Editor’s Note: As project co-director, Paul Paulman, MD, of the University of Nebraska and a number of other education leaders worked together to create the Family Medicine Curriculum Resource (FMCR). This resource is designed to help medical school faculty refine and further develop curricula in family medicine. In this month’s column, Dr. Paulman explains how this resource also is of value to office-based teachers of family medicine. I welcome your comments about this feature, which is also published on the STFM Web site at www.stfm.org. I also encourage all predoctoral directors to make copies of this feature and distribute it to their preceptors (with the appropriate Family Medicine citation). Send your submissions to williamh@bcm.tmc.edu. William Huang, MD, Baylor College of Medicine, Department of Family and Community Medicine, 3701 Kirby, Suite 600, Houston, TX 77098-3915. 713-798-6271. Fax: 713-798-7789. Submissions should be no longer than 3–4 double-spaced pages. References can be used but are not required. Count each table or figure as one page of text.

The Family Medicine Curriculum Resource: Utility for Office-based Teachers of Family Medicine

Paul Paulman, MD

Description and Background
The Family Medicine Curriculum Resource (FMCR, the Resource) is the end product of a 4-year contract between the Society of Teachers of Family Medicine (STFM) and the Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA), a unit of the Department of Health and Human Services.

A group of educators in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics developed the Resource, which contains educational resources, “best practices” in medical education, assessment strategies, faculty development materials, and names and contact information of medical education content experts. Medical student competencies are defined for different levels of medical school and special topics of interest. These competencies and other materials in the Resource are useful to family medicine educators, primarily those in full-time academic practice in medical schools, in developing curricula for students throughout all 4 years of medical school. In defining these competencies, the educators used the general competencies identified by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Outcome Project (Table 1) as an organizing structure.

Content
The Resource is divided into five sections:

(1) Introduction

This section provides a brief history and description of the Resource. The process of developing and refining the Resource, including the choice of the ACGME general competencies as the supporting theoretical framework, is discussed in this section.

(2) Collaborative Curriculum Project (Pre-Clerkship)

A group of educators in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics collaboratively developed this section, which contains resources for development of curricula in the first 2 years of medical school, catalogued by ACGME general competencies. For each ACGME general competency category, competencies for the pre-clerkship student to achieve prior to beginning clinical clerkships are

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delineated. Educational methods, resources, assessment strategies, and faculty development materials also are available.

This section also includes recommendations for areas that would benefit from greater emphasis in the first- and second-year medical school curriculum (Interviewing and Physical Examination Skills, Communication Skills, Professionalism, Lifecycle and Self-Awareness, Probabilistic Thinking, and Systems of Care). For each area needing greater emphasis, there are recommended competencies, a rationale of why this area is important, a list of references, and suggested methods on how education leaders could increase the emphasis of this area in the curriculum.

(3) Family Medicine Clerkship
Predoctoral and residency educators in family medicine constructed this section of the Resource. This section contains educational resources for family medicine clerkships catalogued and searchable by 29 core diagnoses seen in family medicine, the ACGME general competencies, family medicine principles (context of care, continuity of care, comprehensive care, coordination of care, and the biopsychosocial approach), and family medicine clerkship themes (prevention and wellness, acute and chronic illness, community and population medicine).

Specific family medicine clerkship learning objectives are presented and organized by the ACGME general competencies and family medicine clerkship themes. In addition, for each of the 29 core diagnoses, specific learning goals and objectives are presented and organized by the ACGME general competency categories. Educational methods, resources, assessment strategies, and faculty development materials also are given.

(4) Past Clerkship Training Resource
Predoctoral and residency educators in family medicine also constructed this section of the Resource, which contains resources for curriculum design for the fourth year of medical school, catalogued by ACGME general competencies. For each ACGME general competency, the level of competency that students should attain prior to entering residency training is described. Educational methods, resources, assessment strategies, and faculty development materials also are included.

(5) Special Topics
Educators in family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics, as well as content experts, developed this section, which contains resources for curriculum design in areas of special interest to HRSA: end-of-life and palliative care; geriatrics; genetics; Healthy People 2010 objectives; informatics; substance abuse, including mental health; and oral health. For each special topic, competencies are defined and organized by ACGME general competency categories. Educational methods, resources, and assessment strategies for each special topic also are provided.

Utility for Office-based Teachers of Family Medicine
Since many office-based teachers of family medicine are also available. Preceptors can learn how to improve their teaching of family medicine core topics through resources that are listed under those core topics. There also are faculty development resources on general teaching skills. (Click on the “Faculty Development” line on the left menu bar of the Clerkship section.)

Similarly, preceptors of preclinical students may find the Collaborative Curriculum Project (pre-clerkship) section valuable.

• Understanding the competencies that are desired of students prior to them beginning their clerkships gives preceptors different goals that they can help their preclinical students achieve.

• Learning resources and faculty development resources on general teaching skills to help preceptors improve their teaching of these preclinical issues also are available in this section.

Table 1
Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education General Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patient care</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical knowledge</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice-based learning and improvement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal and communication skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Professionalism</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Systems-based practice</td>
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The Future

Current plans for the Resource are to include it in the proposed on-line Family Medicine Digital Resource Library (FMDRL) being developed by STFM. There, it will continue to be updated and available to all office-based teachers of family medicine.

Conclusions

The FMCR is a Web-based resource designed to assist family medicine educators in designing curricula, but many segments may also be helpful to office-based teachers of family medicine in planning educational experiences for students in their office and understanding competencies that different levels of students can achieve. The Resource is easily accessible, and navigation and searching are straightforward. There are plans for the resource to continue to be available and periodically updated.

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REFERENCE