

Introduction

- In the United States, medical school is traditionally a four-year curriculum
- Several current medical schools have produced accelerated three-year programs, allowing medical students to condense a traditional four-year education into three years
- In the 20th century, about 25% of medical schools maintained a three-year pathway; however, due to issues with accreditation, only about 25 programs existed in the 1980s and 1990s

Development of 3-year Pathways

- The Consortium of Accelerated Medical Pathway Programs (CAMPP) was created in 2015 to help develop 3-year or other accelerated curricula that lead to the MD degree in the United States and Canada
- As of 2015, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM) was the only osteopathic school with an accelerated 3-year program
- In April 2006, the American Osteopathic Association Commission on College Accreditation approved LECOM's accelerated three-year medical school curriculum, the Primary Care Scholars Pathway (PCSP) program, to encourage and facilitate students' career choice to pursue a career in primary care
- The first students began the curriculum in October 2007 and graduated in May 2010

LECOM PCSP

- LECOM's PCSP program is unique because the pathway directly addresses the national primary care shortage
- Students from the program can pursue either a Family Medicine or Internal Medicine residency
- Upon completion of residency, students must practice primary care medicine for a minimum of five years to maintain the program's financial benefit of saving a year of tuition
- A fellowship in Geriatrics, Neuromuscular Medicine, or Family Medicine-Obstetrics may delay the actual practice of primary care medicine

Primary Care Shortage

- While an aging and growing population in the United States has been contributing to a physician shortage in all specialties, the shortage is most prominent in primary care
- The AAMC predicts that by 2034, there will be a shortage of 17,800-48,000 primary care physicians
- Students with increased educational debt burden are less likely to enter specialties with lower compensation, causing many to avoid pursuing primary care
- LECOM's PCSP program attempts to increase interest in primary care specialties by reducing the educational debt burden and the duration of education
- Some PCSP students have also pursued the National Health Service Corps (NHSC) Scholarship, which aims to provide scholarships to students pursuing primary care health professions training in return for a commitment to provide primary health services in a Health Professional Shortage Area

Research Questions

- What is the likelihood of PCSP graduates pursuing Family Medicine versus Internal Medicine residency?
- Where geographically do PCSP graduates pursue residency training?

Methods

- Data on LECOM PCSP graduates was obtained from the Lake Erie College of Medicine
- A chi-squared test was performed to assess the statistical significance of residency specialties
- Google Sheets was used to map where graduates matched for residency

Primary Care Scholars Pathway (PCSP): An Innovative Curriculum Addressing the National Primary Care Shortage

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Results

- Since 2010, 87 students have graduated from the accelerated 3-year PCSP program at LECOM
- 48 graduates were male, and 39 graduates were female
- Graduates have completed residency training in Family Medicine (N=65), Internal Medicine (N=18), Traditional Rotating (N=2), Internal Medicine/Psychiatry (N=1), and Pediatrics (N=1) (Figure 1)
- Compared to Internal Medicine, more students pursued residency training in Family Medicine χ^2 (df = 1, N = 83) = 26.614, p<.0001
- No statistical significance exists between males and females in any of the residency specialties pursued

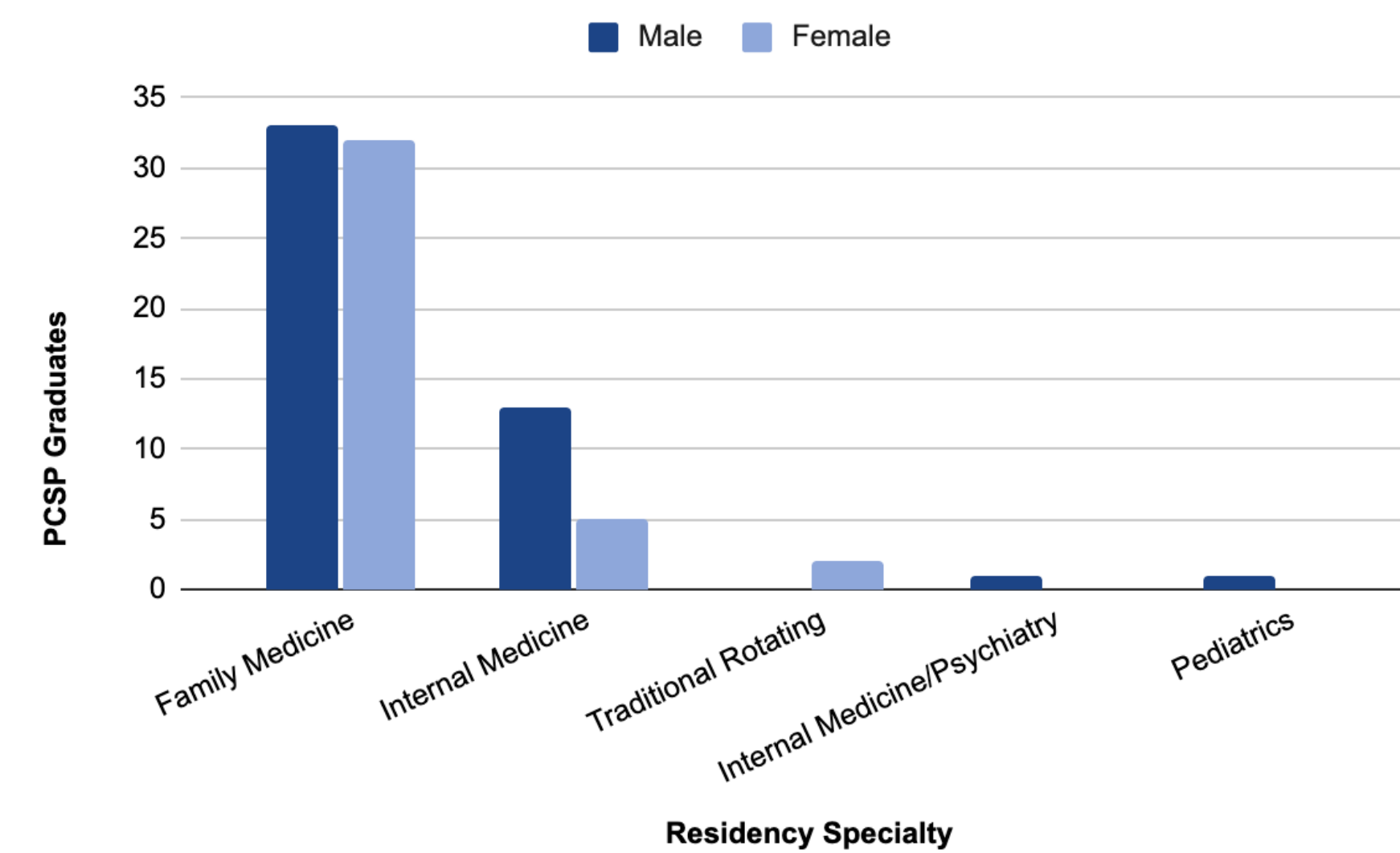


Figure 1. Residency specialties of LECOM PCSP graduates

- PCSP graduates have pursued residencies in 22 states (Figure 2)
- Most graduates trained in Pennsylvania and New York (Figure 2)
- Approximately 35% of LECOM PCSP graduates complete residency in Pennsylvania (N=28), 14% in New York (N=11), 10% in Texas (N=8), and 7% in Ohio (N=6) (Figure 2)

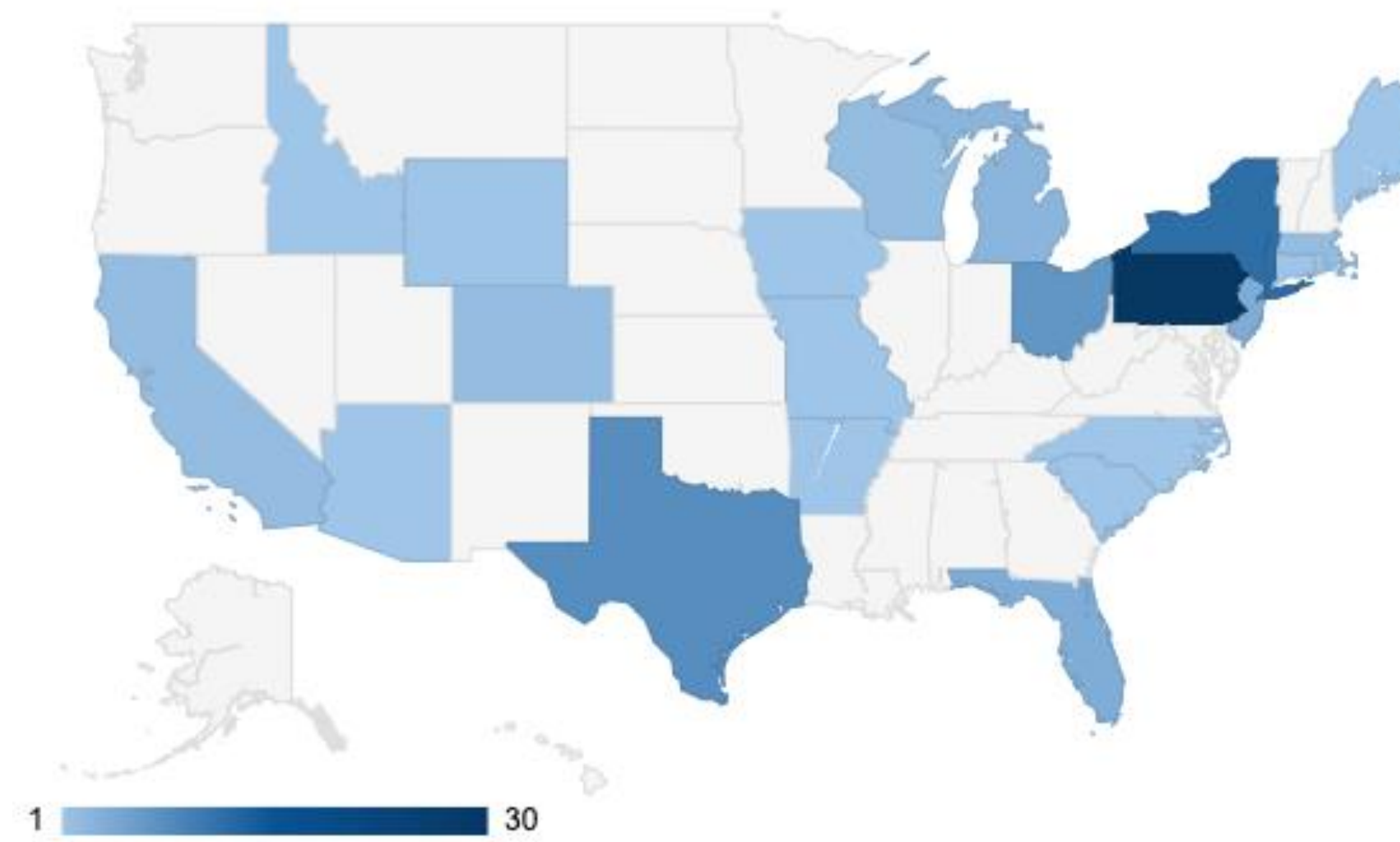


Figure 2. States where LECOM PCSP graduates pursued residency

- PCSP graduates have pursued residencies in 61 cities (Figure 3)
- The cities with the highest number of PCSP graduates who pursued residencies are Buffalo, NY (N=6) and Erie, PA (N=5), followed by Altoona, PA (N=4)
- Many graduates also pursued training in Washington, PA (N=3), Morristown, NJ (N=3), and Corpus Christi, TX (N=3)

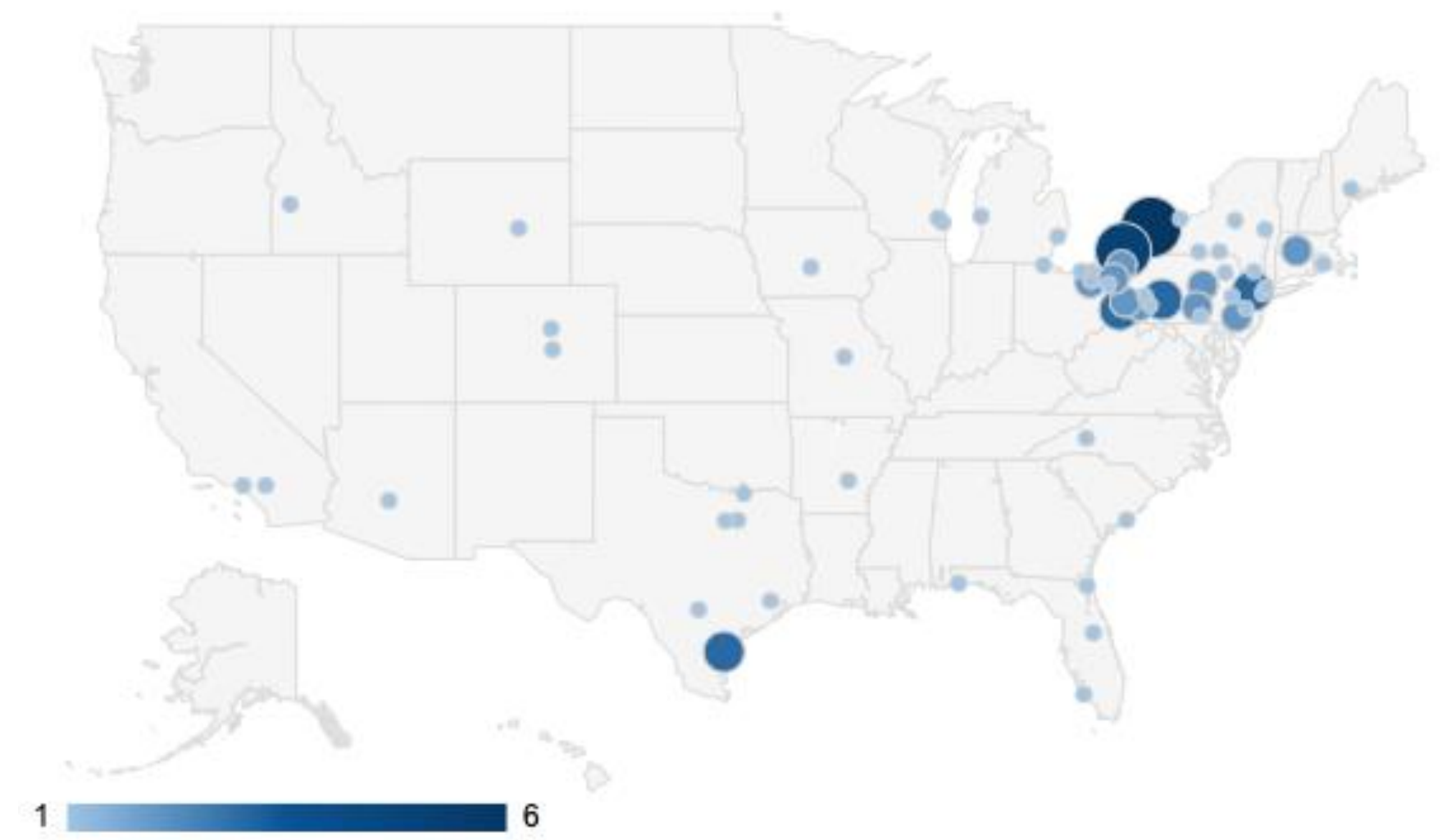


Figure 3. Cities where LECOM PCSP graduates pursued residency

Conclusion

- LECOM continues to be an avid participant in addressing the national primary care physician shortage through the PCSP program
- Data suggests that 95% of graduates of the medical school's accelerated primary care curriculum continue their medical training in the primary care specialties of Family Medicine or Internal Medicine, with only 2% of graduates pursuing training in Pediatrics or combined Internal Medicine/Psychiatry programs
- Whether this trend is due to the individual graduate's preference or an influence from the college and its faculty remains to be seen
- Graduates have continued their training in over 20 states and over 60 cities across the United States
- Many PCSP graduates pursue residencies within Pennsylvania, the home state of LECOM, and the neighboring state, New York, suggesting local retention of graduates
- Such data supports the need to produce more accelerated primary care programs in osteopathic medical schools to further address primary care physician shortages

Limitations

- This study only regards the location of graduates' residency training and not of current, post-residency practice

Future Research

- Studying the practice locations and fields of post-residency training, which may provide more insight into where the program graduates provide their services
- Analyzing the likelihood of pursuing scholarships such as the NHSC Scholarship while being in an accelerated primary care program

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