

# Obstacles to Research Credentialing among Medical Students

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# Background

- Research credentialing is a mandatory process for healthcare workers
- Thought to create more uniform practice and improve patient outcomes
- Credentialing among medical students has been challenging
  - Multiple forms
  - Unclear instructions
  - Multiple individuals to contact to navigate the credentialing process

# Objective

- To understand the strengths and challenges that medical students found in the research credentialing process at University Hospitals Cleveland Medical Center

# Methods

- Inclusion criteria:
  - Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine students, who were research-credentialed through the UH Department of Dermatology and various other UH departments
- Participants asked to fill out anonymous online survey with questions about various steps in credentialing process
  - 3 yes/no questions
  - 3 open-ended questions
    - Challenges faced when trying to get credentialed
    - Resources found to be most helpful during credentialing process

# Results

- 14 students credentialed through UH Department of Dermatology
- 11 students credentialed through other departments (Urology, Neurology, Orthopaedic Surgery, Cardiology, Pediatrics)

# Results (continued)

- Biggest struggle medical students faced was **overly long and confusing process**
  - 73% among Dermatology students; 90% among other departments
- Second biggest struggle medical students faced was **lack of communication**
  - 47% among Dermatology students
- Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of Dermatology students (73%) reported **limited production of research projects** due to obstacles in credentialing
- More than half of Dermatology students (60%) did not feel they received sufficient resources from school to build project
- Half of medical students (50%) from other departments did not feel they received sufficient resources

# Results (continued)

- Project completion
  - 57% of Dermatology students reported project completion
  - Only 40% of students from other departments reported project completion
- Resources found to be helpful during process
  - Graduated upperclassmen from medical school
  - Department personnel
  - Involved mentors
  - Online website/presentation given by medical school
- Interest in conducting future research, despite obstacles
  - All Dermatology students reported interest in doing future research
  - 82% of students from other departments were interested in future research

# Discussion and Future Studies

- Medical students from various departments find credentialing process to be confusing and challenging
- Medical schools may not be providing sufficient resources because they also are not receiving clear instructions
- Project efficiency and completion may be affected negatively
- Future studies
  - Streamline credentialing process – one website, one form, one list of all department personnel/contact information
  - Ensure information is relayed to medical schools so that students can be made aware from time of matriculation