Integrating Research and Education into Clinical Practice – The Multi-Organ Transplant Student Research Training Program (MOTSRTP) Model

Objective:
Given the increased student interest in clinical research and the need to implement health research initiatives, the Multi-Organ Transplant Student Research Training Program (MOTSRTP) aims to (1) promote ongoing coalitions between academic and healthcare institutions by engaging undergraduate/graduate student trainees, clinicians, and researchers in the development of quality health services initiatives that integrate research and education into clinical practice; and (2) foster the development of collaborative relationships between trainees and their mentors to enable trainees to gain clinical research experience while increasing the research productivity of their mentors.

Planning/Research Methods:
Development of the program: A comprehensive environmental scan and a review of existing literature were performed to identify the typical components of student training models that integrated both clinical research and education into a comprehensive curriculum. Through adopting the strengths and refining the limitations of previous training models, the novel MOTSRTP model was developed. Evaluation of the program: Evaluations of the MOTSRTP are performed periodically by both trainees and mentors using quantitative and qualitative metrics in order to address existing limitations and improve the program for current and future trainees.

Implementation Methods:
Selection of trainees: The process of recruiting trainees into the program involves: (1) review of submitted applications; (2) interviews with prospective candidates; and (3) selection of candidates with academic and personal qualities and experiences deemed most appropriate for success in the program. Matching of mentors to trainees: Mentors within the MOTSRTP are matched to trainees interested in carrying out health research projects in the mentor’s discipline. Furthermore, clinical observations and educational activities are made available to trainees through consultation with mentors and hospital administration.

Results:
- Development and maintenance of the Comprehensive Renal Transplant Research Information System (CoReTRIS) via abstraction, audit, and entry of patient biomedical information
- Development and implementation of knowledge exchange and communication tools, including the Kidney Pulse biannual newsletter, kidney transplant living donor/recipient patient manual, and clinical research in transplantation educational brochure
- Development of quality performance measurement tools, including the pre-transplant psychosocial assessment tool, post-transplant quality of life tool, and quality of care patient satisfaction questionnaire
- Carrying out ongoing independent research projects relevant to transplant care management
- Reduction of $300,000 to $350,000 in wages annually [the cost of hiring student trainees (paid $10.52/hour) substitutes for the cost of hiring level I research analysts (paid $21.98/hour)]

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