Eye-conic Approaches to Eye Health

July 13–14, 2022

A Virtual Interactive Event
Diversity in the United States

- US Census
  - 332 million persons in the US
  - 63.6% White (not Hispanic or Latino)
  - 18.5% Hispanic or Latino
  - 13.4% Black or African American
  - 5.9% Asian
  - 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
  - 2.8% Two or more races
  - 50.8% female

Diversity in the United States by region and race
Diversity in Ophthalmology

• Women
  • Residents: 44.3%
  • Faculty: 35.1%
  • Practicing Ophthalmologists: 22.7%

• Minority groups/URM:
  • Residents: 7.7%
  • Faculty: 5.7%
  • Practicing Ophthalmologists: 6%
• Lower volume of cases in female ophthalmology residents

• Fewer female ophthalmologists in leadership positions
Diversity in Ophthalmology (cont.)

- 6.8% of URM in faculty positions
- 7.5% of clinical chairs are URM

% URM in ophthalmology is low relative to other medical specialties
Why Does It Matter?

• Black and Hispanic youth experience blindness and visual impairment at higher rates than white youth (1.9x and 1.5x higher, respectively)

• Rates of glaucoma are nearly 2x higher for black individuals compared with white individuals

• Diabetic retinopathy affects black individuals at 1.4x vs white individuals

• Less likely to receive eye care

Normal (left) and glaucomatous optic disc (right)

Diabetic retinopathy
Why Does It Matter? (cont.)

• Physician-Patient Relationship
  • Trust and empathy

• Communication
  • Understanding of condition and adherence to medication

• Access to Care
  • URM more likely to practice in more regions with more URM patients

Abstract

We examined a national sample of African American, white, Hispanic, and Asian American respondents to test the hypothesis that doctor-patient race concordance is predictive of patient satisfaction. Our analysis examined racial/ethnic differences in patient satisfaction among patients in multiple combinations of doctor-patient race/ethnicity pairs. Additionally, we outline the determinants of doctor-patient race concordance. The analysis used the 1994 Commonwealth Fund Minority Health Survey to construct a series of multivariate models. We found that for respondents in each race/ethnic group, patients who had a choice in the selection of their physician were more likely to be race concordant. Whites were more likely to be race concordant with their physician compared to African American, Hispanic, and Asian American respondents. Among each race/ethnic group, respondents who were race concordant reported greater satisfaction with their physician compared with respondents who were not race concordant. These findings suggest support for the continuation of efforts to increase the number of minority physicians, while placing greater emphasis on improving the ability of physicians to interact with patients who are not of their own race.

Greater patient satisfaction if patients and physicians are same ethnicity

Role of communication in patient care
How do we increase diversity in the ophthalmology and eye care community?
Methods to Increase Diversity

• 1. Transparency
• 2. Dialogue and increasing awareness
• 3. Promote interest and engagement
• 4. Sustain interest and engagement
• 5. Increasing representation at all levels
Mentorship

Aims of mentorship:
- MOTIVATION
- ADVICE
- SUCCESS
- DIRECTION
- SUPPORT
- COACHING
- TRAINING
- GOAL

Role of a mentor:
- Advises on professional development
- Supports the mentee’s journey toward progress
- Identifies and provides resources
- Discusses goal setting and aspirations
- Offers encouragement during challenging times
- Provides personal development tips
- Shares knowledge and life experiences

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Benefits of Mentoring

- Increased personal achievement and satisfaction
- May be especially important to reduce physician burnout

Mentoring faculty increases personal achievement and satisfaction

Resident mentoring leads to increased medical student self-confidence, exposure to surgery, and likelihood to pursue surgical residency
Mentoring in Ophthalmology

• In 2018, MOM program was established to help increase mentorship to URM college and medical students

• In 2022, Women in Ophthalmology is developing mentoring program for attendings, fellows and residents

The Minority Ophthalmology Mentoring program is a partnership between the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) and Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO).

The purpose of the program is to increase diversity in ophthalmology by helping underrepresented in medicine (URiM) students become competitive ophthalmology residency applicants. Students receive one-on-one mentorship, valuable guidance in medical career planning, networking opportunities and access to a variety of educational resources.

MOM program statement
Bascom Palmer Mentorship Program

- Resident to medical student mentorship program being implemented
- Increase access and exposure to ophthalmology
- Connect to peers to demonstrate all stages of training and reduce potential stress associated with reaching out to faculty
Bascom Palmer Mentorship Program

• 32 medical students

• Agree mentorship is important

• Agree diversity is important

• Moderate identification with current mentor

• Hope for more exposure and advice
I am concerned about diversity in ophthalmology. 1– Not at all concerned 2– Slightly concerned 3– Somewhat concerned 4– Moderately concerned 5– Extremely concerned

32 responses

Average 2.8: most are somewhat concerned about diversity
The field of ophthalmology is diverse in terms of physician ethnicity. 1– Strongly disagree 2– Disagree 3– Neither agree or disagree 4– Agree 5– Strongly agree

32 responses

Average 3.25: neither agree nor disagree about ethnic diversity
The field of ophthalmology is diverse in terms of physician gender. 1– Strongly disagree 2– Disagree 3– Neither agree or disagree 4– Agree 5– Strongly agree

32 responses

Average 3.375: neither agree nor disagree about gender diversity
Bascom Palmer Mentorship Program

• 50% have not had a mentor
• Only 15/32 (46.8%) satisfied by current level of mentorship
• Only 18/32 (56.3%) can identify with current mentor
Bascom Palmer Mentorship Program

- Keywords
  - Guidance
  - Advice
  - Research
  - Opportunities
  - Application
  - Residency
  - Exposure
Next steps

• Include high school and college students
  • Linked connection – faculty to junior faculty to residents/fellows to medical students to high school students – is ultimate goal with direct interactions facilitated by existing connections

• Combine local and national programs

• Promote interest -- emphasis on women and URM

• Feedback loops: Collect data to evaluate efficacy of long-term mentoring programs on interest and successful pursuit of ophthalmology and incorporate adjustments
Conclusions

• There is currently limited gender and ethnicity diversity in ophthalmology

• Mentorship may increase exposure and access to eye professions as well as sustained engagement

• Can start with local programs and expand and scale to national level

• Improving gender and ethnicity representation in eye care will significantly affect eye care throughout the United States, especially for underserved and minority populations


• https://www.cognizantsoftvision.com/blog/a-successful-mentorship/
• https://www.newyorker.com/culture/culture-desk/the-new-yorker-cover-thats-being-replicated-by-women-surgeons-across-the-world
• https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.361.6401.522
• https://www.betterup.com/blog/how-to-be-a-mentor
Thank you

• My amazing mentors at Harvard and Bascom Palmer

• Prevent Blindness Organization