New AMA resource helps overstretched GME program directors

FEB 18, 2022

Timothy M. Smith
Senior News Writer

Despite the growing importance of residency and fellowship programs to forging the next generation of physicians, designated institutional officials’ and graduate medical education (GME) program directors’ often struggle to acquire additional budgetary support. That can raise the question of how they are supposed to keep pace with expectations.

The AMA GME Resource Program gives the AMA more capacity to provide resources to help GME leaders more effectively meet accreditation requirements, enhance education delivery and improve well-being for their learners and faculty.

Ways to go in new directions

“There's been one recurring challenge that every group we’ve worked with has faced,” James Gilligan, vice president of health system and group engagement at the AMA, said during a recent webinar. “You're always being asked to do more, but often with less,” which may mean a lower budget, fewer people, or less of other vital resources.

The goal of the AMA GME Resource Program is to partner with GME programs to help them enhance support for residents, fellows, faculty and administrators, while also ensuring learners are better prepared for practice.

The program has several components.

The AMA GME Competency Education Program (GCEP). “It's always been known as a solution for assisting with meeting the requirements around ACGME [Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education] core competency requirements,” Gilligan said. “Now it can actually also assist in meeting accreditation requirements around a number of common program requirements.”
These include courses to support faculty development, well-being and health equity, the latter developed in partnership with the AMA Center for Health Equity.

“The content's already created. We've worked with experts from around the industry,” Gilligan said. “You don't have to spend the time to create your own or spend money to bring in a high-priced speaker.”

The AMA GME Speakers Bureau. “If there's a topic that isn't included in GCEP that you want to cover with your residents, you should call us first,” Gilligan said. “More than likely, a subject-matter expert can assist with that.

“I should also call it the ‘coaches bureau,’ because we can come in and do some very tailored faculty workshops around things like coaching, providing feedback, creating a more positive learning environment.”

The AMA GME Insight Network. “We'll identify leaders that have been very innovative or cutting edge and some of the things that we're trying to provide support around,” Gilligan said. “How are they meeting accreditation requirements? How are they improving the delivery of education? How are they improving well-being?

“We're going to bring them to the table with you to share their work, in detail, and how they found success. That gives you early access to these innovative ideas.”

Post-residency curriculum. Online courses help prepare residents and fellows for practice in the modern health care environment while in training, These explore both the business side of medicine and health systems science.

“It’s a tough battle to get a resident to engage in a 45-minute recorded lecture,” so the AMA has used adult learning best practices to create education delivery that is both engaging and concise Gilligan said. “Our average run time is 14 minutes.”

Well-being resources. These include customized Mini Z burnout assessments to identify systemic drivers of burnout and develop intervention strategies, as well as the AMA Data Lab, which explores trends within organizations and in specific demographics.

Community is the key word

The AMA Center for Health Equity is also working with several partners to develop a national racial equity grand rounds series that will launch later this year.
The AMA Reimagining Residency initiative was launched in 2019 to transform residency training to best address the workplace needs of the current and future health care system. Through $15 million in grants over five years, it is funding eleven projects to help create a meaningful and safe transition from undergraduate medical education to residency, establish new curricular content and experiences to enhance readiness for practice, and promote well-being in training.

Learn more about AMA GME-focused programs and initiatives.