ME/CFS Undergraduate Medical Education Curriculum

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Background of ME/CFS Medical School Curriculum

• Frank H. Netter MD School of Medicine (donation from the anatomist estate)
• Launched in 2013—first graduated class of 2017
• ALL clinical training in the community—ambulatory and inpatient—NO faculty practice, no onsite “University” medical center.
• Class size 90–95/year all students rotate through ME/CFS education
• My role: Chairman of Dept. of Family Medicine
• ME/CFS curriculum launched with M1, M2 years 2019, M3 year 2020. Now rolling with each class every year.
• No barriers encountered-did NOT go thru Curriculum Committee on Oversight (CCO). Programmatic content thru other curricular departments.
## Curriculum Topics for Each Class Year

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Year</th>
<th>Curriculum Slot</th>
<th>Method</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Introduction to Patients and Families</td>
<td>Include ME/CFS patient and family</td>
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<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Objective Structured Clinical Exam</td>
<td>Include ME/CFS in differential diagnosis</td>
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<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>Primary Care Clinical Rotation</td>
<td>Didactic/CME</td>
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<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td>Funded “Away” Rotation at ME/CFS Clinic</td>
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Experience of M1 Students

M1 experience focused on a Collaborative classroom event preceded by Patient and Family personal story. Intent is clearly to humanize, for the students, the experience of living with ME/CFS.

Paradoxically, medical education often de-emphasizes the patient centeredness focus once the clinical training begins.
M2 CLINICAL YEAR EMPHASIZES DEDUCTIVE CLINICAL REASONING, HYPOTHESIS DRIVEN
M3 Third Year medical student ME/CFS exposure
Occurs during the Primary Care clinical rotation
NOW MORE THAN EVER

BE A DETECTIVE
BE A CLINICIAN
DON’T BE AN EYE-ROLLER!!
The Post COVID-19 Tsunami is Coming
Number of Clinicians Seen Before Dx of ME/CFS

- 1-4 doctors.................. 679 .............. 58%
- 5-9 doctors.................. 336 .............. 28%
- 10-15 doctors.............. 110 .............. 9%
- 16-20 doctors.............. 34 .............. 3%
- More than 20............... 53 .............. 4%
Say It Again: NOT a Psychiatric Disease and NOT a Disease of Deconditioning

- “Just go out and exercise” = NO
- “Just get Cognitive Behavioral Therapy” = NO
- “Just get Graded Exercise Therapy” = NO
- Self Pacing = YES

Never Forget—Post Exertional Malaise
“Listen to your patient, they are telling you the diagnosis.” –William Osler

- History history history—in these patients the HPI, the PMH, and the ROS really are the CC.
- Think BIG, Cast a WIDE Net, BE A DETECTIVE
M4-Fourth year undergraduate medical

Fully funded “away” rotation at ME/CFS Center of Excellence (i.e., Bateman Home Center, Salt lake City Utah)