

Key Informant Guide Research Dean

Thank you for making time to talk to me today. As you know, we are conducting research to help inform the deliberations of the Physician-Scientist Workforce Committee at the National Institutes of Health about how to strengthen the nation's physician-scientist workforce. In particular, we're exploring how young people make the decision to pursue a career in research. We are talking with other deans, like yourself, as well as conducting focus groups with students.

What is said in this conversation will remain private to the extent allowed by law. That is, no one person's contributions will be identified to the Committee. Instead, the Committee will be provided with aggregated information to help them in their deliberations. We would like to tape record the interview so that we can be sure our notes are accurate. The tape recordings and transcripts will be stored in a locked file cabinet until June 30, 2014 and then they will be destroyed. Is it okay with you if we tape this conversation?

Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. About what percentage of your medical/dental/veterinary students are interested in a career in research, i.e., as physician-scientists?
2. When do most students who choose to become physician-scientists make the decision to pursue a research career? (PROBE FOR: Are their minds already made up when they enter medical school?)
3. What are the factors that most influence students' decision-making about a medical research career as a physician-scientist? (PROBE FOR: Time commitment, cost, future earnings, faculty role models who are pursuing research [e.g., do large numbers of faculty members have NIH or other grants?] other?)
4. What kind of differences, if any, have you observed between male and female students in their decision-making about a medical research career as a physician-scientist?
5. What activities, if any, does your medical school provide to encourage promising students to pursue a research career? (PROBE for: Research track? Formal mentoring program? Preceptor programs? Internships? Technological approach? If programs exist, please describe them.)

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6. How do you define success in the research-focused classes or activities that you described? What factors contribute to their success or lack thereof?
7. How are today's students different from those of 20 years ago, in an inclination toward a research career? If so, what is the difference? How would you describe today's students?
8. We want to go directly to the source and ask medical school students about their decision process regarding becoming a physician-scientist, and we could really use your help. Would you be willing to help us make contact with students from your institution for an exploratory focus group about this? (PROBE: Nominate specific students? Share student contact information? Refer to student organization?)
9. What kinds of things would you suggest to the Physician-Scientist Workforce Committee that would help strengthen the physician-scientist workforce?

Thank you very much!