

[P02.145] Attitudes toward Neurology in Undergraduate Students Who Will Be Applying to Medical School

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OBJECTIVE: Assess attitudes of pre-medical college students toward Neurology **BACKGROUND:** With a growing geriatric population highly susceptible to Neurologic disease and a shortage of Neurologists throughout the United States and Europe, it will be increasingly important to attract students to Neurology. While prior studies have assessed attitudes of medical students toward adult neurology, no studies have addressed this issue for college students planning to apply to medical school.

DESIGN/METHODS: We surveyed pre-medical college students from seven universities throughout the United States (5 Florida, 1 NY, 1 NJ). A 52-item web-based questionnaire assessed attitudes toward Neurology when compared to other disciplines of medicine via 5-point Likert scale, and students ranked factors most influential in choosing or excluding Neurology as a career choice. **RESULTS:** Perceived most difficult disciplines of medicine: Surgery (4.78/5), Neurology (4.49/5), Cardiology (4.29/5). Students were most interested in Neurology due to understanding disease mechanisms (68.8%) and personal reward (62.5%), and least interested due to lifestyle/hours (56.3%) and large geriatric population (50%). 30% were interested in practicing Neurology in the future. 68.6% of students had taken a Neuroscience class: 75% felt the class was well taught, 45.5% felt the class was difficult, and 72.2% found the class interesting or enjoyable. 32% of students had a friend/family member with a neurologic disorder. 15.7% had family working in the field of neuroscience, psychology, or psychiatry. 10.3% were aware of the AAN-sponsored College Student Interest Group in Neurology (Co-SIGN) at their school. **CONCLUSIONS/RELEVANCE:** While interest in Neurology is high in college students, prior studies have shown a much lower rate of interest in Neurology by senior medical students. Identification of factors contributing to the loss of interest in Neurology during the early years of medical school is the first step toward attracting junior medical students to the field. Further study is warranted on how to address this issue.

Category - Neurologic Education

SubCategory - Other