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97 Assessing the Need for a Structured Curriculum During Attendance at an Emergency Medicine National Conference

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Background: Emergency Medicine (EM) residents are required to complete a scholarly project prior to graduation. To encourage scholarly activity, many programs send residents, at considerable expense, to a national conference. We know of no formal curriculum that ensures residents maximize the value of this conference experience.

Objectives: To assess the need for EM residents to attend a national conference for a structured curriculum during the conference to augment programming and encourage scholarly activity.

Methods: We surveyed 2nd year EM residents in a large, urban 4-year residency program prior to attending a national EM conference. Self-administered questionnaires were created by the investigators to assess progress of the scholarly project prior to the national conference, and to assess the perceived need for conference attendance and a structured curriculum.

Results: Twelve residents (100%) completed the survey prior to attending the national conference. Seven respondents (58%) reported being intimidated by having to do a scholarly project, and 67% reported little or no progress towards the scholarly project before the conference. 75% felt that they were not given enough time during residency to complete a scholarly project. Sixty-seven percent felt the residency did not teach skills for idea development and 100% thought the residency did not teach skills for study design, 17% reported feeling unprepared to attend a national conference.

Conclusions: EM residents at a large, academic residency would benefit from a curriculum to maximize the value of a national conference. Prior to conference attendance during 2nd year, few residents had made tangible progress towards a scholarly project and felt intimidated and poorly prepared for this required residency activity. We plan to assess the long-term impact of this curriculum on the quality of scholarly projects.