

A Rigorous Approach to the Design, Implementation and Evaluation of Initiatives for Women Physicians

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Background

- Gender disparities exist in medicine: specifically within the specialty of Emergency Medicine (EM)
- Programs successful in supporting women have been shown to increase morale and physician retention and decrease work/life conflict.
- Recently, a *Best Practices for Supporting Women in EM policy* was passed by the two largest professional organizations in Emergency Medicine: the American College of Emergency Medicine Physicians (ACEP) and the Society for Academic Emergency Medicine (SAEM).
- Data on specific program impact during women's initiative implementation is sparse.

Research Methods & Evaluation

- Using a well validated survey tool we assessed the baseline characteristics of one academic emergency department.
- Surveys distributed every 6 months to men and women faculty for 2 years throughout implementation.
- Faculty self-identified as being either male or female and were given gender specific surveys.

Initiative Design and Implementation

Implementation of Initiatives in 3 phases:

Phase 1 (Completed)

- Audit current state of women faculty via baseline survey
- Implement programs related to schedule and wellness of men and women faculty at little or no cost to department.

Phase 2 (In Progress)

- Targeted development and mentorship programs for women faculty that require significant additional funding.

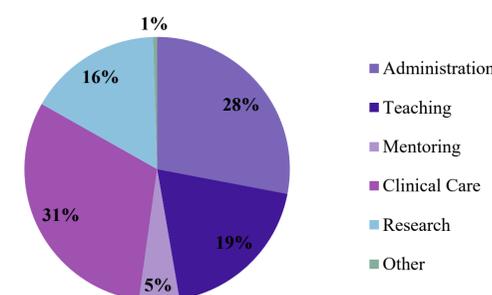
Phase 3 (2016)

- Program maintenance, sustainability and valuation.

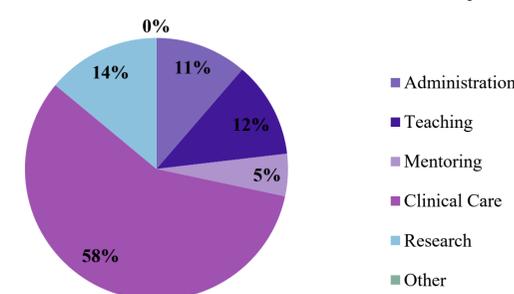
Preliminary Results

- 21 Faculty members responded to the initial survey (13 men, 18 women)
- Select baseline characteristics are shown below.

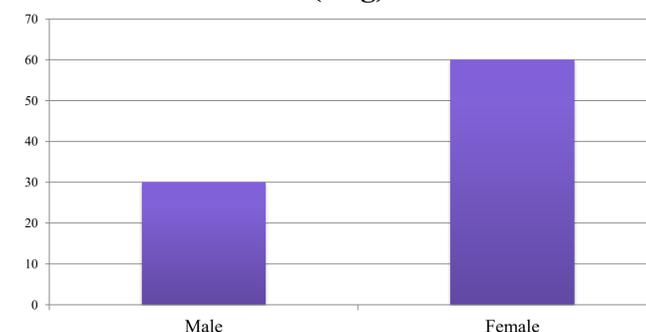
% Effort Allocation - Male Faculty



% Effort Allocation - Female Faculty



Spouse Hours Worked Per Week (Avg)



Lessons Learned

- The needs of both male and female physicians must be assessed to accurately understand baseline characteristics of an academic faculty.
- Visible strategic support from senior leadership is critical for faculty buy-in and participation in data collection.
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration allows for a better understanding of best practices regarding the support of women in academic medicine.

Ongoing Goals

- To improve the status of women in one academic emergency department.
- To understand the limitations to participation and buy-in from faculty in an academic emergency department seeking implement change.
- To provide a benchmark for other institutions that seek to impact the careers of women physicians.
- To emphasize the value of rigorous attention to evaluation throughout the change process.

Objectives

- To assess the status and needs of women faculty in one academic emergency department.
- To design and implement policies and practices supportive of women in that department.
- To evaluate the impact of change efforts on the career outcomes of men and women faculty in that department.
- To critically appraise the utility of each initiative on a costs and departmental resources basis.

