3 ways the AMA is reshaping medical education

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Almost one-fifth of American medical schools are members of the AMA Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium. Since the AMA began working with medical schools in 2013, the original 11 consortium schools have been joined by 26 other medical schools and 11 Reimaging Residency projects, at the graduate medical education level.

The advancements the group has made are many. An article published in Academic Medicine—“The Accelerating Change in Medical Education Consortium: Key Drivers of Transformative Change”—offers insight on some of the most tangible and impactful developments that have come about as a result of the group’s work.

**Move to competency-based training**

One of the consortium’s original goals was to move medical education toward programs that were more based on desired outcomes and achievement of competencies and less based on the amount of time spent in a classroom.

According to the article’s authors, this was necessary “because each student possesses differing strengths and educational needs, fully fostering their development across competencies requires flexible, individualized pathways of training.” To date, consortium schools’ move toward a competency-based approach has manifested in many ways. Among them: Schools have applied frameworks that align with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Milestones as well as the Association of American Medical Colleges Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency; created the Master Adaptive Learner model to support mastery learning; improved educational handovers; and implemented coaching programs to foster informed self-assessment.
More physicians equipped for modern care

In the consortium’s first five years, member medical schools trained about 19,000 medical students across the United States, who are projected to provide care to more than 33 million patients annually. Because of the concept of health systems science, they will be more equipped to do so with a knowledge of the environment in which they operate.

Health systems science is a foundational platform and framework for the study and understanding of how care is delivered, how health professionals work together to deliver that care, and how the health system can improve patient care and health care delivery.

With the health systems science (HSS) textbook, now on its second edition, HSS has become a core part of the work of the consortium. Other key developments to spread knowledge on HSS have included a suite of online modules on HSS topics and the creation of standardized HSS exam in collaboration with the National Board of Medical Examiners.

More dynamic learning environment

Curricular changes implemented by consortium schools often involve new techniques for teaching and assessment. Eventually, the initiative led to significant changes in faculty members’ roles. At the 32 consortium schools, 900 faculty positions were repurposed or created, and a total of 87 full-time equivalent positions were redistributed, the paper’s authors noted.

Specifics of changes to curriculum included increased importance placed on team-based care, quality and safety, diversity and inclusion, student well-being, and use of technology in learning and assessment.

The authors also explore the role of the consortium’s design in driving this success. The community of innovation propelled these initiatives through a strong sense of collaboration and transparency among the institutional members, backed by AMA resources to effect change.

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