

New Curriculum For Medical Students

A new curriculum of some form is in full operation in 20 North American medical schools, and is being planned in 67 others.

The status of medical curriculum revision, with details filling a book more than an inch thick, was reported recently by three University of Michigan medical educators.

They submitted their findings to a curriculum workshop sponsored by the Association of American Medical Colleges here.

THE REPORT was based on a survey developed by a steering committee headed by William M. Hubbard Jr., dean of the U-M Medical School and former AAMC president. The study itself was conducted by Drs. John A. Gronvall and George R. DeMuth, both new associate deans at U-M. They did much of the work while Dr. Gronvall was associate dean at the University of Mississippi and Dr. DeMuth was professor of pediatrics at U-M.

The survey was sent to the dean of each of the 117 medical schools in Canada and the United States. Responses came

from 103 deans, but not every dean answered every question.

The length of the new curricula varies from school to school. In 59 medical schools it will be four years long. It will be three years in six schools, five years long in two schools, and six years in one school.

In addition, the survey disclosed that 19 schools have shortened the time from high school to the M.D. degree. In six schools, medical work begins in the third year after high school. The average time for acceptance to medical school is the third year after high school.

Thirty-four schools reported multiple tracks or pathways allowing for differentiation among medical students: in 15 schools, track selection begins in the first year, in nine schools during the second year, and in six schools, during the third year.

IN THE PAST medical students have had few if any electives, but the survey disclosed that now only three schools out of 100 have no elective time. In most schools, the student chooses from lists of available

electives. In a few he may propose his own elective.

Medical students have traditionally had little free time during their education. Nevertheless, all but three of 96 reporting schools indicated that now there is some free time in the curriculum.

For the past 50 years the American medical curriculum has remained substantially unchanged while new scientific information has been added,

The survey revealed that most of the schools have deleted or shortened courses in developing a new curriculum.

Over half of the reporting schools indicated that they sponsored a comprehensive or family-care clinic as part of the curriculum. In many of the schools all students must attend the clinic.

Research is a part of intellectual activity and no school reported total lack of oppor-

tunities for independent research. In fact, 53 schools stated that research opportunities have increased.

MEDICAL STUDENTS perform better if they develop professional identity early in their educational development. All 103 schools reported that students are brought into contact with real patients during the first year or two of medical school training.



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