



BY JARROD SHAPIRO, DPM

Reinvigoration with Resident Training

Becoming a residency director is a win-win situation.

Practice Perfect is a continuing every-issue column in which Dr. Shapiro offers his unique personal perspective on the ins and outs of running a podiatric practice.

For those of you in practice and not involved with resident education, it's time to convince you why it's in your best interest to join those working in the education field.

We Need Your Help!

First, "We need you!" Let's be honest and tell you that education is very hard work. It takes very long hours to create the best experiences for trainees. The direct teaching part (lectures, workshops, journal clubs, etc.) is the easy part. That's fun. Seeing the light of understanding and interest in a student's or resident's eye is the reason you teach. Watching residents go from novices in their first year to independent podiatrists in their third is simply the most rewarding aspect.

But on the flip side, the single hardest thing to do is build relationships and new rotation opportunities for them. It's often a grueling process that requires traveling, lots of meetings, tons of administrative work that makes one's hair grey, and the need to deal with personalities and egos of all sorts. Podiatrists can be tough nuts to crack! We have our opinions, our needs and wants, and may desire something that is at odds with a resident's needs for education. It isn't easy to balance everyone's needs.

Here's where you come in. None of the educators can do their jobs without your help. It would be liter-



ally impossible to have a residency program without the involvement and dedication of so many clinicians and healthcare institutions. Without having a variety of surgeons and their patient cases, residents would not have the surgical experiences to be adequately trained. Without the involvement of the various medical attendings, residents wouldn't have a behavioral health rotation, or a musculoskeletal MRI rotation, or a PM&R rotation, among others. Programs exist solely on the beneficence of those individuals who agree to work with trainees. They take the time to teach, to let residents scrub in to their cases, and to mentor. For those of you who help in this manner, know that you are valued.

Besides directly teaching, the relationships with attendings are important for another reason: building opportunities. For example, several

of the rotations where my residents do literally hundreds to thousands of surgical cases, are in existence because colleagues knew someone who knew someone who was interested in teaching. Some of these rotations would otherwise not exist. Your involvement with a residency program will only make that program better.

Being Involved with Education Can Help You!

There are lots of benefits to being involved with a residency program. Let's run through a few.

1) Keeping it Fresh—Working with young, vibrant, interested residents keeps you young and sharp. Their passion is invigorating. Looking through their eyes makes you see the world just a little differently.

2) Staying Current—Being in-

Continued on page 44

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Resident Training (from page 43)

volved with residents motivates us to stay current. What better way to learn than to teach!

3) Indirect Monetary Profits—Having a resident involved in your practice can actually be profitable. For example, having a resident can potentially move your surgical schedule along faster. With the right set-up, you can scrub out of a case and have the resident close, while you dictate or get the next patient ready. That may allow for more cases to be scheduled in a day. In some cases, residents can help in the clinic. There is a natural benefit that occurs when an experienced, well-trained resident helps you.

4) Future Associates and Partners—Where is your next associate or partner going to come from? When your practice grows, and you want to make more money, where are you going to find that person to help make that happen? They don't grow on trees.

If you're not currently involved with a residency, know that you're very badly needed. These programs rely on you for their very existence. You have the power to help them get better and grow. Residency directors can't do it on their own. They need your help. And you need their help too. There is no better mutually beneficial relationship in medicine than the professional community working together with the education community. Let's all help each other grow. Join in. Call your local residency director and take the step. You won't regret it. **PM**

Dr. Shapiro is editor of PRESENT Practice Perfect. He joined the faculty of Western University of Health Sciences, College of Podiatric Medicine, Pomona, CA in 2010