

Family Medicine Interest Group (FMIG) Program of Excellence Award Winners

Overall Award

The George Washington University School of Medicine

FMIG Operation

The leadership follows a longitudinal structure, with the majority of group coordination and event planning done by a group of MS1 students in the second semester (after January) and continuing in the first semester as MS2s. These roles include planning interest events, particularly for the MS1 and MS2 classes; participating in organization fairs; monitoring the group email and Instagram page; coordinating plans with faculty and other student leaders. The MS3 and MS4 leaders participate in informal mentorship of students in the preceding classes, assist with events such as a post-match panel, and organize contact information for graduating alumni to assist future students who apply into family medicine.

Goals

The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences is one of the few allopathic target schools (previously known as orphan schools) in the U.S. As of now, our institution does not have a family medicine department, family medicine clinical clerkship, nor affiliated residency. Due to these limitations of family medicine exposure in our curriculum, the George Washington University FMIG plays a fundamental role in the family medicine spirit of GWU. As stated in our group's constitution: "GW FMIG's purpose is to provide the GWU community with a necessary outlet for those interested in family medicine. The purpose is to explore the opportunities available in family medicine, have a forum within which to discuss issues affecting family medicine specifically, to organize, network and advocate for further family medicine resources to be made available to the students and to educate the community of GWU on the opportunities available in family medicine. There is not a similar opportunity at GW for students interested in family medicine, and thus this fills a need expressed by students and faculty."

Faculty Advisor

We have two advisors for our group, who both have extensive experience in family medicine practice, teaching, and advocacy: Drs. [REDACTED], MD, FAAFP (current Board Chair of the American Board of Family Medicine) and Dr. [REDACTED], MD, FAAFP (current President-Elect of the District Columbia Academy of Family Physicians). The faculty advisors attend most group meetings and assist with the planning of events, including contacting faculty and alumni for educational panels. They also improve group communication and coordination by facilitating interaction between students of different classes who take on different responsibilities within the group. They often alert students to broader AAFP events on the local and national levels. Furthermore, as a medical school without a family medicine department, the faculty advisors act as mentors for many students who are interested in family medicine. They advise students in group and one-on-one settings, supporting them in their interests and professional goals throughout medical school and the residency application process.

Programs

Primary Care Leadership Collaborative Community Project

A group of student leaders from the Family Medicine Interest Group joined the Primary Care Leadership Collaborative in April 2022, participating in group meetings and learning about leadership principles. While in the program, we created a community project in collaboration with the GW Bridge to Care student-run free clinic and the Culinary Medicine Interest Group to improve culturally relevant dietary management of chronic diseases. The clinic, a branch of the GW Healing Clinic, serves patients primarily from uninsured, immigrant populations. The objective of the project was to develop educational resources related to nutrition that would be relevant to the diets and cultural backgrounds of our patient population. The project consisted of four major stages: an initial patient survey, website development, clinic demonstrations, and post-intervention analysis. Throughout the project, students also completed 3 poster presentations and 3 Powerpoint presentations at various events, both at internal medical school events and at academic conferences. In the initial stage, 30 patient surveys were collected to learn about the dietary habits, preferences, and challenges of our patients. Most patients surveyed were not interested in changing their diet (79%) but were interested in healthy recipes (94%), and most patients preferred electronic modalities to receive information (77%). Based on these responses, we aimed to compile educational resources and healthy resources that aligned with patient preferences for specific foods and meals to allow for easier dietary modification without dramatic changes in dietary structure. We created a website in both English and Spanish with these educational resources, recipes, and information on local food assistance or cooking classes. A few recipes were then selected for in-clinic recipe tasting events. Patients and families were invited to sample the recipes during these events, and flyers with links to the website were distributed. At this event, we also gave patients the opportunity to complete surveys to evaluate the usefulness and understandability of the website for our post-intervention analysis. Analysis also included website traffic data. As medical student and physician volunteers continue to work in the clinic, we hope that this website can be a resource incorporated into interactions with patients who desire to improve their nutrition for management of chronic diseases.

Shadowing Initiative

To increase GW students' exposure to family medicine, incoming FMIG leaders launched a new shadowing initiative this semester. They are actively recruiting community family physicians across DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia, seeking diverse clinical settings and patient populations for students to experience. The student leaders conceptualized the program and wrote an invitation letter detailing the value of hosting a GW student. Distributed to alumni, DC AAFP members, and other supporters, the letter has already secured participation from several physicians. The program plans to offer these shadowing sessions to FMIG members starting Summer 2025, during the first-year students' summer break. We expect participation from at least 15 GW students. We will evaluate the success of the program through surveying students on their experiences and biannual check-ins/updates to the participating physician repository.

"What is Family Medicine?" Events

The GW FMIG plans and executes several events in accordance with the "What is Family Medicine?" theme per calendar year to expose students to the history of family medicine, the breadth of practice, reasons for choosing a career in family medicine, and the match process. At all events, students were encouraged to sign up for the FMIG Listserv to stay up to date about events and given the opportunity to take AAFP informational materials. In May 2024, we hosted a "Week in the Life of a Family Medicine Doc" panel (new event for our FMIG), where panelists came to describe their work and personal schedule in a typical week. This topic was proposed by our faculty advisor based off of a Society of Teachers of Family Medicine conference panel and recurring article ("Day in the Life" in the American Family Physicians journal). It featured seven FM physicians, including a residency director and the Board Chair of ABFM, working in areas such as geriatrics, academic medicine, rural medicine, labor and delivery, and FQHCs. This event was conceptualized by FMIG student leaders and faculty advisors with the aim of showcasing the diversity of practice and opportunities available to family medicine physicians. Student leaders booked the meeting space, created all advertising materials and RSVP, ordered food, and assisted with general flow of the event. Faculty advisors recruited panelists, provided a slide deck, and moderated. The event was advertised to current medical students using email lists and Instagram posts and it was well-attended, not just by students interested in family medicine, but also those interested in OB/GYN, disaster medicine, correctional medicine, etc. due to the wide range of panelist experience. This event could be made even more successful in the future by collaboration with other interest groups, potentially in Internal Medicine or OB/GYN to reach a wider audience. Another event, Family Medicine Jeopardy, has proven to be a great event hosted in the fall to introduce MS1s to the history of family medicine and the fellowships, specialized training, and procedures that fall within the scope of family medicine. Student leaders booked the meeting space, created all advertising materials and RSVP, ordered food, and assisted faculty with running the Jeopardy board and keeping score. Faculty advisors developed the materials, provided a Jeopardy game deck, and served as game hosts. The event was advertised to current medical students using email lists and Instagram posts. Students who attended expressed increased knowledge about family medicine and were eager to learn more about the field. While the event was well-attended, attendance for this event has been higher in the past. Challenges faced this time can be mitigated in the future by more deliberate planning around exam schedules and keeping watch for events held by other interest groups at the same time. Finally, a post-match panel with graduating MS4s is held annually to allow students to gain understanding of how their peers chose family medicine, what to expect from faculty advising and support in the match process, and how to approach interviews and networking with programs leading up to their application cycle. FMIG student leaders communicated with MS4s who matched FM to select a date and time for the panel. A combination of in-person and Zoom options has been used over the years with success in both. Student leaders collected questions and moderated the panel. Faculty attended to support the event. Event success was measured by turnout and engagement of students in asking

questions throughout. Improvements from previous years include a form for submission of questions in advance of the event and recording the panel for those unable to attend live.

Skills Night

Driven by student interest in hands-on procedural training, student leaders collaborated with faculty advisors to develop a "Skills Night" showcasing the breadth of Family Medicine procedures. Faculty advisors recruited volunteer attending physicians to teach five stations: shave biopsy, upper extremity splinting, intrauterine device (IUD) insertion, point-of-care ultrasound (POCUS), and osteopathic manipulative medicine (OMM). Meanwhile, student leaders managed event logistics, including booking the space, creating advertising materials, handling RSVPs, ordering food, and coordinating station setup and student rotations between stations. A total of 18 students from all academic years attended. The event began with a brief introduction highlighting the wide variety of procedures performed by family physicians, after which students divided into groups to rotate through the stations. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, as students valued the supportive and practical experience of applying clinical knowledge and practicing skills. Despite scheduling two hours for the event, the high level of engagement at each station indicated that more time would have facilitated deeper learning. We plan to host future Skills Nights, potentially focusing on only 2-3 procedures per event to allow for more targeted practice and better time management.

Primary Care Health Policy Scholars program

This is an ongoing initiative in collaboration with the University of California San Francisco's Primary Care Health Policy Scholars Program. Three student leaders, two FMIG faculty advisors, and the current ABFM-GW Health Policy Research fellow, are working to adapt outlines and materials previously used by the UCSF program to fit the needs of GW students interested in Family Medicine. While GW has an extensive public health course required for all medical students, we believe this program focused on how primary care, specifically, intersects with health policy and practical experience in advocacy will be integral for students interested in the field. Currently, students and faculty are reviewing program outlines to develop an implementation plan for the GW program to start in the fall of 2025. We will recruit students from all years through an application process and select the first cohort of students to participate. A total of at least eight program sessions, each lasting 2.5 hours, will provide opportunity for the student leaders to facilitate discussions and health policy lessons. Faculty will work collaboratively to add to session material, and it is our aim that participating students will also gain experience with peer-peer teaching and facilitation. The first year of the program will culminate with creation of at least one original policy project or initiative (policy brief, newsletter, research report, lobbying, etc.) spearheaded by student leaders and program participants and guided by faculty. Program success will be evaluated through student interest in applying for the program, cohort size in the first year, active participation and productive dialogue between participants, and the health policy project or initiative produced.

ABFM Family Medicine Factbook Student Focus Group

Our location in the heart of Washington, DC, enables frequent collaborations with national family medicine organizations, including partnerships with the AAFP Robert Graham Center and the ABFM Center for Professionalism & Value in Health Care. A recent example involved the ABFM's update to its Family Medicine Factbook, initially published in 2023 to share data-driven insights about family physicians nationwide. For the new edition, the ABFM sought student perspectives and collaborated with GW FMIG to conduct a focus group. Our role involved co-sponsoring the event by providing funding for food and promoting attendance among our members. The ABFM provided speakers and moderated the session, which drew attendance from GW students as well as students from other DC medical schools.

This initiative provided a valuable opportunity for our students to meet national family medicine leaders and share our unique perspectives on this key resource. While the ABFM led the program initiative and determined its overall success, GW FMIG is confident that our contributions through co-sponsorship and ensuring strong student participation were instrumental in gathering the feedback the ABFM needed.

District of Columbia AFP Engagement

GW FMIG regularly engages with District of Columbia AFP activities. We have 1 student representative and 1 faculty representative to the Board of Directors, who regularly attend monthly planning and CME meetings as facilitated by DC AFP. GW FMIG ensures strong member attendance at three key annual DC AFP events: the Meet and Greet (August), the Annual Meeting (November), and the Graduating Students & Residents Celebration (May). These events are promoted via the GW FMIG listserv and by our student leaders and faculty advisors. Over the past year, at each of these events, GW FMIG students have consistently formed the majority of student attendees at these events compared to other DC medical schools affiliated with DC AFP. This strong participation was evident at the recent Annual Meeting, where GW students presented six of the eight research posters, and one student received a DC AFP scholarship to attend the 2024 AAFP National Conference (now known as FUTURE). This sustained engagement with the DC AFP builds a valuable support network outside of GW and provides crucial opportunities for students to connect with local family physicians. Furthermore, the relationships forged through this involvement have directly facilitated other GW FMIG initiatives, such as securing panelists for our "What is Family Medicine" events and launching our shadowing program.