

An Analysis of Future Publications, Career Choices, and Practice Characteristics of Research Presenters at an American College of Surgeons State Conference: A 15-Year Review

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OBJECTIVES: The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education requires scholarly activity within general surgery residency programs. The association between in-training research presentations and postgraduation publications is unknown. We hypothesized that surgical trainee presentations at an American College of Surgeons (ACS) state chapter meeting resulted in peer-reviewed publications and future scholarly activity.

DESIGN: The ACS Wisconsin state chapter meeting agendas from 2000 to 2014 were reviewed to identify all trainees who delivered podium presentations. A literature search was completed for subsequent publications. Program coordinators were queried and an electronic search was performed to determine practice location and type for each residency graduate.

SETTING: Wisconsin state chapter ACS meeting.

PARTICIPANTS: General surgery residents, fellows, and medical students in Wisconsin.

RESULTS: There were 288 podium presentations by trainees (76% residents, 20% medical students, and 4% fellows). Presentations were clinical (79.5%) and basic science (20.5%). There were 204 unique presenters; 25% presented at subsequent meetings. Of these unique presenters, 46% published their

research and 31% published additional research after residency. Among presenters who completed residency or fellowship ($N = 119$), 34% practiced in a university setting, and 61% practiced in a community setting; 31% practiced in Wisconsin. When comparing clinical vs basic science presenters, there was no difference in fellowship completion (37% vs 44%; $p = 0.190$) or practice type (38% vs 46% in a university setting; $p = 0.397$). Repeat presenters were more likely to pursue a fellowship vs those presenting once (76% vs 37%; $p = 0.001$).

CONCLUSIONS: Research presentations by surgical trainees at an ACS state chapter meeting frequently led to peer-reviewed publications. Presenters were likely to pursue research opportunities after residency. Repeat presenters were more likely to pursue a fellowship. ACS Wisconsin chapter meetings provide an excellent opportunity for scholarly activity. These outcomes should encourage ACS chapters and ACS members to support trainee research. (J Surg Ed ■■■■-■■■. © 2017 Association of Program Directors in Surgery. Published by Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.)

KEY WORDS: General surgery, Residency, Scholarly activity, Basic science, Clinical research, Professional surgical societies

COMPETENCIES: Practice-Based Learning and Improvement, Interpersonal and Communications Skills, Professionalism

INTRODUCTION

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education requires general surgery residency programs to participate in

*Portions of these data were presented at the Association for Program Directors in Surgery Surgical Education Week April 15, 2016 in Boston, MA.

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scholarly activity.¹ This requirement is fulfilled in distinct ways throughout residencies in the United States. Notable strategies include dedicated research years, mandatory research presentations or publications, structured research programs with designated mentors, and specific curricula to help stimulate scientific curiosity among residents. These techniques have been successful in increasing the number of presentations and publications during residency.^{2,3} Structured programs and educational resources are often not as accessible once residents graduate and begin their surgical career. It is unknown whether engaging in scholarly activity during residency influences residents to continue to do research beyond residency. Currently, no studies have been published that investigate the association between in-training research presentations and postgraduation publications.

Our goals were to determine the career path of each author and the publication prospects of the research study after presentation at the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Wisconsin chapter conference. We sought to investigate how many of these presentations are accepted for publication, the likelihood of graduates continuing to publish research following residency, where the presenters established their practice, and the future careers sought by medical student presenters. We hypothesized that (1) surgical trainee presentations at an ACS state chapter meeting often result in a peer-reviewed publication. (2) Basic science presentations by a surgical trainee are more likely to be associated with a future career in a university affiliated surgical practice when compared with clinical presentations. (3) Medical students who present at an ACS state chapter meeting are likely to pursue a career in surgery. (4) Presentation at an ACS state chapter meeting by a surgical trainee is associated with additional scholarly activity after residency.

METHODS

The agendas for the Wisconsin ACS state chapter annual meetings from 2000 to 2014 were reviewed to identify all medical students, residents (postgraduate years 1-5), and fellows who delivered podium presentations. Meeting agendas were obtained from the Wisconsin Surgical Society (WSS) Archivist. Presentations were classified as clinical or basic science based on the article title or abstract, with bench research designated as basic science. A PubMed search was then performed to identify publications by the presenters during and after residency. Residency program websites were reviewed and residency program coordinators were queried to determine the practice location of the residents and to assist with identifying potential name changes. Descriptive statistics and Fisher exact test were used to compare data. A $p < 0.05$ was considered significant. Data were classified by presenter and whether or not they were still in training. Outcomes

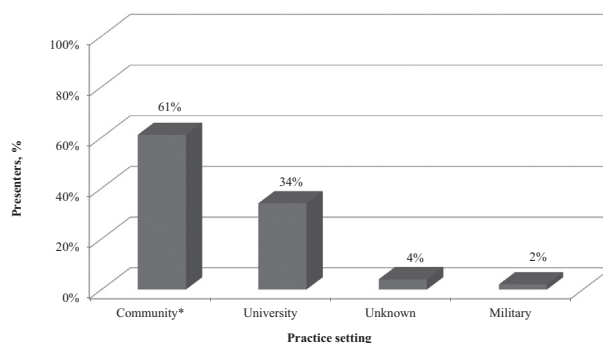
included practice type, practice location, and research publications.

RESULTS

From 2000 to 2014 there were 288 podium presentations by trainees at the ACS WSS annual meeting. These were delivered by 204 unique presenters including residents (76%), medical students (20%), and fellows (4%). Clinical presentations constituted most of the presentations (79.5%). Residents represented 1 of the 4 Wisconsin general surgery residencies including the University of Wisconsin (49%), Medical College of Wisconsin (33%), Gundersen Health System (15%), and Marshfield Clinic (3%). Medical students represented University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health (51%) or Medical College of Wisconsin (49%). In addition to unique presenters, 25% of individuals ($N = 51$) went on to present additional research at subsequent Wisconsin Surgical meetings, with some individuals presenting greater than 4 separate years ($N = 6$). The repeat presenters presented 2.5 presentations on average. Presentations for 94 (46%) of the unique presenters resulted in peer-reviewed publications. In all, 70% ($N = 66$) of these presenters had completed their training and 35 (53%) went on to publish additional research after residency.

Overall, 119 (58%) presenters completed their training; 53% ($N = 63$) continued scholarly activity resulting in additional publications. The majority practiced in a community or private practice setting (Fig. 1). Approximately one-third of the residents established practice in Wisconsin (Fig. 2). Of the medical student presenters who have completed their medical degree, 31 (62%) chose a residency in a surgical specialty (general surgery [$N = 12$], orthopedics [$N = 4$], cardiothoracic surgery [$N = 1$], neurosurgery [$N = 1$], and obstetrics and gynecology [$N = 1$]) (Fig. 3).

When comparing the basic science and clinical science presenters, there was no significant difference in those who completed a fellowship or initiated practice in a community



*Includes private practice and hybrid practice settings.

FIGURE 1. Current practice type for presenters at an American College of Surgeons state chapter meeting.

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