Dermatology Series: Disparities in the Dermatology Workforce 2.1

Understanding Perceived Barriers of Minority Medical Students Pursuing a Career in Dermatology: A survey was sent out to medical students to understand the lack of diversity and barriers to applying to dermatology residency.

**POPULATION STATISTICS**

- **African American**
  - General population: 12.8%
  - Dermatologists: < 5%
- **Hispanic**
  - General population: 16.3%
  - Dermatologists: < 5%

**STUDY DESIGN**

- This survey of medical students used a Likert scale to assess factors important to applying to dermatology.
  - 1 = not important
  - 5 = very important
- Accessed by 242 students and completed by 155 students (80% school response rate, 64% student response rate)
- 15.5% of respondents were Black, 9% were Hispanic, 11% identified as LGBTQIA, 52% had a childhood household income ≤ $100,000

**BARRIERS TO A CAREER IN DERMATOLOGY**

- **For all participants, most important cited factors included:**
  - Step 1 scores, clinical grades, and risk of not matching
- **For low-income and minority participants, highly-ranked factors included:**
  - Lack of diversity in dermatology
  - Negative perceptions of minority students by programs
  - Socioeconomic barriers (lack of loan forgiveness)
  - Accessibility to mentors (especially with whom the student can identify)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Actively recruit and mentor students of all backgrounds
- Increase minority students’ exposure to dermatology in the curriculum, provide research opportunities and reduce the cost of away rotations by offering stipends

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*Smart DR. Physician Characteristics and Distribution in the U.S. Chicago, IL: American Medical Association; 2009.*