Resident Research: Perspectives of a DIO and Journal Editor

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Goals

- Why is this important?
- Why should residents do research?
- What are the obstacles?
- What are the facilitators?
- What do we do next?
My History

- My first publication came about when I complained to a faculty member about the vile taste of antacids after a bout of acid reflux in medical school. He asked me if anyone had studied taste of antacids, and when I learned that no one had, we devised a wine tasting type study for antacids. It was published as a Letter to the Editor in the NEJM.
My History

- I later became interested in headache treatment because we were seeing many patients in the ED who demanded narcotics for their “migraines”. I was looking for an alternative and stumbled upon the use of intravenous ergot compounds. I decided to study them and decided to give prochlorperazone (Compazine) as a premedication.
My history

- After receiving the prochlorperazine most of the patients got better before I could give the ergot or placebo.
- I was stumped. “Are you sure the headache is gone? I haven’t given you the medicine yet”
- “Yup, it’s gone.”
- This led to a study of prochlorperazine vs placebo which ultimately was published in JAMA.
My History

- Both examples illustrate some themes about scholarship and publication that we will consider later.
- Motivation - bad taste of antacids, frustration at headache treatment.
- Review of literature
- Study design
- Mentorship
What is scholarship?

- Ernest Boyer Scholarship Reconsidered-1990
- Four types of Scholarship-
  - Discovery
  - Integration
  - Application
  - Teaching
Why is scholarship important?

- Differentiates physician training from other health care providers
- Critical thinking
- Improves health care and health and maybe cost
- Individual growth
Why should residents do research?

- Contribute to growth of knowledge in field
- Learn research skills which will help with literature analysis
- Identity development
- Support faculty
- ACGME requirement?
What are the obstacles?

- Motivation
- Time
- Lack of mentors
- Resources
- IRB
- Lack of skills and experience
- Conflicting priorities - training, family, wellness, sleep.
What are the facilitators?

- Mentors who help design doable projects
- Adequate time to accomplish project (dedicated months)
- Training- CTSC, fellowships, other training
- Ongoing Community of scholarship support
- Incentives-financial, time, travel, promotion
- Support for stats, IRB, writing and submission, research director.
Next steps

- Consider broader definitions- literature reviews, case reports, quality improvement, patient safety.
- Team research projects
- Cost effectiveness
- Health services health policy
- Reconsider research requirements in ACGME based upon goals
Final Thoughts

- Research can enrich residency or can be a burden.
- Resident research should address individual and program goals
- If a requirement, adequate time, resources, and faculty support needed.