

Can Assigning a Dedicated Resident Abstract Mentor Improve the Residents' Scholarly Activities?

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Learner Audience: Residency Program Directors

Background: The ACGME expects residents' involvement in scholarly activities that lead to presentations at national meetings. In our program, a few residents were actively involved in research under the guidance of a mentor, but the majority of the residents had no experience in presenting at national meetings. The leadership of our residency program sought to create an academic culture to improve residents' participation in scholarly activities that lead to presentations at national meetings.

Needs Assessment: There was poor resident participation in scholarly activities that resulted in presentations at national meetings.

Hypothesis: A dedicated resident abstract mentor, separate from a research mentor, can improve the scholarly activities of residents at national meetings.

Curriculum Design: A faculty member was assigned as the "Resident Abstract Mentor" in February 2008. The initial focus for residents' scholarly participation was **abstracts of medically challenging cases**. The rationale being that the residents feel more motivated when they were personally responsible for the clinical management. The mentor took the following initiatives. 1. Periodic emails to faculty and residents to actively seek medically challenging cases. 2. Periodic emails to residents regarding deadlines for upcoming meetings. 3. Informal meetings with the residents to help with writing abstracts and subsequently posters.

Outcome: In 2008, the number of residents who presented at national meeting doubled when compared to previous years, even though the total number of the presentations from the department remained the same. (Table1). A total of 12 presentations involved residents; 10 of which were medically challenging cases. The appointment of a dedicated resident mentor for abstracts and focus on case reports has led to a significant surge in our residents' scholarly activity. The success of our approach may be relevant for other programs in their effort to follow the ACGME expectations regarding the scholarly activities of residents.

Table 1

Year	Number of Presentations at national meetings	Number of residents involved
2003	19	1
2004	14	2
2005	25	4
2006	24	4
2007	26	4
2008	23	9