Introduction

- White coat ceremonies (WCC) mark transitions into medicine
- Begins professional identity formation as a physician
- Residency focused WCCs not common

Methods

- Aurora Health Care Family Medicine Residency Program (FMRP)
- 90-min ceremony highlights core FM specialty values via:
  - Faculty narratives
  - History of the white coat and specialty of FM
  - Concludes with new residents "coated" by mentor

Survey Results & Text Analysis

- Occurrence
  - FMRP White Coat Ceremony annual event 2009 to present
- Participation
  - New interns, all other residents, faculty (highly encouraged)
  - Attendance increased annually from 30 (2009) to 79 (2014) and 97 (2015)
    due to wider audience (clinical staff, hospital and health system leaders)
- E-Survey
  - 60% Response Rate (58/97): 41% residents; 24% FM faculty; 27% FM Clinic Staff; 8% other (GME staff, academic/hospital leaders)
  - 79% rated WCC as an "important transition ceremony for our residency program"
  - Perceived as reaffirming FM values for faculty/staff
  - Text analysis of narrative responses: over 35 most frequent used words; larger the word more frequent its use

Results: Long Term How to Start WCC

- Key action steps for starting residency WCC yielded common features associated with any initiative
  - Requires leaders and champions
  - Advanced planning - schedules, facilities, budget
  - Communication regarding the importance of marking transition events
  - Change management

WCC Leaders Recs on How to Start a Residency Focused WCC

- Culture change strategy: Consider the white coat ceremony as a strategy to reaffirm the values and culture of your specialty, clinic/hospital, and residency program for all team members.
- Continuum of Medical Education: Take advantage of opportunities to reaffirm and reinforce the articulated values and principles:
  - When medical students or other health professions trainees rotate
  - As a referent point when addressing concerns re: professional behavior
  - As core curriculum session/discussion on patient experience
  - During advisor meetings with residents
  - Residency/fellowship graduation ceremonies

Evaluation: 2 Data Sources

- 6 item E-survey of attendees: 3 demographic; 1 Likert and 2 narrative responses on what value and areas for improvement
- WCC leaders debriefed to determine WCC key elements

Results: Short Term How to Start WCC

WCC Leaders Recs on How to Start a Residency Focused WCC Short Term Action Items

- Identify WCC champions and convene planning group from amongst key program leaders, a friendly chief resident and an administrative staff member
- Identify the tenets/foundations of your specialty, emphasizing what is unique/differentiates your specialty from others
- Book date and facility on calendars; set agenda; confirm presenters (consider pairing it with an existing event)
- Extend invitations to key leaders of your organization/system (and they come)
  - Outline a budget including existing (e.g., white coats) and modest additional costs (e.g., pins, food)
  - Start talking about it — with faculty, staff, resident — emphasizing that it’s a solemn and joyful part of your residency program

Conclusions

- Residency WCC formally marks the transition from medical student to that of the physician
  - Designed to support new residents’ professional identity development by highlighting the history, ideals and values of their chosen specialty
  - Unanticipated outcome: Reaffirms faculty physicians’ specialty choice
- WCC elements change over time to reflect the evolving role of family physicians and the needs of the residency program
- Future study is needed on effects of the WCC longitudinally on curriculum, residents’ and faculty physicians’ professional identity development, and role (if any) of age, gender, and ethnicity

Citation: