

UTMB School of Medicine
Practice of Medicine (POM) Years 3 and 4
Faculty & Student Goals & Objectives

POM3 | Session 7, Types of Practice

Goals: Students often choose specialties based on exposure and role modeling. One of the goals of this session is to expose them to additional specialties they may not have considered. They will also likely come to a better understanding of the process of training – by now, they all will have met fellows and should understand the difference between a resident and a fellow, but you can be sure to enlighten them if they remain confused. They should also reflect upon what is truly important to them as they choose a career path, and tie that to the reasons they originally sought a career in medicine. This time of year they begin looking ahead to residency applications and the match, and start getting nervous if they haven't settled on a specialty, despite the fact they have only completed half of the required clerkships. They run the risk of losing themselves in this process, making decisions based on what others think is best rather than what satisfies their core values and desires.

The other topic of the session is further in the future – students often are confused and do not understand different practice settings such as private practice vs. HMO, etc. I could not find excellent resources to help with that, but hopefully this will provide a glimpse.

Faculty who also facilitate POM4 groups may find that this is a good session to hold as a joint meeting – the year 4 students have more immediate perspectives on the residency search process that may be helpful to year 3 students.

Objectives:

1. Students will review a list of medical specialties and will research a few in depth.
2. Students will review different practice settings.
3. Students will reflect on their own specialty choice and how it relates to their value system.

Activities:

Required Tasks:

Have you encountered specialties you had never heard of before? Do you have any idea how they are trained or what types of patients they see? Cruise this list of 145 board-certified specialties. Choose a few you don't know much about or have been interested in looking into. Do some investigation, and bring back information to your group about the specialty.

[http://www.abms.org/who we help/physicians/specialties.aspx](http://www.abms.org/who_we_help/physicians/specialties.aspx)

Do you know the difference between private practice, group practice, health maintenance organization and other practice settings? Read this short paper describing several practice settings <http://www.nejmcareercenter.org/article/2251/differentiating-among-medical-practice-settings/> Feel free to investigate further, either by searching the web or asking physicians with whom you interact more questions about their practice setting.

What elements have influenced your thinking about specialty choice? Read this essay, “Considering Life before Lifestyle”, JAMA 2012 307:2159-60.

Optional Reading

There has been a lot of talk about “medical homes”. Here is an article that compares these ideas to HMOs. This is a very one-sided article, but may be of interest – there are also many presenting a completely opposite point of view. “Lessons that patient-centered medical homes can learn from the mistakes of HMOs” Annals of Internal Medicine. 152(3):182-5, 2010 Feb 2.

Did you feel forced to make choices very early in medical school? This essay may resonate with you: “A Differentiation Diagnosis – Specialization and the Medical Student”, NEJM 2011; 365:391-3.

Are you interested in primary care? This essay talks about the inherent value in that endeavor, despite the push to go into more lucrative fields. “The Road Less Traveled” NEJM 2011; 365:2449-51.

Essay Prompts:

Feel free to combine these questions as you write your essay.

1. As you think about what specialty you will pursue, what facets of your life and personality are absolutely critical for you to satisfy in this career choice? Is it “life” or “lifestyle”?
2. As you read about practice settings, are there any that resonate with you, and seem like they are the most likely type you will pursue when you finish your training?
3. If you can lay your hands on the essay you wrote when you applied to medical school, does it still ring true for you? Which things that you said about yourself and your future still hold true? Will they impact your specialty choice in any way?
4. Did you come to medical school with a specialty choice in mind? If so, why? Do you still feel that way?
5. Do you have suggestions for how UTMB could help students prepare for the choices involved in picking a specialty? Read New Engl J Med 2011; 365(5):391-3 for an essay by a medical student on this topic.

POM4 Syllabus | Session 7

Session 7: Transitioning to Residency and Beyond

Structuring your Practice: Life after Residency

Have you thought about life after residency? What concerns you the most?

Assignment: Review the articles in the Session Folder. What type of practice do you envision and why? What are your long-term career goals?

Combined Session with POM 3:

Students in POM 3 during their 7th session will be discussing “Types of Practice.” Senior medical students can provide some great insight for junior medical students in their review of the various types of medical practices in addition to the panel discussion. Please consider making recommendations on planning for senior year (i.e. electives, interviews, etc...) if time permits.

Goal: To expose students to additional specialties and types of practice they may not have considered.

Objective: Students will review different practice settings and reflect on their own specialty choice.

Reference: <https://www.aamc.org/cim/specialty/exploreoption/list/>

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