

Education in Pediatrics Across the Continuum (EPAC) Timeline

The early years (2008-2011): EPAC emerged from a desire to make the medical education process both a true continuum from medical school through residency and a process based not on time in training but on achievement of competence. Dr. Deborah Powell, Dean Emeritus of the University of Minnesota Medical School, originally conceived of the idea. Through her presentations and conversations with educators, the concept that would become EPAC was formed. Pediatrics was selected to pilot the concept because of the enthusiasm and early engagement of Drs. Carol Carraccio and Doug Jones, who had leadership positions at both the American Board of Pediatrics. They were also both involved with the Initiative for Innovation in Pediatric Education supported by the American Board of Pediatrics Foundation (ABPF) and knew that the Board was open to new ideas involving medical education more broadly. David Leach, President of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and subsequently his successor, Tom Nasca, were also consulted about the idea and were supportive of a pilot that truly tested time-variable, fixed outcome education.

While the ACGME and ABP were crucial partners in this endeavor, a national sponsor was essential if the idea was to become a reality. Carol Aschenbrener, Chief Medical Education Officer at the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), agreed to host the first meeting of what was initially called the Pediatric Redesign Group at AAMC Headquarters in Washington, DC in 2009. That meeting included all of the members of the EPAC Steering Committee, representatives of the American Board of Pediatrics and the ACGME and the initial 3 sites (Colorado, Maryland and Minnesota) as well as others from the AAMC and pediatric organizations representing perspectives from hospital leadership. The purpose of that meeting was to present the idea and see if there was enough interest among the participants to continue. By the conclusion of the meeting there was a unanimous decision to go forward with the design phase of a feasibility pilot.

2010: In 2010, the AAMC agreed to sponsor the pilot, and continued to host biannual meetings of the group (with the exception of one that was held in Minnesota) from 2009 through the present. Drs. Powell, Carraccio, and Aschenbrener formed the Steering Committee for the project. Two more schools (Utah and UCSF) were added as the result of conversations with leaders at those schools.

2011: In 2011, Bob Englander who had been a consultant to EPAC in his role as Vice President of Quality and Patient Safety at Connecticut Children's Medical Center, was hired by the AAMC in a new role as Senior Director of Competency-based Learning and Assessment. One of the central roles in that job was to assume leadership of the EPAC project for the AAMC and to thus join the EPAC Steering Committee.

2012: During 2012, site visits occurred at all schools with one or more members of the steering committee. The University of Maryland decided to withdraw as a participating school. The EPAC name was chosen and the group approved a set of Guiding Principles for the project. The AAMC research division undertook a qualitative implementation analysis of the project, to record the start and the process of developing EPAC for future reference in new program development. The EPAC group also initiated several working groups to maintain momentum between meetings, including:

- 1) Team Leaders Working Group
- 2) Competency Assessment Working Group
- 3) Program Evaluation Working Group
- 4) Communications Working Group
- 5) Faculty Development Working Group

2013: In 2013 the first medical students who would join the EPAC cohort at each site entered medical school. Each school began programs to identify students interested in pediatrics and to educate them about the program, while also helping match them with early pediatric experiences and didactics. Perhaps most energizing to the project was the grant funding awarded by the the Josiah Macy Foundation to the AAMC to support the work of the faculty at the individual schools. Additionally, the AAMC hired two external consultants part-time to oversee the work of assessment and of program evaluation (Alan Schwartz and Dorene Balmer, respectively).

2014 to date: In 2014, as the work at each school and in the group continued, the EPAC website was launched, as was a Facebook page designed primarily for the students to have a social networking opportunity across sites. All four sites have applied for expedited review from their Institutional Review Boards.

Remainder of 2014: The University of Denver is set to choose the first cohort of EPAC students from among their students completing the first year of medical school. The Universities of Minnesota and Utah are poised to choose their first cohort in the 2014-2015 academic year, and the University of California San Francisco in the early part of the 2015-2016 academic year.

We will continue to update this timeline on an annual basis. For questions or correspondences, please contact:

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