Reviewer's report

Title: Resident Interest and Factors Involved in Entering a Pediatric Pulmonary Fellowship

Version: 1 Date: 22 April 2004

Reviewer: Gregory Redding

Reviewer's report:

General
The article by Dr. Gershan explores reasons why pediatric and medical/pediatric residents consider subspecialty fellowship training in pediatric pulmonology during residency at a single institution. Comparisons are made between survey results of 1992 and 2002. Conclusions about why residents might consider a pulmonary fellowship are tempered by the few (1 of 91 respondents) who actually matriculated in this fellowship program.

Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached) None.

Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct) None.

Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)
The data suggest that residents in their first year of training are most likely to consider a pediatric pulmonary fellowship. The authors could correlate how often this reflects simply the generic interest of interns to stay in academic medicine (i.e. positive responses to pulmonary fellowship specific questions vs questions about continuing education after residency). The author might also address if there are experiences within the institution or residency training program that actively discourage residents from considering a pulmonary fellowship by the time the residents reach an R-2 or R-3 level, based on the apparently diminishing interest in those years of residency.

The choice of patients that dictate an interest in pulmonary medicine is limited on the survey. There is no mention of asthma, respiratory infections, or diagnostic challenges. This bias should be acknowledged as the only reference to cystic fibrosis and ventilator dependent patients may elicit negative impressions unrelated to the rest of the field of pulmonary medicine. Similarly, the choice of options may reflect the particular pulmonary emphasis at this institution and this may differ with other programs, limiting ability to generalize the results.

What next?: Accept after discretionary revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No
Declaration of competing interests:

None.