

Innovative Teaching Program for Clinician-Educators

at the University of Chicago



SUMMARY

Target Audience

Clinician-educator (CE) junior faculty and fellows in geriatrics

Purpose

To help develop clinician-educators with expertise in focused scholarly areas and assist with their promotion

Program

Protected time for geriatrics CE junior faculty and fellows to develop geriatrics teaching expertise focused on a clinical niche

History

The program began in 2000

Operating Costs

At least one protected day per week for CE faculty to devote to career development

Outcomes

All three junior faculty trained through this program have been successfully promoted to the Associate Professor level; nine fellows have received promotion to the Assistant Professor level

Available Materials

Website of the Curriculum for the Hospitalized Aging Medical Patient (CHAMP)

For More Information

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Program Overview

The Innovative Teaching Program is a dedicated approach to developing geriatrics clinician-educator fellows and junior faculty who are recognized locally— and eventually nationally— for their expertise in a specific area of clinical geriatrics and related academic and teaching endeavors.

Clinician-educator trainees select a specific clinical area or 'niche' on which to focus their teaching pursuits, similar to an area of concentration for clinician-researchers. Through this approach, clinician-educator fellows and junior faculty become the "go to" people for clinical expertise and innovative teaching in their defined areas. With this expertise, they help take the lead on developing new lectures, courses, and electives in their topic area.

Program Operations

Shortly after their arrival at the institution, each clinician-educator trainee meets with the Geriatrics Section Chief to develop a strategic career plan. An annual overview of faculty interests enables trainees to select an area of clinical focus and to identify mentors with expertise in that area. Areas of focus have included palliative care, geriatric oncology, dementia, pain management, polypharmacy, ethnogeriatrics, systems of care, and specific geriatric care settings such as long-term care

The strategic career plan forms the basis of the clinician-educator trainees applying for funding and presenting at meetings in their chosen area of expertise. Trainees are urged to keep complete records of courses they teach, lectures they give, and presentations they make, to build a record of accomplishment around their content area of choice.



To provide them with sufficient time to develop their teaching skills as well as expertise in their clinical niche, the Department of Medicine reduces the clinical time required of geriatrics clinician-educator trainees. This provides more time for clinician-educator faculty to teach geriatrics and serve as mentors to medical students and residents.

Mentees identify mentors through discussions with the Section Chief and the Fellowship Director, as well as at a transitions gathering at the beginning of the academic year. Mentors meet with mentees at least quarterly.

Staffing Requirements

There are no special staffing requirements necessary for the program. Geriatrics faculty are able to organize their interactions with the clinician-educator trainees through their identified area of interest. Faculty and staff from other areas, such as medical education, are engaged to advise on and assist with the educational programs that are being created by the geriatrics clinician-educators.

Program Costs and Funding Sources

The clinician-educator program is supported by the Hartford Center of Excellence, both through salary support for faculty within the section and through support for specific meritorious pilot grant funding awarded to faculty members. Clinician-educator trainees (junior faculty and fellows) are mentored by senior faculty who are at the Associate Professor and Professor levels. The Department of Medicine supports faculty time through a faculty funding agreement recognizing their efforts.

Further support for clinician-educator fellows and junior faculty came from the Reynolds Foundation Aging and Quality of Life Program Award, which supports the University's Care of the Hospitalized Aging Medical Patient (CHAMP) education program. This award was granted in recognition of both the strategic alliances with faculty and staff across the Department of Medicine and the identified

areas of expertise and targeted career development for clinician-educators. Five clinician-educator junior faculty have secured Geriatric Academic Career Awards (GACAs) as well.

Process and Outcomes Data

The program is designed to assist fellows and junior faculty in meeting the criteria for promotion as clinician-educators. Currently, three out of three junior faculty participants have been successfully promoted to the Associate Professor level (one at the University of Chicago, and two at other academic medical institutions). One is now Chief of General Medicine and Geriatrics at another university. Nine former fellows have been promoted to the Assistant Professor level.

Through the innovative teaching approach to training clinician-educators, new, formal teaching efforts in geriatrics now exist in multiple specialty areas, such as geriatric-oncology, palliative care, and urology. Medical students and residents also benefit from teaching efforts and many receive regular mentoring from geriatrics faculty on educational research projects.

Each participant is expected to write up their experiences for presentation at national meetings and for publication.

Implementation Lessons

- Engaging institutional stakeholders within the medical school early on helped to quickly: 1) identify faculty members as local experts who could serve as mentors for the clinician-educator fellows and junior faculty, and 2) identify and met the geriatrics educational needs of the medical school and residency programs. These stakeholders included the Dean for Medical Education, Associate Dean for Medical School Education (former Vice-Chair of the Department of Medicine), Assistant Dean for Curricular Innovation, and the Clinical Skills Course Director.



- The involvement of the above stakeholders also enabled geriatrics fellows and junior faculty interested in medical education to focus on career development in that area. For example, one faculty member received national recognition for the development of clinical training through his Observed Structured Teaching Exercise (OSTE) program.

Available Materials

Website

- Curriculum for Hospitalized Aging Medical Patient (CHAMP)
<http://www.champ.bsd.uchicago.edu>.

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This document is part of a compilation of approaches to geriatrics recruitment, career development, and programmatic expansion, based on the work of the John A. Hartford Foundation "Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training." For more information, visit www.afar.org/recruitment or www.jhartfound.org.

