2013
CAP Policy Meeting
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GME and the Future of the Pathologist Workforce

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CAP's Integrated Workforce Model

- Methods
- Results
- Implications
Methods: Policy Questions

• Will we have the right number of pathologists in the U.S. to meet future patient needs?

• What federal government policies might affect this situation?
Methods: Model Development

- Decision to look at 20-year time frame
- Recognizing it may take a decade to initiate workforce changes through changes in GME
CAP's Integrated Workforce Model

- Developed over a two-year period:
  - Comprehensive
  - Flexible
  - Evidence-based
  - Interactive spreadsheet model
CAP’s Integrated Workforce Model: Modeling Supply

- Current supply of pathologists
- Plus: Additions to Workforce
- Minus: Separations from Workforce
- Adjusted for: Working Hours by Age, Gender

FTE Supply of Pathologists
CAP’s Integrated Workforce Model: Modeling Demand

- Disease Incidence
- Population Demographics
- Sub-specialization
- New technologies
- Role of Informatics

Demand for Pathology Services
CAP's Integrated Workforce Model

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- Results
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Results

Most important findings:

- An imminent pathologist shortage
- Without increased supply input (pathologists in training), patients and their clinicians will experience potentially disruptive changes in current patterns of practice
Many pathologists are approaching retirement age.

Age and Gender Distribution of Pathologists in the US, 2009

AMA - Physician Characteristics and Distribution in the US, 2010 Edition
Pathology Residency Programs and Positions from 1926 to 2013

Pathology Residency Programs
1926 - 2010

143 in 2013
2372 in 2013

# of Programs

# of Positions
"Retirement Cliff" is coming, but residency slots remain constant.
Results

A cumulatively significant gap in pathologist supply

Yearly Net Changes to Pathology Workforce

2010  2014  2019  2024  2030

Results

Supply Gap, 2014-2030

FTE Pathologists

Supply
Demand

Supply Gap, 2014-2030
Results

Other factors have relatively limited impact

• Use of Pathologists’ Assistants
  o Already in equilibrium

• New Technologies and Roles
  o Possibly in jeopardy...
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Implications for Today’s Pathologists

A substantial shortage of pathologists could:

• Impair patient access to needed care
• Prevent pathology from leading in emerging areas:
  • Informatics
  • Genomic Medicine
  • New delivery systems (i.e., coordinated care)
• Thereby leaving it to others to take on roles that fit best for pathology
Policy Implications

• Policy makers need to have current data to assess and address specific needs across specialties

• Pathology extenders are important—but not enough to meet future pathologist workforce needs

• GME funding should be increased—not cut—to address shortage areas
CAP is fighting for:

- Funding the National Health Care Workforce Commission
- Increased GME funding that allows full funding of all pathology residency positions
- Increased visibility, so pathologists are "at the table" when healthcare workforce issues are addressed
CAP is fighting against:

- More cuts to GME
- GME cuts are part of nearly all budget deficit packages