

ABSTRACT

Gregg A. Warshaw, MD, Elizabeth J. Bragg, PhD, RN, David E. Brewer, BS, Karthikeyan Meganathan, MS, and Mona Ho, MS. The Development of Academic Geriatric Medicine: Progress Toward Preparing the Nation's Physicians to Care for an Aging Population. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. 2007;55:2075-2082.

Academic geriatric medicine programs are critical for training the physician workforce to effectively care for aging Americans. This article describes the progress made by medical schools in developing these programs. Academic leaders in geriatrics at all 145 accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools in the United States were surveyed in the winter of 2005 (68% response rate), and results compared with findings from a similar 2001 survey. Physician faculty in geriatrics at U.S. medical schools increased from 7.5 (mean) full time equivalents (FTEs) in 2001 to 9.6 FTEs in 2005. Faculty and staff effort is mostly devoted to clinical practice (mean=36.9%) and education (mean 34.6%). A relatively small number of programs focus on research: only six responding schools devote more than 40% of faculty effort to research. Seventy-one percent reported that their medical school required a geriatrics medical student clerkship and/or that their geriatric training was integrated into a required clinical rotation. In summary, from 2001 to 2005, more fellows and faculty have been recruited and trained, and some academic programs have emerged with strong education, research, and clinical initiatives. Medical student exposure to geriatrics curriculum has increased. However, few academic geriatricians are pursuing research careers, and the number of practicing geriatricians is declining. An expanded investment in training the physician workforce to care for older adults will be required to ensure adequate care for aging Americans.

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