

Professional Impact of the DMU Predoctoral OMM Fellowship

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Introduction/Background:

Many osteopathic medical schools offer specialty training in Osteopathic Manipulative Medicine (OMM) to medical students known as a predoctoral OMM fellowship (pOMMF). pOMMFs are an additional year of medical training that frequently involves direct patient care and teaching medical students OMM. There is little known research on pOMMFs.

Objective:

To investigate the impact of the Des Moines University (DMU) pOMMF on the medical and professional careers of graduates.

Methods:

A survey of 26 questions was sent to 88 DMU pOMMF graduates from 1979- 2020. The survey contained a combination of Likert scale, yes-no, and free text questions. The Chi-square test of goodness-of-fit was used to assess the equal distributions of different response categories.

Simultaneous 95% confidence intervals (CI) for multinomial proportions were created using the R function MultinomCI of package DescTools. Free text was qualitatively analyzed for recurrent themes.

Results:

Out of 61 respondents, 90.2% of participants reported that the pOMMF significantly improved their ability to teach medical students and residents, along with 77.1% of participants teaching residents/attending OMM during residency. Of those eligible, 79.2% of alumni held at least one of the following leadership positions: chief resident, clinical preceptor, department chair, medical director. Most participants (83.6%) report providing OMT to their patients, along with 80.7% of respondents attributing the fellowship to significantly improving their ability to incorporate OMT into their medical practice.

Discussion/Conclusion:

The results suggest that the DMU pOMMF creates positive downstream effects in the medical careers of graduates by fostering teaching excellence, leadership skills, and the utilization of OMT. Limitations include potential selection bias and inability to establish causal effect. Further research could corroborate these findings with other pOMMFs and compare responses to non-pOMMF graduates.