

INTRODUCTION

WMed residents and attending physicians often teach medical students in an environment where learners may experience expressions of disrespect toward various specialties. Although most physicians view these disrespectful statements as unprofessional, there is widespread recognition that this continues to be a problem within the practice of medicine.

Previous studies have shown that up to 80% of surveyed learners have experienced Specialty Disrespect (SD)^{1,2,3,4} and 17-25% of students reported that SD impacted their career choice.^{1,3} Students perceived decreased teaching opportunities and negatively biased rotation grades due to SD.

Our study aims to better define (1) the degree to which WMed students bring experiences of specialty disrespect with them upon matriculation into medical school and subsequently, (2) the extent to which new experiences impact them in each subsequent year of medical education.

METHODS

- An adapted version of a questionnaire developed by Kathryn Hart, MD at Georgetown University was used as a tool to survey WMed students about their experiences with SD.
- The survey was administered during the WMed Clinical Skills course (M1–M2) or Transition Courses (M3–M4). A member of the research team introduced the survey in person, with an attending physician present, and provided students a QR code to access the REDCap survey platform. Participants were allotted 10 minutes of dedicated time for completion.
- Participation was completely optional and confidential.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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RESULTS

The survey was completed by 195 WMed students.

- Responses were distributed evenly across the four classes.
- 89% of students were familiar with the issue of SD.
- 57% of students felt that SD was a moderate to extreme problem at WMed.
- 57% of clinical students noted observing SD at least monthly while only 18% of preclinical students described a similar frequency.
- The top 5 sources by role were social media, clinical faculty, residents, students, and clinical staff.

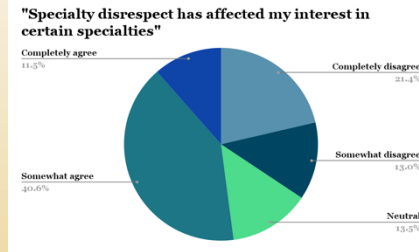


Figure 1: SD Affects on Specialty Interest

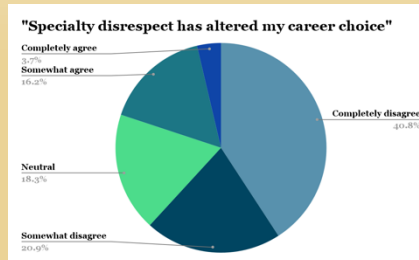


Figure 2: SD Affects on Career Choice

"Are there certain specialties that tend to engage in specialty disrespect more than others?"

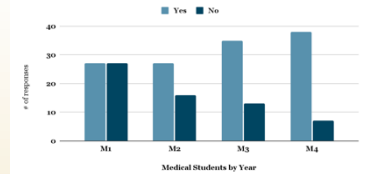


Figure 3: SD Engagement in Certain Specialties

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that medical students perceive specialty disrespect to be a significant problem at WMed, impacting their interest and decision-making as they explore potential careers within medicine. Students appear to be most impacted by SD in their 3rd and 4th year, which is consistent with their increased exposure to the clinical environment and commonly identified sources of SD such as resident and attending physicians. Social media platforms also emerged as notable contributors. These findings underscore the need to formally recognize SD as a form of systemic bias in healthcare. To address SD at WMed, interventions should focus on fostering visible interspecialty collaboration and mutual appreciation, beginning in the preclinical years.

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