

Besrouer Center for Global Family Medicine

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Title:

Destination Excellence: A Faculty of Medicine's Strategic Approach to Social Accountability

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Abstract:

Introduction: Social accountability is a key value and accreditation standard for medical education on various levels and contexts. Memorial University of Newfoundland's (MUN) Faculty of Medicine has incorporated Social Accountability (SA) into education, service and research through its strategic plan, *Destination Excellence*. While SA has long been evident at MUN, the implementation of this strategic plan is intended to lend cohesion to those efforts and facilitate an institutional shift in culture towards SA.

Objective: To describe one Faculty of Medicine's process of incorporating SA into its strategic plan and implementing that plan faculty-wide to create a unified, intentional approach to SA.

Process: The Destination Excellence Implementation Steering Team (DEIST) leads the overall implementation of MUN's strategic plan. DEIST therefore recruited a trans-disciplinary Social Accountability Project Team to specifically develop and implement the SA components of *Destination Excellence*. Working groups were created within the Project Team to focus on specific tasks and deliverables when needed. An early working group developed a definition of SA, "Social accountability is our responsibility to work collaboratively with others to advance the health and well-being of all the communities we serve. We reflect social accountability through partnerships, leadership, education, research, clinical care, and everything else we do." We then adopted four hallmarks of SA: equity and justice; sustainability and cost effectiveness; partnerships and collaboration; and respectful learning environment. Further working groups developed a governance structure; established measurement processes, indicators, and templates for collection and curation of SA narratives; and conducted a scoping review to provide guidance on best practices in community engagement. Progress reports were shared with Destination Excellence Implementation Steering Team (DEIST) to ensure support across the faculty. This process led to creation of an Office of Social Accountability to be led by an Assistant Dean.

Conclusion: Institutionalizing SA requires formal, visible support from administration and careful planning to ensure engagement from all units within the faculty. Explicitly including language around and a commitment to SA in a faculty of medicine's strategic plan is a critical step in this process.