

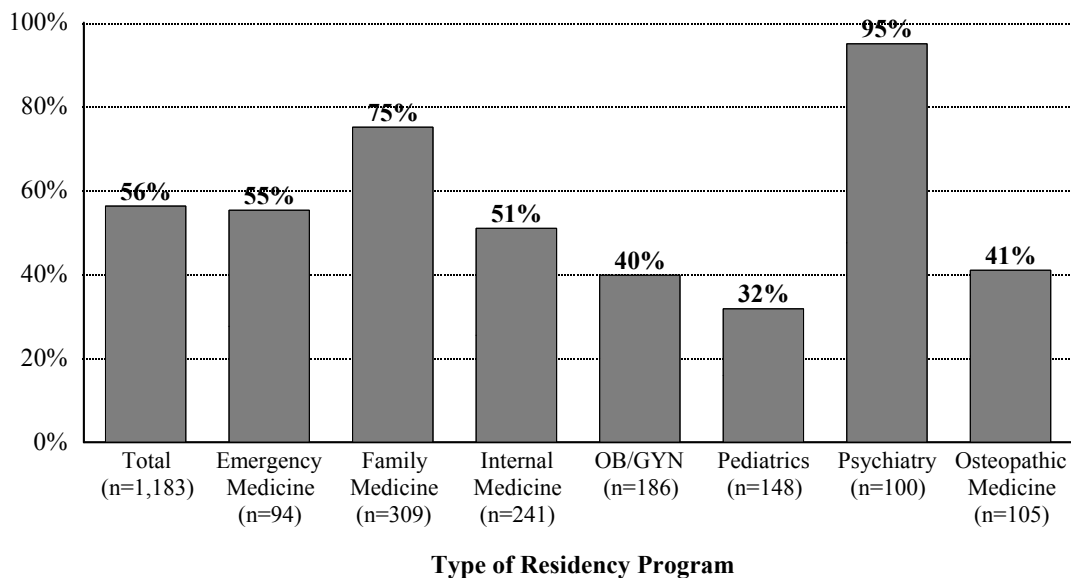
A Weekly FAX from the Center for Substance Abuse Research

University of Maryland, College Park

Substance Use Disorder Training Varies Widely Among Medical Residency Programs

Physicians are not consistently trained to diagnose and treat substance use disorders, according to a national survey of residency program directors in seven medical specialties. Overall, 56% of residency programs surveyed had a required curriculum in preventing and treating alcohol and drug use disorders. However, the percentage of residency programs with substance use disorders training requirements varied greatly across specialties, ranging from 95% in psychiatric programs to 32% in pediatric programs (see figure below). The most commonly reported barriers to providing training were a lack of time (58%), a lack of faculty expertise (37%), and a lack of institutional support (32%). According to the authors, substance use disorders training can be improved by integrating training into existing residency structures, increasing faculty knowledge on the subject, and including more questions on substance use disorders on board examinations.

**Percentage of U.S. Residency Programs with
Required Substance Use Disorders Curriculums, 1997**



SOURCE: Adapted by CESAR from Isaacson J.H., Fleming M., Kraus M., Kahn R., Mundt M., "A National Survey of Training in Substance Use Disorders in Residency Programs," *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* 61:912-915, 2000. For more information, contact Dr. J. Harry Isaacson at isaacs@ccf.org.