

CHAPTER 7

MEDICAL SCHOOL AND THE TRAINING OF PHYSICIANS

Learning Questions

1. How was early nineteenth-century medical education in the United States inferior to its counterpart in England?
2. What were the advantages and disadvantages of proprietary schools during the nineteenth century?
3. What were the key recommendations of the Flexner Report?
4. What is the typical course of study for medical students today?
5. What are the sources of stress for medical students?
6. What is meant by detached concern and tolerance of uncertainty?

Chapter Outline

- I. Learning Questions
- II. Development of Medical Schools and Medical Education
 - A. Medical Education in Early America
 - B. Nineteenth-Century Developments
 - C. The Flexner Report
- III. Medical Schools Today
 - A. Sociodemographic Profile of U.S. Medical Students
 - B. A Brief Look at Medical School Faculty
- IV. The Lives and Experience of Medical Students
 - A. Stress, Fatigue, and Burnout
 - B. The Socialization of Medical Students
- V. Conclusion
- VI. Summary
- VII. Giving It Some Thought

Key Terms

Clerkship: a clinical rotation during the third and fourth years of medical school in which students go on rounds with other students

Detached concern: medical students' emotional distance from patients

Medical student burnout: the mental, emotional, and physical stress and exhaustion that many medical students experience during their preclinical and clinical years and during their residencies

Proprietary schools: independent, for-profit medical schools that were established in many cities around the United States during the first half of the 1800s

Socialization: the learning of a culture's norms, values, and attitudes

Tolerance of uncertainty: medical students' acceptance of the fact that their own knowledge of medicine will be uncertain because they cannot know everything known to scientific medicine and because scientific medicine does not know everything about the causes and cures of disease and illness.

“Giving It Some Thought”

You are a third-year medical student and are now in the third week of your first clerkship. A senior resident taking you and some other students on rounds ridicules you when you are slow to answer a question about a patient. You feel humiliated, and you notice some of the other students grimacing in sympathy. What, if anything, do you do about the verbal harassment you just experienced? Explain your answer.

Online Resources

1. Gapmedics
<http://www.gapmedics.com/blog/2014/03/01/battling-fatigue-in-medical-school/>
What are the signs of medical student fatigue? What can medical students do to resist fatigue?
2. Yale Journal of Biology and Medicine
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3178858/>
How did the Flexner Report change the nature and process of medical education?
Research this article to see how the Flexner Report changed many things.
3. The Atlantic
<http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/07/cadaver-dissection-empathy-medical-school/398429/>
What is the process by which medical students can learn empathy? How are medical students socialized to learn empathy?