

THE FACTORS OF AN INDIANA BACKGROUND THAT INFLUENCE PRACTICE LOCATION CHOICE OF RESIDENCY AND FELLOWSHIP GRADUATES

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A shortage and unequal distribution of health care professionals in Indiana is increasingly restricting access to quality medical care for Indiana residents. There is a limited amount of research on the factors that predominate when residency and fellowship graduates choose their practice location. This project looks at the different factors affecting graduates' choices of practice location, while specifically focusing on the connection of hometown, high school, college, and medical school locations to their decisions to practice in Indiana. Surveys were completed by 264 of the 383 graduating residents and fellows of the graduate medical education programs at Indiana University School of Medicine during the exit interview process, yielding a response rate of 69%. The graduates responded to questions concerning demographic characteristics, assessment of their training, plans after graduation, intended practice location, and reasons for choosing their practice location. The largest contributor to choosing to practice in Indiana was graduating from a medical school in Indiana (80.6%). Having an Indiana hometown was the least contributing factor (76.1%), but the combination of hometown and medical school was the highest contributing factor (82.1%) to choosing to practice in Indiana. The top three reasons to stay in Indiana given by respondents who graduated from an Indiana medical school were "met my professional needs or preferences" (88.0%), "liked the people" (86.0%), and "met my personal needs or preferences" (76.0%). Also, factors concerning the needs of their spouse and family were only moderately important. This project's data may assist admission committees when choosing graduates for their residency programs. By admitting more graduates who have deeper connections to Indiana, the number of health professionals in Indiana may increase, thus allowing more of Indiana's residents to have access to quality health care.

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