Surveys of predoctoral dental students pre- and post pediatric dental rotation: Assessment of knowledge and comfort in treating pediatric patients

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Abstract

Does the predoctoral pediatric dentistry rotation at ECU School of Dental Medicine equip students to confidently diagnose and treat the pediatric patient post graduation? Pediatric dentists receive a great deal of referrals for treatment solely because of the age and comfortability of their general dentists to accurately diagnose and successfully treat children. It implies that there may be insufficient predoctoral pediatric exposure to produce general dentists who are comfortable diagnosing and treating pediatric patients. These surveys will help identify common predoctoral students’ strengths and weaknesses when it comes to treating pediatric patients. With these areas identified, the pediatric rotation can be enhanced or supplemented in hopes to produce more general dentists who are more willing and confident treating pediatric patients.

Introduction

Pediatric rotations as practicing student doctors are vital for the future of pediatric dentistry, but little is known about dental students’ perceptions of the field before and following these rotations. By surveying dental students about their perspectives on pediatric dentistry before and after their pediatric rotation, this study seeks to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the educational experience during rotation. To be more precise, this study will compare dental student attitudes and perspectives toward pediatric dentistry before and after a pediatric rotation. The study also aims to evaluate the relationship between the dental student’s level of interest in pediatric dentistry, self-assessed knowledge, and attitudes toward pediatric dentistry prior to and following the pediatric rotation. The results of this investigation will offer crucial insights to possible changes in the predoctoral pediatric dentistry education.

Methods

Qualtrics survey will be utilized, and IRB approval will be sought.

1. Develop two surveys. Pre and post surveys will capture the data needed for the research study. They will include questions about the pre-rotation and the post-rotation knowledge and comfort levels of the predoctoral 3rd and 4th year dental students.

2. Recruitment of participants. Participants who are currently enrolled in a pediatric dental rotation will be informed verbally and in writing that pre and post surveys will be a requirement for the completion of their pediatric dentistry rotation. The reasoning and goals for the study will be explained by Predoctoral Director Dr. Nikki Tucker.

3. Administration of surveys to the participants. The survey will be administered electronically before and after the pediatric dental rotation to capture the changes in knowledge and comfort levels.

4. Collect and analyze the survey responses. The survey responses will be analyzed for any patterns and trends in the data.

5. Results of the research study. The results of the research study should be written up in a report and poster format in preparation for the research presentation at the 2024 AAPD annual conference.

Results

An improvement in knowledge and comfort in treating pediatric patients during the rotation may be one of the anticipated outcomes of completing the research survey of predoctoral dental students prior to and following their pediatric dentistry rotation. The survey results might also shed light on the many facets of pediatric dentistry that students felt more at ease with and that might require more focus. The survey may also shed light on any subject areas where students encountered difficulties.

Literature Review

Pediatric rotations as practicing student doctors are vital for the future of pediatric dentistry, but little is known about dental students’ perceptions of the field before and following these rotations. By surveying dental students about their perspectives on pediatric dentistry before and after their pediatric rotation, this study seeks to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the educational experience during rotation. To be more precise, this study will compare dental student attitudes and perspectives toward pediatric dentistry before and after a pediatric rotation. The study also aims to evaluate the relationship between the dental student’s level of interest in pediatric dentistry, self-assessed knowledge, and attitudes toward pediatric dentistry prior to and following the pediatric rotation. The results of this investigation will offer crucial insights to possible changes in the predoctoral pediatric dentistry education.

Conclusions

The anticipated results can be concluded to improve or supplement the predoctoral pediatric dentistry educational experience in the hopes of producing general dentists who feel equipped and confident to treat the pediatric patient when deemed necessary.

References