SUBSPECIALTY PROGRAM COMPLIANCE AND FELLOW EXPERIENCE WITH THE DELAYED PEDIATRIC FELLOWSHIP START DATE

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Introduction

• Residents are under contract to work until June 30, but fellowships typically begin July 1
• Incoming fellows may also be required to attend orientation before July 1
• This creates great difficulty for those who must relocate to another city.
• In the fall of 2014, the Council of Pediatric Subspecialties recommended that beginning with the July 2017 appointment year, 1. fellowships delay their start date and begin no earlier than July 7
2. Orientation not occur before July 5

Objectives

The objectives of this study were to
1. determine if pediatric fellowship programs required their incoming fellows to report after July 1 and
2. gauge fellow experience and opinion in programs in which the start date was or was not delayed.

Methods

• Separate surveys were e-mailed to pediatric fellowship program directors (FPD) and first-year pediatric fellows.
• Surveys asked whether the required fellowship start date was after July 1, 2017, the date fellows were required to report for training and about experience and concerns.
• FPDs were surveyed 10/30/17 - 12/11/17; fellows 10/24/2017-1/4/2018
• To determine overall program compliance, data from the two surveys were pooled (FPD (75.6%) and Fellows (24.4%)).

Results

FPD Survey
Response rate: 458/803 (57.0%)
• 59 had no fellow starting in June or July 2017 or only provided subspecialty/institution
• FPD data based upon 399 respondents
Fellow survey
Response rate: 510/1401 (36.4%)
• 116 did not start fellowship in June or July 2017, immediately after residency, a US fellowship or started survey but did not provide any data
• Fellow data based upon 394 respondents

OVERALL PROGRAM COMPLIANCE

In 2017, did you require your incoming pediatric fellow(s) to begin their training ON or BEFORE July 1 (including any institutional orientation)?

Yes
No

1 (305)

Fellows in programs in which the start date was NOT delayed strongly preferred that their fellowship had complied with the CoPS' recommendations.

FPD REPORTED IMPEDIMENTS TO DELAYING THE FELLOWSHIP START DATE

FPD Reason (more than one could be selected) % (n=136)
Current system is working so I did not think this was an issue 23.7% (32)
Institution would not allow the change 54.4% (74)
Concerned that trainees could not have a gap in income 29.4% (40)
Concerned about potential visa issues for trainees 22.1% (30)
Concerned about lack of health insurance during the gap in training 41.2% (56)
Other 29.4% (40)

DIO AND DELAYED START DATE

Separate Peds DIO 86 (11)
Single DIO 174 (23)

Figure 1. Of the 527 programs from 123 institutions, the start date was delayed in 62%.

• 78% of all FPDs strongly agreed or agreed that a delayed start date improves the transition from residency to fellowship.
• 75% of programs which delayed their start date required their fellows to report for training (excluding orientation) on July 7 or later.

Figure 2. 83% of programs with a separate DIO delayed the start date but 60% with a single DIO (oversees pediatric and adult programs) also did.

Figure 3. For fellows in which the start date was delayed, 81% (183/225) reported little impact with a gap in salary.

In 2017, did you require your incoming pediatric fellow(s) to begin their training ON or BEFORE July 1 (including any institutional orientation)?

To what extent did the lack of salary during the gap in training impact your life?

CONCLUSIONS

• In the first year of implementation, the majority of pediatric fellowships delayed their start date to after July 1, most to July 7 or later.
• Fellows do not report difficulty with a gap in income but only about half had health insurance with many unfamiliar with COBRA.
• Fellows in programs in which the start date was not delayed strongly preferred that their fellowship had complied with the recommendations.
• FPDs need more education about the experience of incoming fellows and trainees need to be educated about COBRA.

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Number of Responses % Yes (n) % No (n)

Health insurance in fellows from programs in which the start date was delayed

HAD HEALTH INSURANCE
228 53% (121) 47% (107)

AWARE ABOUT COBRA?
223 73% (162) 27% (61)

FELLOWS DATA

92% (136/148) of fellows from programs in which the fellowship start date was NOT delayed would have preferred that their program had followed the CoPS' recommendations.