

Besrouer Center for Global Family Medicine

Poster Presentation Besrouer/FMF 2020

The Contribution of Family Medicine to Primary Health Care – The Experience of India [in progress]

AUTHORS: Gupta A*¹, Abraham S², Prasad R³, Kumar R³, Menon N⁴, Steele Gray C¹, Sridharan S^{1,5}, Landes M¹, Bhattacharyya O¹

¹ University of Toronto, Toronto Ontario, Canada

² Christian Medical College Vellore, Vellore Tamil Nadu, India

³ Academy of Family Physicians of India, India

⁴ Amala Institute, Thrissur Kerala, India

⁵ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation - India Country Office, New Delhi, Delhi, India

BACKGROUND

The role of family medicine (FM) in strengthening primary health care (PHC) in low and middle-income countries has not been well studied. The first decades after implementation of FM training are a particularly important time to understand the role of early cohort graduates in shaping the future of FM in their countries and how this may strengthen PHC. India is an important middle-income country to study as FM is an emerging discipline where formal training was only first introduced three decades ago. Since then, FM programs have spread to 17 States with 48 accredited FM postgraduate training programs and several innovative distance-based training programs.

AIM

The primary aim is to explore how the implementation of FM training builds capacity in PHC systems in India and understand the relevance to other settings.

The following questions will be addressed:

1. What motivates individuals to choose to enter the field of FM at a time when it does not exist in their contexts?
2. What skills do graduates gain from postgraduate training in FM and how does this influence what activities and roles graduates participate in post FM training?
3. What are the potential mechanisms by which early cohort FM graduates influence the primary health care system?

METHODS

An interpretive descriptive study of the first cohorts of graduates of postgraduate FM training in India was conducted. 20 early cohort graduates identified by purposeful and snowball sampling. In-person interviews were conducted, audiotaped, and transcribed between August and October 2019. Data from these interviews informed the development a national survey. The online cross-sectional survey of family physicians (graduates who completed postgraduate training in family medicine) is scheduled to be open for recruitment in Fall 2020.

CONCLUSIONS

Participants will understand the Indian experience in the implementation of FM including its trajectory, barriers and facilitators, and the roles early cohorts played in its implementation. We hope attendees will draw parallels to their own context and walk away with tools on how to monitor the implementation process of FM development in their own country contexts.