

# RESIDENT RESOURCE CENTER

- Patients' Perspectives of Dermatology Residents
- Setting a Practice Apart

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## Evaluating a Patient's Perspective of Dermatology Residents Via a Short Survey

By Emily Kollmann, DO and David Cleaver, DO

Resident physicians are common in many hospitals and doctor's offices today, but how do patients feel about seeing a resident physician or a medical student? Currently there is nothing in the literature discussing the patient's perspective of resident physicians. To find out, we created a brief patient survey to assess patient feelings toward dermatology resident physicians.

Many of the allopathic residency programs have evaluations for patients to assess the residents and the care they provide, but most osteopathic residency programs do not. With the pending Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and American Osteopathic Association (AOA) merger, evaluations will need to be created. We hope this brief survey can be used by our program and other residency programs in the future.

### METHODS

Institutional Review Board approval was granted from the A.T. Still University of Health Sciences IRB. Patients were asked by the medical assistant if they want to participate in a five-question survey about the resident physician who assisted in their care that day. Patients agreed or declined, and no compensation was provided. The study was completed after two days when all of the resident physicians were present.

The patients were asked if they strongly disagreed, disagreed, were neutral, agreed, or strongly agreed with a series of five statements. The five statements included in the questionnaire included:

1. I felt comfortable seeing a resident physician today.
2. The resident was professional.
3. I was satisfied with the exam or the procedure today.
4. I have confidence in the resident's care.
5. I was satisfied with the care I received by the resident today.



### RESULTS

We gathered 121 responses during the two-day period that all of the resident physicians were in clinic. We found that overall patients were very pleased with the quality of the resident's care. The exact numbers appear in Table 1.

### DISCUSSION

Our primary goal was to create a user-friendly, versatile survey as we move toward ACGME accreditation and make

TABLE 1

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
I felt comfortable seeing a resident physician today.	1	0	0	22	98
The resident was professional.	1	0	0	10	110
I was satisfied with the exam or the procedure today.	1	0	0	15	105
I have confidence in the resident's care.	1	0	0	18	102
I was satisfied with the care I received by the resident today.	1	0	0	14	106

## How to Differentiate A Dermatology Practice

Most dermatologists practice in a very competitive environment, observes Gary Goldenberg, MD. In an interview for Practice Path MD, he talks about how he planned to differentiate his new practice, opened this year.

"The way I thought conceptually about differentiating myself from other practices in the area and in general is really with personalized customized care... Every patient is treated differently because every patient is different," Dr. Goldenberg says.



Learn more about Dr. Goldenberg's approach and his emphasis on availability to patients.

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it available for other residencies. Our secondary objective was to gauge the patient's perspective of our resident physicians and make appropriate changes if necessary.

We felt the survey was an appropriate length to gain the information we sought without burdening patients or hindering participation. In fact, we had nearly a 100 percent participation rate among the patients asked to participate.

Both the patient's and the attending physician's opinion of a resident is important. Patient opinions support the growth of a resident personally and professionally.

Overall the patients were very pleased with the resident physicians and their care. Of the 121 patients who participated, all but one agreed or strongly agreed to our statements. In fact, a majority strongly agreed. The one patient who strongly disagreed could have been excluded as an outlier. This patient may not have read the statements thoroughly and instead circled the wrong answer.

This feedback provides residents with self-reflection that can improve their bedside manner and other important characteristics such as professionalism. ■

*The authors have no relevant disclosures.*

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### CALLING ALL RESIDENTS!

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