

Workshop 5

Enhancing Research Competences

Modern medical curricula are focussed on teaching “doctor – patient – illness relationships”. Vertical and horizontal integration of topics is first demand, clinic & patient is placed in the centre of teaching efforts.

However, in the end of this reform process the medical student

- never had the chance to dip in classical fields like pathology, cell biology, microbiology etc.,
- never experienced how to read a scientific paper,
- never participated in research,
- never composed a scientific poster.

As a consequence the future medical doctor may become uncritical consumer of “scientific” information.

Questions:

- Are medical students willing to spend time in the lab? How many months?
- Does a future GP “understand” medical science?
- Is continuing medical education possible without some education in science?
- Are medical faculties prepared to attract students in science programs?
Financially (stipendium for students) as well as by “true” mentorship and good equipment?
- Should future medical science be done mainly by
biologists/chemists/biochemists? Where is the place for medical doctors?

At present medical students have the following possibilities:

1. Get MD with final exam.
2. Perform some research in the evenings and weekends in parallel to medical studies under good or bad mentorship.
3. “Elective research period” for fulltime research under good mentorship.
4. “Elective research period” after final exams.

Proposals:

- Research electives with clearly structured programs.
- Graduiertenkollegs/Graduate Schools/ Research Training Groups providing clear research topic, accompanying educational program, stipends/scholarships, evaluation of students and teachers, cooperation between medical students/biochemists etc. Minimum time ca. 9 months.

PS

Medical Science is fun, excitement, challenge, discovery and future health.