Making an educator: Pilot evaluation of a PA student-led academic medicine elective rotation
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BACKGROUND
- There is a growing need to ensure adequate PA educator workforce, but limited preceptor availability and recruitment and retention of qualified faculty remain a challenge.
- Many PA students express interest in a future preceptor or faculty role, but most receive no formal training on how to teach.
- This study sought to evaluate the efficacy and feasibility of a PA student-led academic medicine elective rotation regarding the development of core teaching competencies in the absence of formal educational training.

METHODOLOGY
- A 4-week academic medicine elective rotation was piloted in a PA program by a clinical-year PA student (PA-S3) and a faculty mentor with the goal to help the PA-S3 develop core teaching competencies.
- The components of the rotation included (1) library of learning (LoL) for building foundational knowledge; (2) adjunctive teaching in Clinical Skills for first-year students; (3) independent teaching in Clinical Medicine for first-year students; and (4) supervised clinical practice experience (SCPE) with the faculty mentor as clinical preceptor.
- The rotation was evaluated via weekly verbal debrief sessions with the faculty mentor, verbal debriefing with a faculty member following each teaching session, and verbal feedback from first-year PA students.

REFERENCES
- Peluso MJ, Hafer JP. Medical students as medical educators: opportunities for skill development in the absence of formal training programs. The Yale journal of biology and medicine. 2011 Sep;84(3):203.

RESULTS – POINTS OF INNOVATION

ACADEMIC MEDICINE ELECTIVE ROTATION – BY THE NUMBERS
- Total weeks on rotation: 4
- Hours of in-person teaching time: 50
- Hours of clinic-based SCPE: 12
- Self-paced LoL activities: 8
- Original lectures & learning sessions: 3
- Total hours logged on rotation: 190
- % lecture-free didactic learning: 50%

CONCLUSION
- A PA student-led academic medicine elective rotation presents an effective model for clinical-year PA students to develop core teaching competencies (e.g., curriculum development, evaluation, assessment, coaching, leadership) in the absence of formal educational training.
- Early, weekly curricular incorporation of teaching sessions allows for maximal teaching experience.
- Inclusion of SCPE in an academic medicine rotation may allay student concerns regarding missing out on hands-on clinical training.
- A student-led academic medicine elective rotation may foster innovation and help develop the PA educator workforce of the future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
- PA Education Association (PAEA) Future Educator Fellowship
- Patricia Airey, DHSc, PA-C, Radford University PA Program
- Roger A. Hofford, M.D., Carilion Roanoke Community hospital
- Radford University PA Program Class of 2022 (esp. Lab Group A)

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- Hwal was a clinical-year PA student at the time of this project implementation.