

A Model for Improving Scholarly Activity for Pediatrics Residents

We read with interest the article, “An Incremental Approach to Improving Scholarly Activity,” by Penrose et al¹ in the December 2012 issue of the *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*. In that report, the authors showed that the addition of mentoring by a postdoctoral researcher was associated with a growth in resident research activities in a small obstetrics-gynecology residency.

We would like to share our success in improving residents’ scholarly activities at a small community hospital with limited resources in Queens, New York. Our pediatrics residency is accredited for 30 residents, 10 in each level of training. Most of our residents are international medical graduates. The program is affiliated with an academic university center that provides some clinical and didactic support. Like many other programs,² we have struggled to meet the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education research requirement.³ To address potential deficiencies in resident scholarly activity, we designed and implemented a new research curriculum that included a formal lecture series and a mentoring program designed to stimulate residents’ research interests and activities with the ultimate goal of meeting the Residency Review Committee’s scholarly activity requirement.³

The research program is mandatory for all second- and third-year residents and is optional for interns. Goals and expectations are clearly delineated, including the requirement to complete a research project and submit it to a scientific meeting. Residents have access to the research team leader and faculty mentors, via e-mail, phone, and in person, to assist them with the project, and a 2 to 4-week research block is provided under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Theoretic aspects of the curriculum are

reviewed weekly during protected conference time. A statistician is available to assist in study design, statistical methods, and data analysis. The team assists residents in writing and editing their abstract submissions. To enable residents to meet submission deadlines to regional and national pediatric scientific meetings, we require them to complete their projects by the middle of their third year.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the research program, we used the number of abstracts submitted by senior residents and accepted for presentation as an outcome variable, before and after implementation of the new research curriculum. The results showed a significantly higher number of abstracts submitted and accepted for presentations at regional (mean = 1 versus 8, $P = .001$) and national meetings (mean = 1 versus 5, $P = .008$), following the implementation of the new curriculum.

Even with limited resources, implementing a systematic research curriculum with active participation of faculty mentors helped residents improve their research performance and successfully meet the scholarly activity required by the Residency Review Committee.

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