The Increasing Emphasis on Primary Care in Medical Education: “Be Careful What You Wish For”

Carol P. Herbert
Symposium on “Enhancing Quality Primary Care Through Research and Evidence in Hong Kong”
University of Hong Kong – November 2011
Policy makers

*Academic Institutions

Teaching

Research

Health Managers

Communities

*Health Professionals

Health Services based on community needs

C. Boelen, 2003
AFMC – Social Accountability : A Vision for Canadian Medical Schools

“[Medical schools have] the obligation to direct their education, research and service activities towards addressing the priority health concerns of the community, regions, and/or nation they have a mandate to serve. The priority health concerns are to be identified jointly by governments, health care organizations, health professionals and the public.” WHO, 1995
FMEC Recommendations

1. Address Individual and Community Needs*
2. Enhance Admissions Processes*
3. Build on the Scientific Basis of Medicine
4. Promote Prevention and Public Health
5. Address the Hidden Curriculum*
FMEC Recommendations

6. Diversify Learning Contexts*
7. Value Generalism*
8. Advance Inter- and Intra-Professional Practice
9. Adopt a Competency-Based and Flexible Approach
10. Foster Medical Leadership
FMEC Enabling Recommendations

A. Realign Accreditation Standards  
B. Build Capacity for Change  
C. Increase National Collaboration  
D. Improve the Use of Technology  
E. Enhance Faculty Development
Challenges/Unintended Consequences

- Insufficient resources in university primary care departments to handle teaching load and build research
- Promotion issues
- New community-based faculty may resist faculty development
Challenges/Unintended Consequences

- Social engineering may screen out disruptive innovators
- Learners may resist being ‘forced into’ primary care settings, given hidden curriculum
- Medical schools need to train specialists too!
Family Medicine departments and faculty are at risk of becoming the ‘drones’ of the medical school
Responding to the Challenges: Departments

- Recruit more teachers
- Expand interprofessional models
- Provide needs-based and accessible faculty development
- Reward research and scholarship
- Attend to ‘hidden curriculum’
Responding to the Challenge: Medical Schools

- Expand primary care academic workforce and resources
- Attend to hidden curriculum
- Confront prejudices/jealousy in other specialties
- Conduct educational research to ensure outcomes are being met