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Graduation Rates and Attrition Rates of U.S. Medical Students

Source: AAMC Student Records System

Key Findings
Medical school graduation rates for nondual-degree MD students remained stable from academic year 1997-1998 through 2016-2017. The four-year graduation rate ranged from 81.7% to 84.1%. Six years after matriculation, the average graduation rate was 96.0% of nondual-degree MD students.

The length of time to graduate varied for students in combined degree programs. For example, 61.3% of MD-PhD students graduated within eight years of matriculation; within 10 years of matriculation, that percentage reached 93.2%. Most students in the other types of combined degree programs (e.g., MD-MPH) graduated within five years of matriculation.
From 1997-1998 through 2016-2017, more medical students left medical school due to nonacademic reasons than due to academic reasons, according to data reported by medical school registrars in the AAMC Student Records System. The national total attrition rate remained relatively stable at an average of 3.2% over those 20 years. Additionally, attrition rates appeared to vary by degree program. For academic years 2007-2008 through 2016-2017 combined, students in MD-MBA combined degree programs had no attrition, and students in combined Bachelor’s-MD programs had the highest attrition rate at 5.6%.