

An Assessment of Emergency Preparedness and Disability Training in Physician Assistant Programs and Medical Schools in the Midwest



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Introduction

Disabilities

- Disability education is not a requirement for medical school accreditation (Santoro et al., 2017)
- It is estimated that 20% of US medical schools have incorporated disability education into curriculum (Seidel & Crowe, 2017)
- It is expected that healthcare professionals will encounter these individuals in their career (Ankam et al., 2019)

Emergency Preparedness/Disaster

- There is not a national consensus or standardized curriculum for disaster preparedness in US medical schools (Jasper et al., 2013)
- Previous survey of medical schools revealed that 31% incorporate some type of disaster training in their curriculum (Weisner et al., 2018)
- Survey of medical students, reported only 17.2% believed they were receiving adequate disaster education during their program (Pollard et al., 2018)

Objective

- This study aims to assess the current status of disability and emergency/disaster preparedness training in the curricula of PA, MD, and DO programs in the Midwest

Methods

- Participants:** Deans and program directors of PA, MD, and DO
- Inclusion Criteria:** programs had accredited or applying for accreditation status and were located in the Midwest, with more than one program in the state
- Survey:** Quantitative methods survey participant's email through Qualtrics
- Analysis:** SAS frequency tables

Results

- 10 PA schools responded
- 0 Medical schools responded
- All DO programs were excluded
- 70% of PA programs have lectures that address disability training
- 55% of PA programs currently have plans to increase disability training coverage
- 33% of PA programs offer extracurriculars opportunities for emergency/disaster preparedness
- 11% survey students for their interests in regards to emergency/disaster preparedness

Table 4

Percentage of Physician Assistant (PA) and Medical School Programs in the Midwest That Responded "No" to Questions About Disability and Emergency/Disaster Preparedness Content within Curriculum, 2020

Questions Asked	PA (n=10, n%)	Medical (n=19, n%)
Responded "No" to at least one question.		
Disability		
1. Does your program offer a graduate-level track or concentration in disability?	n=10 (100%)	-
2. Does your program offer dual-degree or multidisciplinary program that highlight disability (eg, Physical/Occupational therapy)?	n=10 (100%)	-
Emergency/Disaster Preparedness		
1. Does your program offer a graduate-level track or concentration in emergency/disaster preparedness?	n=9 (100%)*	-
2. Does your program offer a dual-degree or multidisciplinary program that highlights emergency/disaster preparedness?	n=9 (100%)*	-
3. Does your program have other graduate-level courses that deal substantially with emergency/disaster preparedness (eg, Course on natural disasters, or mass casualties)?	n=9 (100%)*	-

*accounts for 1 missing response

- indicates that no survey participants responded

Conclusions

- A majority of PA program respondents do provide lectures that specifically address disability and emergency/disaster preparedness
- Three PA programs have competencies that encompass disabilities
- Four PA programs have competencies that encompass emergency/disaster preparedness
- Only one PA program responded that they survey students asking for their interests in specific topics, such as disabilities
- Two PA programs currently plan to increase of topics related to emergency preparedness education

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