

## ABSTRACT

Gregg A. Warshaw, MD, Elizabeth J. Bragg, PhD, RN, Ruth W. Shaul, MSN, RN, Linda M. Goldenhar, and Christopher J. Lindsell, PhD. Geriatric Medicine Fellowship Programs: A National Study from the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs' Longitudinal Study of Training and Practice in Geriatric Medicine. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society* 2003;51:1023-1030.

This report documents the development and growth of geriatric medicine fellowship training in the United States through 2002. A cross-sectional survey of geriatric medicine fellowship programs was conducted in the fall 2001. All allopathic (119) and osteopathic (7) accredited geriatric medicine fellowship-training programs in the United States were involved. Data were collected using self-administered mailed and Web-based survey instruments. Longitudinal data from the American Medical Association (AMA) and the Association of American Medical Colleges' (AAMC) National Graduate Medical Education (GME) Census, the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), and the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) were also analyzed. The survey instrument was designed to gather data about faculty, fellows, program curricula, and program directors (PDs). In addition, annual AMA/AAMC data from 1991 to the present was compiled to examine trends in the number of fellowship programs and the number of fellows. The overall survey response rate was 76% (96 of 126 PDs). Most (54%) of the PDs had been in their current position 4 or more years (range: <1-20 years), and 59% of PDs reported that they had completed formal geriatric medicine fellowship training. The number of fellowship programs and the number of fellows entering programs has slowly increased over the past decade. During 2001-02, 338 fellows were training in allopathic programs and seven in osteopathic programs (all years of training). Forty-six percent (n = 44) of responding programs offered only 1-year fellowship-training experiences. PDs reported that application rates for fellowship positions were stable during the academic years (AYs) 1999-2002, with the median number of applications per first year position available in AY 2000-01 being 10 (range: 1-77). In 2001-02, data from the AMA/AAMC National GME Census indicated a fill rate for first-year geriatric medicine fellowship positions of 69% (259 first-year fellows for 373 positions). During 2001-02, more than half of programs (53%) reported having two or fewer first-year fellows, whereas 31% had three or four first-year fellows. Thirty-three programs (36%) reported having no U.S. medical school graduate first-year fellows, and another 25 (28%) reported having only one. Of the 51 programs offering second-year fellowship training, PDs reported 61 post-first-year fellows (median 1, range: 0-7). During the past 10 years, 27 new allopathic geriatric medicine fellowship programs opened; there are now 119 programs. There are also seven osteopathic programs. The recruitment of high-quality U.S. medical school graduates into these programs remains a challenge for the discipline. Furthermore, the retention of first-year fellows for additional years of academic training has been difficult. Incentives will be needed to attract the best graduates of U.S. family practice and internal medicine training programs into academic careers in geriatric medicine.

PMID: 12834526