Development and implementation of a clinical lipidology subspecialty program for healthcare professionals

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Background

The University of South Alabama (USA) College of Nursing (CON) identified a need to develop a clinical lipidology subspecialty program to formally prepare healthcare professionals in the clinical lipidology content area. Interprofessional students, professions, and the community of interest will benefit from this addition to the curriculum at the USACON. There was no evidence of a clinical lipidology program offered on a college campus nationwide.

Purpose

The purpose is to describe the process used to develop the clinical lipidology subspecialty program to provide healthcare professionals with specialized clinical knowledge to provide culturally competent care to patients and families with complex dyslipidemia and related cardiometabolic conditions; therefore, improving health outcomes on a local, regional, and national level.

Methods

Program objectives were developed based on the National Lipid Association Core Curriculum in Clinical Lipidology and the areas of the curriculum the practice management committee consider appropriate for CLS candidates. The Accreditation Council for Clinical Lipidology (ACCL) was contacted to ensure coursework would meet the requirements for continuing education requirement for candidates to sit for the certifying exam. Once approval from the ACCL was given, coursework was developed and students enrolled in the program. Topics incorporated into the coursework include: atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease and coronary artery disease, preventive cardiology, lifestyle management of dyslipidemias, pharmacologic management of dyslipidemias, evidence supporting dyslipidemia treatment guidelines, metabolic syndrome, vascular biology, advanced lipoprotein metabolism, diabetic dyslipidemia, and atherosclerosis imaging.

Results

Students from various specialty areas have enrolled in the program and shown an interest in the CLS role.

Conclusions

The implementation of the clinical lipidology subspecialty program offered within a formal academic unit will increase the number of healthcare with specific clinical knowledge providers to provide care to patients and families with complex dyslipidemia and related cardiometabolic conditions.

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