Medical education research and patient outcomes

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HRSA PCTE Technical Assistance Webinar
January 26, 2017

Mission
To educate students & residents to provide high-quality patient care
Medical education research

- What has been the state of medical education research?

- Authority for medical education historically resides in profession

- Intrinsic capacity to self-regulate

Past 30 years have focused on:

- Basic research on reasoning
- Use of knowledge
- Problem-based learning
- Performance assessment (OSCE, standard patients)
- Provision of continuing education

Lack of patient outcomes in medical education research

- Review of 600 research articles published in medical education journals (1996-98)
- Only 4 measured clinical outcomes of patients
- Half measured trainee performance
- 34% measured trainee satisfaction


Why haven’t we studied patient outcomes?

- Focus on undergraduate education
- Students able to overcome educational interventions
- Not able to conduct randomized, blinded trials
- No reliable data on outcomes
- No money for research
Medical education researchers focus on:

- Changing “individuals”
  (e.g., admitting better students, improving faculty teaching)

- Rather than changing “systems”
  (e.g., clerkships, residency, cost)
A cautionary note

Reconsidering the focus on “outcomes research”


Dilution – Kirkpatrick’s levels, confounding

Feasibility

Failure to establish a causal link

Biased outcome selection

Teaching to the test

Research in medical education and patient outcomes

“[G]oal to build systems to link the education of our physician workforce with the care of our patients”

Success stories

- Physician workforce outcomes
- ACGME and ABMS changes
- Better understanding of Quadruple Aim