

Title: Building Future Physician Leaders and Advocates: A Student-Led Advocacy and Leadership Curriculum

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Abstract: Traditional medical education primarily focuses on the treatment of clinical disease as an isolated entity versus a product of complex socioeconomic and biological factors that influence health. Medical trainees witness the downstream effects of the social determinants of health (SDoH) in their clinical training and have multiple opportunities to advocate for policy solutions. However, without formal advocacy training, students are unprepared to mitigate the influence of policy on health outcomes. To prepare students in this skill set, a student-led advocacy and leadership curriculum (ALC) was established at VCU SOM. A needs assessment completed with the class of 2019 demonstrated that health advocacy training should be included in medical school curricula, and was used to develop the ALC curriculum for the class of 2020. This pilot project is a quality assessment of the initial offering of the ALC curriculum to determine its effectiveness and identify potential revisions. Data obtained from pre- and post-course surveys illustrated that an ALC can improve students' attitudes, knowledge on SDoH, and self-confidence as future physician advocates. This quality improvement study's results will be used to refine the ALC content and launch the full course with a larger cohort. This follow-up study will measure students' pre- and post-course attitudes, knowledge, self-confidence and advocacy competencies. Session objectives will be re-evaluated, and pre- and post-course surveys for participants of the course will be revised based on the literature and received feedback. A secondary analysis will focus on demographic characteristics to evaluate for associations related to interest in advocacy.