Practice Gaps in Dermatology: What has been identified, and how practice gaps are impacting dermatology training in the US

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Practice Gaps in Dermatology

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Objectives

- Define a practice gap
- Identify practice gaps in the dermatology literature
- Describe the impact of practice gap commentaries

What is a Practice Gap?

- The gap between what the medical professional is doing or accomplishing (current reality) compared to what is or should be achieved based on best available evidence or professional knowledge

Practice Gap

- Practice gaps can be found in each of the six competency areas of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)
  - Patient care
  - Medical knowledge
  - Practice-based learning and improvement
  - Interpersonal and communication skills
  - Professionalism
  - Systems-based practice
- In dermatology, medical knowledge and patient care skills are generally categorized
  - Medical Dermatology, Pediatric Dermatology, Procedural Dermatology, and Dermatopathology

Are you familiar with the Practice Gaps section in the Archives of Dermatology?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Uncertain

Disclosure

- I, Kristina M. Britton, MD, have no relevant financial interests, commercial affiliation or relationships with any products or services discussed in this presentation.
Do you regularly review the Practice Gap section in the Archives of Dermatology?

1. Always 20%
2. Usually 20%
3. Sometimes 20%
4. Rarely 20%
5. Never 20%

Archives of Dermatology Practice Gap Section

- Dermatology Practice Gap (DPG) section in the Archives of Dermatology was launched in 2010
- Purpose of the DPG section
  - Highlight gaps in dermatologist knowledge, competence, performance, or patient outcomes
  - To suggest methods to close these gaps

- Practice Gap commentaries are designed to
  - Trigger introspection by the practitioner
  - Stimulate discussion among colleagues
  - Launch practice gap-closing improvement activities
  - Stimulate more research to support or refute the gap discussed

- During the first 15 months of publication, 45 Practice Gap commentaries were published

Practice Gap Examples

- Failure to recognize and manage patients with DRESS
- Failure to submit adequate biopsy specimens to dermatopathologists
- Underutilization of prophylaxis for osteoporosis in patients on long-term glucocorticoid therapy
- Failure to counsel psoriasis patients against smoking and alcohol intake
- Failure to use dermoscopy in hair disorders

Attitudes and Impact of DPGs

- What are the attitudes surrounding the DPGs?
- What impact have Practice Gap commentaries had on dermatologists?
  - Practice changes?
  - Quality improvement projects?
  - Research projects?
DPGs Survey

- Dermatology Program Directors
- On-line survey consisting of 17 questions
- Survey assessed
  - Basic program demographic data
  - Reported journal activity
  - Department actions taken as a direct result of DPGs

DPGs Survey

Demographics

- 48 of the 112 Dermatology Program Directors responded (43%)
- Geographic distribution
  - Northeast
  - Midwest
  - South
  - West
- Over 50% of responding programs had more than 7 residents in their program

DPGs Survey

Results

- 96% regularly reviewed Archives of Dermatology during Journal Club
- 60% of Journal Club leaders familiar with DPG section
- 56% at least sometimes discuss Practice Gap commentaries

DPGs Survey

Results

- Typical Practice Gap discussion
  - Is the gap valid and relevant to our patient population?
  - What can be done to close the gap?
  - Is there something that we should be doing differently in practice?

Have you ever changed your practice as a direct result of any Archives of Dermatology Practice Gap commentary?

1. Yes
2. No
3. I have never read a Practice Gap commentary

70% are identifying practice gaps in articles from other journals
15% of respondents reported that they had changed their practice

Examples of practice changes:
- Looking for lichen sclerosis in morphea patients
- More thorough melanoma screening in skin of color patients
- Vitamin D/calcium review in patients on prednisone

4% of respondents reported a research project

8% of respondents reported a quality improvement project:
- Modifying the ROS for isotretinoin to include questions pertaining to inflammatory bowel disease
- Improving non-English speaking patient education material
- Addressing bone protection in patients taking prednisone

Medicine is heading toward an era of mandating patient-centered quality outcomes

Practice Gap commentaries are discussed during Journal Club activities.

Practice Gap commentaries can serve as a tool to identify gaps in your practice and to initiate quality improvement projects to help close those gaps.