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Introduction

- Aesculapians is an **honor society** of Wayne State University medical students that has been dedicated to **service, community outreach, and social justice advocacy in Detroit** for the past 50 years.
- Each year, AHS elects a **community partner of the year (CPOTY)** that aligns with our mission of supporting to the Detroit community through grassroots organizations and a bidirectional participatory framework.
- Throughout each annual partnership, members **volunteer with and fundraise for** the CPOTY in order to tangibly support their mission.
- AHS' dedication to learning and service prepares us to **support our mission of improving Detroit**, as well as allows us to deepen our understanding of the community's needs and enhances our professional development.
- Our hypothesis is that direct involvement in community outreach allows AHS members to **better understand social determinants of health within the metropolitan Detroit area**, enhancing their medical education and developing their professional identities.

Methods

- A **pre-survey** is distributed to all AHS members to determine a baseline for each student's perceptions of their own professional development, personal growth, and understanding of community needs.
- A **post-survey** is provided to AHS members after each volunteer experience throughout the year to assess for changes in their perception of their professional development, personal growth, and understanding of community needs.
- The surveys utilize a **Likert Scale** to quantify the perceptions of AHS members.
- A **t-test** is performed to discern a mean difference across categories and to determine the significance of any reported changes over time.
- Surveys are **emailed and completed anonymously**.

Results

Participant Data

- A total of n=29 students completed the pre-survey
 - M2, n=5
 - M3, n=13
 - M4, n = 10
 - MD/PHD, n = 1
- Average time in Aesculapians, 1.5 years

Pre-Survey Results at a Glance

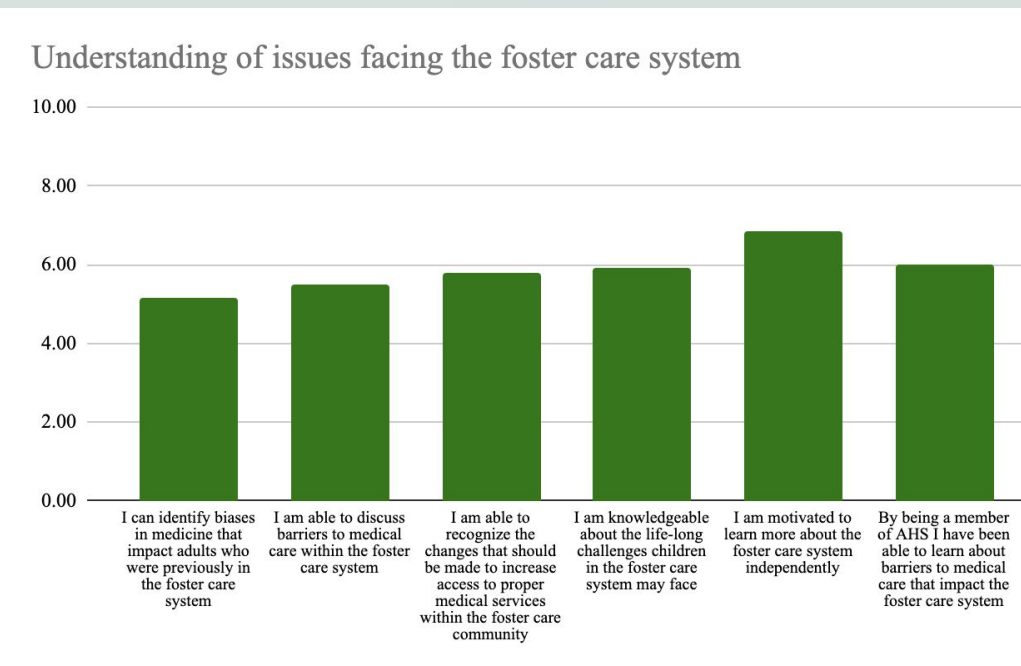


Figure 1. Results thus-far suggest that our participants have a moderate level of comfort with medical issues faced by patients in the foster-care system. We do, however, see a slightly higher level of motivation to learn about the foster care system despite this knowledge gap.

Figures 2 & 3. This pair of graphs demonstrate a bimodal distribution of responses in CPOTY-specific questions.

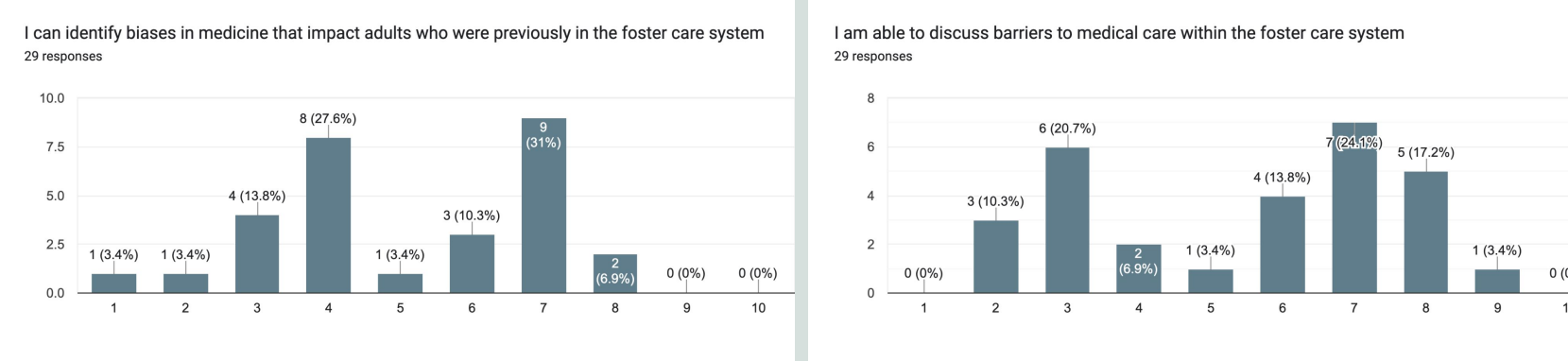
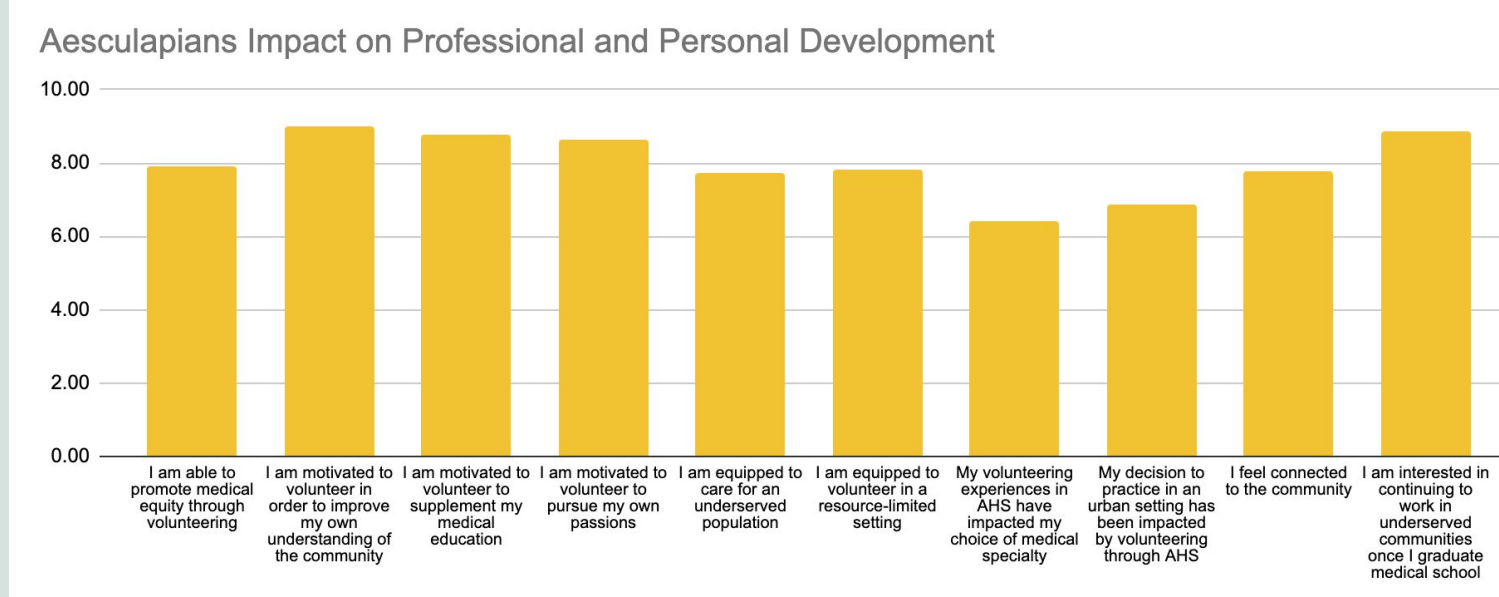


Figure 4. Graph demonstrating strong competency and comfort in the role of volunteering in their personal and professional development. Students feel that they are motivated and equipped to volunteer with their communities, and are interested in continuing this work in their future careers. Volunteering with AHS has a moderate effect on student specialty choice.



Discussion

- The activities that students participate in during medical school have a proven impact on their development of **professional interests, interest in future leadership roles, and future teaching positions**.¹
- Research has demonstrated that student-run clinic involvement **positively impacts retention of empathy** in those who volunteer.^{2,3}
- To determine how influential medical school experiences are on students, we quantified the impact that the unique nature of AHS has on its medical students' current development and future goals.
- This is the **first study** we have created to evaluate our internal efficacy at fulfilling this mission.
- The pre-survey was administered prior to any engagement in CPOTY volunteering; therefore, the **results demonstrating only moderate understanding are to be expected**.
- Results demonstrate that community outreach has a **strong impact on professional identity formation** as well as **preparedness** to work in similar communities in the future.
- With this data, we hope to:
 - Highlight our organization's work to those who are unfamiliar
 - Inform future practices of our organization and continue to optimize
 - Demonstrate the importance of meaningful community experiences in supporting graduate medical education, professional development, and professional identity
- Limitations to this study include **response bias and social desirability bias**. Medical students have a high degree of health literacy and may not want to seem "inadequate" in specific areas, which may inflate their self-assessed scores. This bias may also be further exacerbated due to the nature of AHS.

Conclusion

Aim: To quantify the impact of longitudinal volunteering on medical student professional development and the effects of AHS on medical education.

Impact: By understanding how longitudinal volunteering affects medical students professional development, we can further **optimize the process and outcomes of AHS**. Additionally we hope to **spread awareness about the positive influence that AHS has on both students and the community**, so that other medical schools may consider incorporating a similar organization.

References

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