Can Affect the Transition

I recently read the intriguing article by Simpson and colleagues entitled “The Power of Peers: Faculty Development for Medical Educators of the Future”¹ published in the October 2019 issue. The dynamics of academic medicine and current learners are changing, requiring the faculty to follow suit. Faculty will be asked to identify performance gaps and tailor learning targets, adopt new technology, and design “space” to optimize learning. These are in response to the demands of the modern learner and the trends of medicine. As mentioned in the article, this can be a daunting task for those who have already established their identity within academic medicine and are now being expected to expand their expertise into new areas and new roles.

As a medical education fellow practicing in an academic emergency department, those of us seeking additional training through fellowship and graduate degrees can aid as a bridge to transition faculty into these future roles. In the article, one of the 4S’s identifying faculty development strategies is “support.” This identified peers as the greatest source of support. I believe the increasing number of faculty

members attaining additional educational training can act as “peer champions” through this time of transition. As someone who is currently in the midst of this training, things like growth mindset and adaptability are at the forefront of my current training and will be intertwined into my future positions. These qualities are paramount to the successful implementation of future faculty development programs. Academic facilities could ease this transition and develop a corps of peer champions by supporting those pursuing these advanced academic training opportunities.

I agree wholeheartedly that these changes to the medical educator paradigm are coming and are necessary. I encourage facilities to consider their faculty with advanced academic training when working toward implementing faculty development programs and supporting those who choose to pursue these endeavors. We are a group that is increasing in size and can be an asset in the transition into future educator roles, acting as the support network called for by this article.

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References

1. Simpson D, Marcdante K, Souza K. The power of peers: faculty development for medical educators of the future. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2019;11(5):509–512. doi:10.4300/JGME-D-19-00613.1.