

Building a Pathway Program to Diversify the Pediatric Workforce

Recommendations to create a successful program

As children in the United States have become increasingly diverse, it is crucial for the pediatric workforce to reflect the diversity of their patients. Representation is essential in improving the care patients receive and requires intentional interventions along the pathway which could mean the push for diversity can start early. To meet the need of the healthcare system and populations being served interventions that help to increase the diversity of students who are aware of and prepared for careers in medicine are needed. Pathway programs that support those underrepresented in medicine (URiM) by helping to bridge gaps in knowledge and experience play a vital role in strengthening and diversifying the pathway to medicine. Increased availability of educational opportunities, experiential learning experiences and mentorship connections better inform and prepare students embarking on the journey to obtaining a medical degree.

The 5 topic areas identified below are important to consider when building your program and are key to program success. The tips in practice call out learnings and success from the Pathway Innovation Program that was supported pediatric focused aimed at increasing the number of URiM children and youth participation in these programs. Keep in mind these tips will not occur sequentially in the development of program goals, curriculum and implementation of activities. It is importance to consider and balance the highlighted tips throughout the progression of a program.



Navigating the Landscape

Research the local and national pathway programming landscape. Review and identify stakeholders currently implementing or supporting related initiatives at your institutions and other institutions. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, so build upon the existing work.

Building Your Team

Identify the core individuals who need to be involved to support this work, the roles each person will hold, and priorities to move your program's goals forward.



Engaging Your Stakeholders

Impactful programs engage stakeholders (e.g., community, academic institutions) involved from their inception and include co-created program goals and activities.

Engaging Your Participants

Maximize ways to engage participants and readily respond to feedback as positive student experiences are key to continued program engagement and success.



Sustaining Your Program

Incorporate adaptive and flexible programming that can account for levers such as funding and evaluation. Considering the ways such levers can impact your program helps to ensure program sustainability.

TOPIC 1



Navigating the Landscape

1. Consider the following questions when developing your program and doing your landscape analysis:
 - What are my program goals?
 - Who is my target audience (primary, secondary, undergraduate, medical school, and/or post-baccalaureate students)?
 - What activities should be included in my program and would benefit my target audience (e.g., mentorship, shadowing experiences, panels, presentations, experiential learning)?
 - Who is currently engaging my chosen target audience and is this a stakeholder I can collaborate with?
 - Are there existing programs, resources, and materials to engage my chosen target audience?
2. Identify what individuals can help support program activities.
 - Program directors
 - Faculty
 - Fellows
 - Residents
 - Medical students
 - Program evaluators
3. Share program details, ways to monitor progress and success of your program to obtain buy in from stakeholders.
4. Obtain clarity on roles from the individuals identified vital to the work prior to developing your program.



Tip: When examining identified gaps, discuss potential opportunities such as engaging with stakeholders outside your institution, as a way to address those issues.

TOPIC 2



Building Your Team

1. Identify who you want to be part of your team and the roles each individual will play.
2. Suggest the allocation of protected time to explore ongoing opportunities occurring and their own academic progress.
3. Provide resources that support individuals to balance their priorities as they engage in the work.
4. Consider the existing roles played by each member of your team. Those underrepresented in medicine are often called to serve on multiple committees, mentoring activities, and diversity program. It is important to create a plan to support and engage, as needed, those who express interest in being a part of the team.
5. Find time to keep record of the process and learnings as your team might change.

Tips in Practice: Pediatric Pathway Innovation Program grantees found that creating a program roadmap that outlines processes, logistics and learning, allows for continuity in their ongoing work as team members changed. Programs involving medical students and residents should incorporate time between outgoing and new project leads, to discuss and handoff deliverables. Keeping in mind program sustainability.

TOPIC 3



Engaging Your Stakeholders

1. Explore programs with local universities, primary and secondary schools that you can readily collaborate with.
2. Identify partners engaged in or looking to engage in opportunities raising awareness of pursuing medicine and/or more specifically pediatrics.

Tips in Practice: The Pediatric Community Advocacy Program (PCAP) collaborated with the Harvard Medical School Health Professions Recruitment & Exposure Program (HPREP) during their recruitment process to help publicize their program to URiM high school students.

3. Build your network and maintain relationships with key stakeholders. Finding stakeholders is just the beginning, one must try to engage with them in various ways throughout your program

Tips in Practice: The Pediatric Youth Immersion Camp of the Upstate (PYICU) program partnered with the Student National Medical Association Chapter at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine Greenville to support recruitment of medical students, collaborated throughout the program and invited a speaker to participate in their mentor symposium. This collaboration created alignment in securing a continuous pipeline for URiM students transitioning to Premed Pathways Programs, followed by enrollment at the school of medicine and pediatric residency.

4. Bring in and involve perspectives and experiences to strengthen your program.
5. Work with stakeholders to co-create program resources addressing the needs of your target student population.

Who can I collaborate with?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic institutions | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community based organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical organizations local chapters | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing pathway-focused organizations |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pediatric interest groups | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Volunteers |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical student affinity groups | |



Tip: When engaging community partners, be attentive to the existing structures, expertise, and programs of that community

TOPIC 4



Engaging Your Participants

1. Exposure

- Create experiential learning opportunities for participants intended to spark and reinforce interest in the field of pediatrics.

Tips in Practice: Engage youth and medical students in pediatric advocacy and project-based learning with an equity focus. This helps raise their awareness of health issues in their respective communities while also teaching medical student mentors about the impact pediatricians have on children's lives.

- Encourage accomplished URiM and non-URiM faculty to participate in talks at local high schools and historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Presentations like these can aid in the recruitment of students to their programs.
- Utilize social media platforms to promote program activities and disseminate learnings that can reach a larger audience.



Tip: Be sure to cultivate a supportive environment that promotes the recruitment of URiM trainees while minimizing the attrition of this group.

2. Mentorship

- Find advisors to be mentors as you create an engaging program for participants.
- It is important to incorporate adequate time for meaningful engagement between mentees and mentors for the duration of your program.

Tips in Practice: The students at Tour for Diversity in Medicine (T4D) Pediatric Mentoring Circles valued time spent with peers and faculty mentors in smaller group sessions, but often did not feel fully immersed due to the short, 1 hour timeframe. As a result, T4D is implementing multiple small-group sessions of at least 1 hour during the week and 2-3 hours on weekends, allowing for increased engagement in these group sessions.

- Use organizations like AAP and the Association of Pediatric Program Directors (APPD) to expand your mentor pool. This allows for more faculty participation in program curriculum development.
- Expand opportunities for medical students to mentor undergraduate and post-baccalaureate student communities.

3. Participant supporter network

- Identify individuals in the support network (e.g parents, pre-health advisors, extended family) of your program participants.
- Consider ways to engage this supporter network through program activities and shared resources.

TOPIC 5

Sustaining Your Program

1. Funding mechanisms

- Explore existing and upcoming funding sources.
- Conduct a needs assessment to determine what your program will need financially.
- Internal and external funding sources are a great way to support the development of your program.
- Consider working under the umbrella of a larger organization to keep your program financially sound.

Tips in Practice: The leadership team at the Career Help Advancement and Achievement Program (CHAMP) found that working under their Children's Foundation played an important financial support role.



Tip: Apply for federal and private grants! While they can support your program financially, they can also provide great publicity.

2. Evaluation Tools

- Use evaluation tools to assess the progress and impact of your program.
- Implement pre- and post-evaluation surveys to track participant feedback. This feedback will allow you to make necessary changes to your program design (e.g., curriculum) and/or logistical operations to ensure continuous improvement.

Tips in Practice: The Education, Leadership, and Mentorship (ELM) and CHAMP Programs used academic institutions as resources. Students assisted with the evaluation of their programs (e.g., engaging students pursuing degrees that emphasize program evaluation techniques).

Frequently ask and discuss the following questions:

- What are the needs and goals of this program?
- What resources are needed to continue this work?
- What does success look like?
- What aspects of the program are working well?
- What aspects of the program need to change?



Tip: You do not have to wait until the implementation phase to think of sustainability. It is never too early to brainstorm ways to make your program sustainable.

Resources

1. Kenya, S., Young, B., Vega, N., Bringuez-Sanchez, J., Reynolds, A., & Symes, S. (2019). Tips for Building a Pathway to Medicine for Underrepresented Minority Students. *Journal of Best Practices in Health Professions Diversity*, 12(2), 181–191. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26954208>
2. Merchant J.L, Omary MB. Underrepresentation of underrepresented minorities in academic medicine: the need to enhance the pipeline and the pipe. *Gastroenterology*. 2010;138(1):19-26.e263. doi:10.1053/j.gastro.2009.11.017