

## **Assessing student interest for a Primary Care Track program within the LSUHSC School of Medicine curriculum**

Dorian Joye O'Sullivan, MS4<sup>1</sup>, Pamela Wiseman, MD, <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center, New Orleans, LA

### **Background:**

LSUHSC School of Medicine (LSUHSC SOM) has two programs, the Primary Care Scholars Track and the Rural Scholars Track, designed to support students with early interest in primary care and promote primary care workforce development. These programs include a full or partial tuition waiver in exchange for a service commitment to practice in primary care in Louisiana following graduation. However, beyond the tuition waiver, there is little curricular programming to support the development of students with early interest in primary care within the programs. Additionally, the existing waiver programs can support only small group students, and require students to make tough decisions about their futures before they are certain of their career interests. The purpose of this survey was to gather student perspectives on whether there is sufficient interest among students to build a primary care track with no service commitment following graduation, and how such a program could benefit students in general, regardless of their specialty of interest, while helping students find and sustain their interest in the primary care specialties throughout medical school.

### **Methods:**

The survey comprised a 9-question, internet-based survey was generated by a senior primary care scholar and disseminated to the LSUHSC SOM student body. Survey questions included multiple choice and free response prompts focused on student perspectives on general usefulness of a primary care track program, curricular activities they would value, and influences on their interest in a primary care career.

### **Findings:**

37 students completed the survey. Students with a current interest in a primary care specialty represented the majority of responders (n=27, 73%). Of these, the most popular specialty of interest was Family Medicine (n=16, 43.2%). The most valuable curricular activities were Regular Clinical Experiences beginning in the first year of medical school (83.3%), Longitudinal mentors/preceptors throughout medical school (80.6%), and Skills and Procedural workshops (72.2%). 86.1% of responders felt it was important that the primary care track align with the standard curriculum. 94.5% (n=34) of responders would be interested in a longitudinal primary care experience during the third year.

### **Conclusions:**

A low survey response rate (n=37 students) limits the utility of the survey to draw significant conclusions about the data. However, the trends that emerged would support additional student surveys or focus groups to support institutional prioritization of implementing a primary care curriculum with high yield activities. A robust primary care track program could be beneficial to medical undergraduates at LSUHSC regardless of specialty.