



AAMC Efforts to Improve Medical Education

The following information highlights a few of the initiatives currently underway to improve medical education. For more information, contact Retha Sherrod, director of public relations, at 202-828-0975.

Increasing Diversity

AspiringDocs.org

AspiringDocs.org is a marketing campaign to encourage more African-American, Latino, and Native American undergraduate students to pursue careers in medicine. The campaign consists of a Web site to provide students with the information and inspiration they need, online advertising, and campus outreach efforts.

Summer Medical and Dental Education Program (SMDEP)

The [Summer Medical and Dental Education Program](#) (SMDEP) is a free, six-week summer academic enrichment program for freshman and sophomore college students who are interested in a career in medicine or dentistry. SMDEP is implemented at 12 sites across the nation, and all programs provide a basic science curriculum, career development activities, clinical exposure and a financial planning workshop.

Medical Student Debt

FIRST for Medical Education

Created in collaboration with the medical school financial aid community and the Organization of Student Representatives (OSR), [FIRST](#) is an AAMC initiative to help applicants, students, residents, and members of the academic medicine community navigate the complexities of student debt.

Medical School Admissions

Holistic Review Project

The [Holistic Review](#) Project works to create diversity and align admissions and medical school missions. Its first publication, [Roadmap to Diversity: Key Legal and Educational Policy Foundations for Medical Schools](#) was released on March 11, 2008; two additional planned publications are: 1) *Admissions Policies and Procedure* and 2) *Outreach, Recruitment, Financial Aid and Retention*. A pilot project will be conducted at two medical schools.

MCAT® Examination

MR5: 5th Comprehensive Review of the MCAT

A multi-year [review of the MCAT](#) exam is underway that will consider the knowledge, skills, and other characteristics that admissions committees look for in their applicants, the full range of information that already is available in student selection, and the state-of-the-art and professional standards in admissions testing. An advisory committee will provide AAMC with recommendations for the future exam.

Medical Education

AAMC/HHMI Scientific Foundation for Future Physicians

The AAMC and Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) partnered to examine the natural science competencies that a graduating physician needs to practice science-based medicine. A panel of distinguished medical school and undergraduate scientist-educators will recommend both medical school and entering science competencies. One product of these deliberations is expected to be a re-articulation of the natural science competencies that medical school applicants should demonstrate.

A complementary report on the behavioral and social science competencies for future physicians is expected late in 2009.

Applicant Database and Continuing Studies of the Applicant Pool

AAMC is cataloging analyzing all applicants' courses in AMCAS to review pre-medical courses under discussion by Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) and the [Medical School Objectives Project](#) (MSOP).

Medical School Objectives Project

The [Medical School Objectives Project](#) (MSOP) is designed to reach general consensus within the medical education community on the skills, attitudes, and knowledge that graduating medical students should possess. MSOP's goals are to establish program-level learning objectives that medical school deans and faculties can use as a guide in reviewing their medical student education programs; and to suggest strategies that medical school deans and faculties might employ in implementing agreed-upon changes in their education programs. Since the first MSOP in 1998 on "*Learning Objectives for Medical Student Education*," nine reports have been published:

- "Contemporary Issues in Medicine: Oral Health Education for Medical and Dental Students" (2008)
- "Education in Safe and Effective Prescribing Practices" (2008)
- "The Prevention and Treatment of Overweight and Obesity" (2007)
- "Musculoskeletal Medicine Education" (2005)
- "Genetics Education" (2004)
- "Basic Science and Clinical Research" (2001)
- "Communication in Medicine" (1999)
- "Quality of Care" (2001)
- "Medical Informatics and Population Health" (1998)

Future MSOPs will address cultural competence education for medical and public health students (in a joint report with the Association of Schools of Public Health), health disparities education for medical students, prescribing practices, and behavioral and social science competencies for future physicians.

Industry Funding of Medical Education

In response to mounting evidence indicating that gifts, favors and other marketing activities prejudice the independent judgment of those in the medical profession, the AAMC convened a task force to examine the benefits and pitfalls associated with industry funding of medical education. The resulting [report](#) offers principles, recommendations, and guidelines to help medical schools and teaching hospitals better manage their relationships with industry.