

## BACKGROUND

- Medical school can be isolating and lead to higher levels of anxiety, depression, and burnout <sup>(1-4)</sup>
- The need to prioritize wellness and build burnout-fighting strategies early in the medical career is crucial yet challenging among all other responsibilities, including finding direction to a specialty of choice <sup>(3-4)</sup>
- Mentorship relationships and exercise can positively affect wellness for medical trainees. <sup>(5-6)</sup>
- The Health and Wellness committee created a program that facilitates student and faculty health while simultaneously fostering connection through the Walk with a Doc program
- During this initiative, students walk around campus with a faculty member and peer group, discussing questions about the medical field
- To our knowledge, there are no current studies that explore a similar mentorship program

## METHODS

- All pre-clerkship students had the option to participate in Walk with a Doc.
- The program creates a casual environment which links exercise and mentorship - students and faculty participate in a 30 minute walk around the medical campus
- Students from the health and wellness taskforce reach out to interested faculty who provide 1-2 half hour times of availability. Students then post available times for the classes. Typically 3-4 students sign up for each spot
- Original inspiration for this program was taken from a community-based walk-with-a-doc program for patients and adapted to an academic setting
- Students can sign up for a walks based on their individual specialty of interest
- Students and faculty participants were sent anonymous, optional surveys
- This is an ongoing study with questions developed by WSUSOM faculty and students from the health and wellness taskforce, and brief results based on initial responses
- The survey includes questions similar to those sent annually on the Medical Student Check In Survey as well as questions about effective use of time, delivery of information, and how it compares to traditional office-based mentorship meetings

## AIMS

The aim of this study is to explore:

- ✓ How students and faculty feel Walk with a Doc has impacted their personal wellness
- ✓ If it was an effective way to gather/deliver information
- ✓ How Walk with a Doc compares to a more traditional mentorship structure

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

- This project is currently in its data collection phase, with plans for future data analysis
- Preliminary results show 100% of student responders thought Walk with a Doc was a valuable use of their time and would participate in the program again



The experience was less formal and allowed us to openly ask questions related to our field of interest. It allowed the doctors to be more candid and allowed for a deeper connection to be made beyond the medical school program.

Seemed very casual and more enjoyable.

Very light, fun and informative walk. Way better than I even expected honestly.

## DISCUSSION

- Through analysis of the results we hope to gain a better understanding of the impact of this wellness initiative on both student and faculty participants, including:
  - Feeling of support
  - Connection to work
  - Learning information about medical field
  - Comparison to traditional office-based model
- If it proves to be a successful way to build mentorship relationships and learn about medical fields, it adds a mentorship structure during which both students and faculty participate together in self-care and exercise

## CONCLUSIONS

- This wellness initiative offers an additional form of mentorship to traditional office based settings that has the possibility of providing a welcoming atmosphere while combining mentorship with outdoor exercise
- Results from this study may help us understand the impact of a new mentorship setting structure on both students and faculty and guide future wellness initiatives
- The format of this initiative may be easily adapted in other schools
- Future directions include comparing indoor to outdoor walks, expanding to clerkship student groups, and including residents as mentors as part of the effort to further expand this initiative

## REFERENCES

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