Advocacy Training in Healthcare Education: A Way Forward for PAs
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Introduction

- How can Physician Assistants (PAs) be effective political activists — on behalf of their patients and their profession — if they are not given formal political advocacy education?
- No research was found on PA advocacy education
- Some professional issues which need PA advocacy: PAs and team practice, PA scope of practice, PA prescribing, PAs and practice ownership
- Objective: to further analyze whether political advocacy education will increase political astuteness in graduate healthcare students

Methodology

- Tertiary data extracted from previous literature analysis pertaining to political advocacy education in graduate healthcare students
- Databases searched: CINAHL Complete, MEDLINE with Full Text, PubMed, PsychInfo
- Search terms: “advocacy”, “political advocacy”, “advocacy training”, “public policy”, “professional involvement”
- Inclusion criteria: graduate students in healthcare education, intervention was advocacy training in didactic education, appropriate response rate for pre-test/post-test surveys, North America
- Exclusion criteria: Advocacy education during residencies or fellowships
- Limits: English only, journals only

PRISMA Flow Diagram

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Name</th>
<th>Sample Size/ Population</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Data</th>
<th>Stats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blake and Powell</td>
<td>48 PharmD students</td>
<td>Elective advocacy course</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Post-test survey</td>
<td>95.0% think course increased knowledge; 97.5% think course increased awareness</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace and Flowers</td>
<td>100 PharmD students</td>
<td>Elective advocacy course</td>
<td>Not enrolled in course</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>Post-test survey, t-test</td>
<td>Enrolled more likely to be politically active than students not enrolled</td>
<td>p = 0.0088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quraishi et al.</td>
<td>120 Medical students</td>
<td>Elective course &amp; legislative internship</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1 semester</td>
<td>Pre-test/post-test survey &amp; 1 year follow-up</td>
<td>Students increased political astuteness, persisted over one year</td>
<td>Not available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primomo</td>
<td>40 Nursing students</td>
<td>Required advocacy course</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>10-week</td>
<td>Pre-test/post-test survey</td>
<td>Students increased their political astuteness</td>
<td>p = 0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyons et al.</td>
<td>57 Psychology students</td>
<td>Previous advocacy training</td>
<td>Psychology professionals</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Hierarchical multiple regression analysis</td>
<td>More advocacy training leads to more time spent engaging in advocacy activities</td>
<td>p = 0.006</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Definition of Political Astuteness

The following combined qualities will make an effective political advocate:
- Awareness of health policy
- An understanding of the legislative and policy process
- The development of political skills that will enable the actual or planned future political advocacy involvement

Conclusion

If students participate in advocacy training they are more likely to understand the legislative and policy process, become more politically aware, and develop political skills which enables political advocacy involvement.

Next Steps

- Evidence of advocacy education success in graduate healthcare programs should be applied to PA students
- Advocacy workshop for SHU PA students
- Discuss legislative process, current policy issues pertaining to PAs, and ways to get involved with advocacy now and in the future
- Pre-test/post-test survey to assess political astuteness

References


Masters Capstone Presentation – Stamford, Connecticut – March 23, 2018