



Meeting RRC Requirements through FPIN Membership

The Residency Review Committee's Special Requirements for Family Medicine specifically state that residents must participate in scholarly activity. The following six points spell out how programs should ensure that the scholarly activities occur. Joining FPIN and creating a forum for resident HelpDesk Answer (HDA) and/or eMedRef writing fulfills all of these requirements.

1. All residents must actively participate in scientific inquiry, either through direct participation in research or undertaking scholarly projects.

HDAs and eMedRef topics are rigorous academic projects that require a resident to generate new knowledge by reviewing and synthesizing the best research available on a specific clinical question.

2. Formal instruction and practical experience must assure that each resident develops and demonstrates skills in locating sources of scientific data pertinent to the care of patients, analyzing the appropriateness of research design and statistical methods, obtaining information about diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness, and applying evidence from pertinent clinical studies to patient care.

The specific tasks of writing an HDA include selecting or forming a clinical question, performing a focused literature search, grading the resulting evidence, synthesizing information about magnitude of effect, and forming a clinical recommendation. Mentoring a resident through the process of writing an HDA provides a perfect forum for teaching and evaluating these skills.

3. Each program must provide supervised experiences for all residents in scholarly activities such as research, presentations at national, regional, state, or local professional meetings, or presentation and/or publication of review articles and case presentations.

Joining FPIN assures that both residents and faculty in the training program have access to academic projects that meet their skill and interest level (options include HDAs, eMedRef, Clinical Inquiries, and PURLs.) With a qualified mentor/co-author, the HDA and eMedRef projects are well-suited to residents with little or no prior research training.

4. Residents must also have guided experiences in the application of emerging clinical knowledge applicable to their own patient panels. The training environment must be in compliance with accepted evidence-based practices.

Writing HDAs brings new knowledge into the training program. Questions that are chosen are ideally issues in the resident's own patient panel and the answer should have immediate clinical application for the resident author. In an atmosphere where many providers are writing HDAs (or other FPIN projects), evidence-based medicine is valued, modeled, discussed, and applied.

5. The program must provide a supervised, ongoing forum in which residents explore and analyze emerging scientific evidence pertinent to the practice of family medicine.

Journal club is a perfect format for resident HDA and eMedRef authors to share and critique each other's work.

6. The sponsoring institution and program should allocate adequate educational resources to facilitate resident involvement in scholarly activities.

Joining FPIN is an efficient use of program resources, providing access to a proven infrastructure of support for resident scholarship and publication.