



Key talking points for graduate medical education

- Explain what it takes to become a physician and encourage our nation's best and brightest students to pursue medical careers—becoming a physician requires a huge personal and financial commitment.
 - Upon graduation from an undergraduate institution, medical students then go through four years of medical school, which must then be supplemented by an additional residency training of three to nine years in order to specialize and become licensed to practice. This totals 11–20 years of additional schooling past high school.
 - As of 2014 the average medical student debt is \$176,348 with 40 percent graduating with debt balances of more than \$200,000 according to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).
- Highlight the current physician shortage crisis. The United States is facing a severe shortage of doctors, which is expected to get exponentially worse as the population continues to grow and our aging physician workforce moves toward retirement. **It is projected that by 2025 we will have up to 90,000 fewer physicians than the country needs.** While advances in technology and workflow will certainly make physicians more efficient over time, the need for more doctors is still larger than ever to take on the current challenges in the health care system.
- The American Medical Association supports legislation that would expand graduate medical education (GME) positions to address the physician shortage.
 - Resident Physician Shortage Reduction Act of 2015 (H.R. 2124/S. 1148) would create 15,000 new positions over five years
 - Creating Access to Residency Education (CARE) Act of 2015 (H.R. 1117) would establish \$25 million in matching grants to fund new positions in states with low ratios of residents
- Physicians are key members of America's workforce who contribute substantial benefits to the economy. On average physicians contribute **\$1.6 trillion dollars** in total economic impact per year. A physician contributes an average of \$90,449 dollars in state and federal tax revenue per year. Additionally, each physician supports an average of **13 jobs** in a community.
- Although medical schools have expanded to accommodate more students, **there is an insufficient number of residency training positions available due to inadequate funding for GME.** This means students may graduate from medical school and have nowhere to complete their training. In 2015 this happened to more than 400 U.S. graduates of MD programs.
- Without adequately funded residency training positions, students—especially those from diverse ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds—may be discouraged from pursuing a medical career, which has a major impact on patient access to care.
- Teaching hospitals make up 6 percent of hospitals but provide approximately 40 percent of hospital charity care. This is possible because residents provide care for 1 in 5 hospitalized patients, including our seniors, veterans and patients in underserved communities.
- **We are seeking additional champions in Congress as well as innovative solutions to help advance this critical issue, which will dramatically affect access to health care for the entire country.**