Survey compares job search experiences, backgrounds of U.S., international medical school graduates

from the AAP Department of Research

Pediatric residents who graduated from medical schools outside the U.S. or Canada have diverse backgrounds, according to findings from the AAP Annual Survey of Graduating Residents.

A recent study looked at survey data (Umoren et al. Acad Pediatr. 2015;15:557-564, http://bit.ly/1Vs0BZP) and highlighted demographic and job search differences between international medical school graduates (international graduates) and those from U.S. or Canadian medical schools (U.S. graduates).

"International medical school graduates bring diverse backgrounds and experiences to the pediatric workforce," said lead author Rachel Umoren, M.B.B.Ch., M.S., FAAP. "They also face many challenges as they transition to the workforce, including 1-1 visa status, family priorities, intercultural differences and communication barriers."

Of the graduating residents surveyed from 2009-2013, 22% were international graduates. Three-quarters of these graduates were non-white (see Figure 1). They also were more likely to be men (34%) than U.S. graduates (23%). While equally likely to be married or partnered, international graduates were more likely to be married or partnered to physicians (33%) than U.S. graduates (20%). Forty-four percent of international and 28% of U.S. graduates reported having children. Half of international graduates grew up in a bilingual or multilingual family compared to 27% of U.S. graduates, and 20% of international and 15% of U.S. graduates rated their Spanish proficiency as very good or excellent.

Few international graduates (20%) and most U.S. graduates (75%) graduated residency with educational debt of at least $100,000. Nearly all graduating residents (97%) had a job when they were surveyed. Figure 2 compares the types of positions international and U.S. graduates took after residency. Some differences in job search experiences of the residents who accepted general pediatric or hospitalist positions were found: 36% of international and 20% of U.S. graduates reported moderate to considerable job search difficulty.

\[ \text{Figure 1. Race/ethnic background of pediatric residency graduates, n=2,971} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>International medical school graduates</th>
<th>U.S. medical school graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AAP 2009 to 2013 Annual Survey of Graduating Residents

\[ \text{Figure 2. Post-residency position of graduates, n=2,632} \]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Subspecialty fellowship</th>
<th>General pediatric practice</th>
<th>Hospitalist</th>
<th>Chief residency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International medical school graduates</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. medical school graduates</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AAP 2009 to 2013 Annual Survey of Graduating Residents

RESOURCES

- The Academy recently established the Provisional Section on International Medical Graduates in recognition of the role trainees and physicians play in the care of children in the U.S. and abroad. Visit https://www.aap.org/soimg.
- For AAP resources on pediatric careers, visit www.pedjobs.org.
- For more information on the Annual Survey of Graduating Residents, visit http://bit.ly/1DjGban or contact Mary Pat Frintner, in the AAP Division of Health Services Research, at 800-433-9016, ext. 7664, or mfrintner@aap.org.
- 36% of international and 20% of U.S. graduates reported moderate to considerable job search difficulty.
- 71% of international and 55% of U.S. graduates said their spouse or partner’s career plans or family situation limited their selection of jobs.
- 43% of international and 65% of U.S. graduates accepted positions in the same state as their residency.
- Each May, the AAP Department of Research surveys a random sample of 1,000 graduating residents from all U.S. pediatric residency programs. Response rates to the 2009-2013 surveys ranged from 57% to 64%.

Study: 12.5% of U.S. children susceptible to measles

by Melissa Jenco • News Content Editor

Nearly 9 million U.S. children and adolescents are susceptible to measles, according to a new study.

Researchers said vaccination rates are just barely above the herd immunity threshold and expressed concern about the potential for widespread illness if rates decline.

“We don’t have a very wide buffer before these population level immunity estimates start dipping below critical levels,” said Robert Bednarczyk, Ph.D., lead author of the study and assistant professor in the Hubert Department of Global Health at Emory University.

Dr. Bednarczyk and his colleagues presented the findings at IDWeek 2015, the annual meeting of the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America, the HIV Medicine Association and the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society.

They performed an analysis using data from the National Immunization Survey-Teen and found roughly 12.5% of U.S. children 17 years and younger, about 8.7 million children, are susceptible to measles. Children 3 years and younger are at highest risk, with 24.7% likely to get ill if exposed compared to 7.9% of teens.

The study not only looked at overall vaccination rates, but took into account delayed vaccination and vaccine effectiveness.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Academy recommend children receive the first dose of the measles, mumps and rubella vaccine at 12-15 months and the second dose at 4-6 years. However, some children can’t receive the vaccine because they are not old enough, while others have medical contraindications. In other cases, parents with religious or philosophical objections choose not to vaccinate their children.

Earlier this year, a multistate outbreak linked to Disneyland amusement park resulted in more than 100 cases of measles.

Matt Zahn, M.D., medical director for epidemiology at the Orange County Health Care Agency in California where some of those cases occurred, spoke alongside Dr. Bednarczyk at a press conference and expressed his concerns.

“As a pediatrician and a public health officer, it is frustrating to admit children to hospitals with a disease that is very preventable, and generally we felt it (measles) was sort of gone,” he said. “From a public health standpoint, it is sobering to recognize that one exposure event can cause so many public health ripples around the country.”

Carrie L. Byington, M.D., FAAP, chair of the AAP Committee on Infectious Diseases, said in a phone interview the susceptibility rates were even higher than she expected and show “the vulnerability of our nation’s protections from measles.”

“We do not want to return to the pre-vaccine era,” she said.

Measles has a mortality rate of about one in 1,000 for children, and those who survive may face long-term health issues. The Academy provides education and resources to pediatricians and families on vaccinations, stressing they are safe and effective.

“The consequences of our actions affect more than ourselves, and it’s really important that we maintain our national protection against measles,” Dr. Byington said.

RESOURCES

- Measles chapter of Red Book Online, bit.ly/1V5faJp
- HealthyChildren.org measles page, bit.ly/1hEolrJ
- CDC measles website, 1.usa.gov/1ZDh4xk

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