Authors' Response to Letters Regarding "Defining the Scholarly and Scholarship Common Program Requirements"

We are pleased we received a number of responses to our recent editorial on "Defining the Scholarly and Scholarship Common Program Requirements,"¹ over 20 and counting. As a group, these letters continue to demonstrate the differing perspectives on whether and how the common program requirements for residency education should address the topic of scholarly activity (application of a systematic approach to a question or project in a domain as defined by Glassick et al²), or scholarship (a scholarly approach that additionally is aimed at advancing knowledge in the field as judged by peer review³). There seems to be support for the concept that residents and faculty should demonstrate a scholarly approach to questions and projects and that programs should cultivate a culture or environment of inquiry. However, readers disagreed on whether residents and faculty should be required to advance their scholarly approach by producing scholarship.

These varying opinions are reflected in the responses received. Seehusen and Ledford⁴ argue that "successful scholarship breeds successful physicians," and suggest residents should have a scholarship requirement and that their work should be focused on the scholarship of discovery. In contrast, Hong⁵ voiced uncertainty about the role that either resident or faculty scholarship has in the aim of training great physicians, stating that "scholarship alone does not make a competent physician." Both Hong⁵ and Fringer⁶ highlight the importance of ensuring that trainees are prepared to apply a scholarly approach to clinical problems but opine against a widespread mandate for scholarship. In addition, Fringer⁶ illustrates the logistical challenges such an interpretation of the requirement would pose to program directors.

Presently, we advocate that the common program requirements remain focused on the expectation of a scholarly activity as there is currently insufficient evidence to support or not support a requirement for scholarship as a residency training requirement. Given that each program must refer to their specialty's residency review committee (RRC) requirements for specific guidance, over time, we anticipate that the Next Accreditation System will produce data for scholarly activity across the range of accredited programs. The systematic analysis of this data will then allow us to make informed decisions about the relative value of scholarly activity and scholarship on residents' learning and professional development.

PETER J. CAREK, MD, MS

Professor and Chair, Department of Community Health and Family Medicine, University of Florida

DEBORAH SIMPSON, PhD

Medical Education Program Director, Aurora Health Care Professor (Adjunct) of Family and Community Medicine, Medical College of Wisconsin Professor (Clinical Adjunct) of Family Medicine, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health

LALENA M. YARRIS, MD, MCR

Director of Emergency Medicine Residency and Education Fellowship Programs, Oregon Health and Science University

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- 4 Seehusen DA, Ledford CJW. The characteristics and purpose of resident scholarship [Letter]. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2014;6(2):396–397.
- 5 Hong R. Defining the scholarly and scholarship common program requirements [Letter]. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2014;6(2):395.
- 6 Fringer RC. Scholarly activities for residents: high expectations? [Letter]. *J Grad Med Educ*. 2014;6(2):394.