

A cross sectional study of the Family Medicine Resident Medical Student Mentor Program (RMSMP) at the University of Virginia

Echo Buffalo-Ellison, MD, Sarah Blackstone, PhD, Sarah N. Dalrymple, MD
University of Virginia Department of Family Medicine



BACKGROUND

In 2015, residents at the University of Virginia (UVA) Family Medicine Residency started a longitudinal program connecting UVA medical students interested in family medicine with family medicine resident mentors. The initial goal of the program was to provide peer support for medical students navigating the Match. In 2017 at the conclusion of the second year of the program, informal feedback on residents' experiences as mentors was solicited and found to be overwhelmingly positive, suggesting a potential positive impact on resident well-being. The mentoring program has continued with approximately 10 mentoring pairs each year with a brief hiatus from 2020-2022. It is in the process of renewal for the 2022-2023 academic year. Mentoring pairs are assigned based on self-reported interests of both the medical student and the resident. Pairs will meet regularly throughout the academic year.

PURPOSE

Mentoring has been found to be effective at influencing interest in or intent to enter primary care, and specifically family medicine, across different stages of training. This study would help determine if the RMSMP does have an impact on medical student interest and confidence in family medicine as a career choice, improve comfort with the residency application and match process, and decrease burnout among resident physicians.

METHODS

The study has a cross-sectional design utilizing pre- and post-participation surveys. Potential participants will include UVA medical students and residents enrolled in the RMSMP during the 2022-2023 academic year. Surveys will be distributed to UVA medical students and family medicine residents who participate in the RMSMP utilizing Qualtrics. Medical student participants will answer a series of questions regarding their level of interest in Family Medicine as a career choice, confidence in Family Medicine as a career choice, and demographics. Resident participants will also be surveyed about burnout as related to participation in the RMSMP.

Data collection is planned for October-November 2022 at the start of the RMSMP this year and again in April 2023 at the conclusion of this year's Match. The plan is to collect data annually for as long as the program is in existence.



OUTCOMES

This study can provide qualitative information on the effect of a resident-medical student mentoring program (RMSMP) on medical student interest in family medicine as well as other aspects of family medicine as a career. In addition, the project will add to the growing body of literature citing the benefits of mentoring and mentorship. It can also provide groundwork for future studies determining the degree of effect of RMSMPs on medical student attitudes toward family medicine as well as effect on family medicine as a career choice. Understanding the effectiveness and impact of resident mentoring could promote interest at other institutions, potentially leading to a greater family medicine workforce.

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