

FACTORS INFLUENCING GLOBAL HEALTH PARTICIPATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

Scott Stuart, PhD (MD candidate in School of Medicine) and Madiha Abdel-Maksoud, MD, PhD, MSPH

PURPOSE:

The number of students across health care professions who choose to participate in international global health projects has been on the rise for the last several decades. Despite this, there is little published research on trends within global healthcare interest among pre-professionals or the impact these opportunities have on participants continued involvement in global health care after graduation. In addition, there is little data on the impact these opportunities have on the specialty providers choose to pursue following graduation.

METHODS:

The University of Colorado has compiled data from 679 students from the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Pharmacy, and School of Public Health who traveled internationally as part of global health outreach projects between 2013-2019.

From this data, we have extrapolated how participation in global health trips has evolved over time between the different professional schools.

RESULTS:

With the exception of 2013-2014 academic year, participation in global health projects increased every year between 2012 and 2017 at the University of Colorado, but has dropped off in consecutive years with participation across all programs down by 39.1% from peak participation in 2019. Decreased participation was seen across all schools from 2017-2019, although the School of Medicine and School of Pharmacy exhibited the largest drop-offs. We are correlating the above data with the purpose of each global health project in an effort to determine if the decreases in participation are attributable to projects in specific locations or projects with specific purposes. We will also use the data to ask whether participation has fallen from students in specific years of their respective programs. In addition, for the School of Medicine, we have collected data on the specialty each participant has chosen following graduation. We will use these data with national trends in residency selection to determine if participation in global health correlates with the specialty students choose, or if national trends in residency selection may have an influence on students participation in global health projects during their training. Overall, this project will identify trends in the participation of University of Colorado students in global health projects, attempt to identify factors that correlate with the recent decrease in participation in these projects, and highlight how participation in these projects influences students ultimate choice of specialty following graduation.