Project Name: Physicianship Program
Medical School: Rush Medical College of Rush University Medical Center

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Project Description
At Rush Medical College we have included two modules in our Physicianship program addressing the unique health and wellness needs of our veterans and their families. We have recently re-organized our Physicianship program to move away from lecture format to small group discussions on topics picked by faculty, with student input. Currently, our 2-year Physicianship Program is a patient-centered, integrated, multi-disciplinary program designed to provide students with a foundation of clinical knowledge, skills, attitudes, cultural awareness, and behaviors, in order to prepare students for full-time clinical duties beginning with 3rd-year core clerkships. Our program is a combination of competency-based exams, literature readings, and small group discussions facilitated by faculty.

The two modules devoted to addressing the unique health needs to veteran healthcare are small group sessions designed around pre-class reading assignments. For example, last year, the first year medical students discussed an article entitled “Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, and Suicide in Veterans”. During the session, students discussed their reactions to the article, their experiences with veterans in health care thus far, and how the article impacted their approach to treating our veterans and their families for the future. The defined objectives of that session were to identify unique needs of veterans and their families, to be mindful of these needs, and to learn how to approach medical interviewing and treatment of veterans and their families. Following discussion, we role-played the interview process in small groups where our faculty leaders acted as the veteran patient.

Since this module was highly rated by students last year, the new incoming medical school class will also participate in the same module. Additionally, another module has been added for the second year medical students. This module will follow a similar format where a small group discussion facilitated by faculty members will be designed around a reading assignment (to be determined).

Additionally, we will be inviting veterans to come speak to our medical students (hopefully in the month of November). During this session, we would like for invited speakers to discuss their experiences with physicians, how we as future physicians can better address their needs, and anything else they would like to share. We intend to make this an interactive session where students can ask questions and receive feedback. Students of Rush Medical College are greatly anticipating this session.