Selected Abstracts From the Wilderness Medical Society's 2015 Winter Scientific Conference

Injury and Illness at Resident Summer Camps: An Evaluation for Improvement and Preparedness

Background.—The purpose of this study was to examine the common illnesses and injuries that were sustained at a local resident camp.

Objective.—To identify areas of potential improvement and to make recommendations to increase the quality and preparedness of health services at resident camps.

Methods.—We used an observational study design to retrospectively analyze health center logbooks of a resident camp. The logbooks included every visit to the health center and details about each visit, such as the reason for visit, examination findings, treatment, and disposition. If a patient's injury or illness involved multiple visits or rechecks, the subsequent visits were marked as "recheck," but were given a new study identification number. The study population was from a Boy Scout camp in central Missouri from the summers of 2012 and 2013. Camp staff, youth and adult campers, visitors, and employees were included in the study population if they were seen in the health center. The logbook data were extracted into a digital database and placed into categories based on the reason for the visit, treatments, and dispositions.

Results.—In all, 1586 patients were seen at the health center during the 2-year study; 67.0% were seen for an illness and 18.2% were seen for an injury. For 91.1% of the patients, it was considered safe to return to camp, whereas 7.3% needed transfer to another facility and 0.9% were sent home. The most common reason for transfer was for radiologic imaging (35.7% of all those who were transferred). The most common treatments were oral rehydration, oral medications, and topical creams. It was also found that relationships with emergency medical services and hospitals had room for improvement in the provision of health services.

Conclusions.—We developed recommendations to increase efficiency and health outcomes by improving the available supplies and developing relationships with local emergency medical services and hospitals.

Ross T. Miller
Bradley E. Barth, MD
Kansas City, KS, USA

Winter Wilderness Medicine Race: An Innovative Educational Tool

Background.—We describe 4 years of a winter wilderness medicine race (WWMR) targeted at preclinical medical

students at a large allopathic medical school. The race is designed to integrate preclinical basic sciences with clinical skills in a unique outdoor setting. Specifically, the race aimed to integrate the application of preclinical knowledge, clinical information, teamwork, improvisation, and triage while introducing students to wilderness medicine (WM).

Objective.—We hypothesized that this intervention in medical education would enhance students' WM knowledge, build teamwork and improvisational skills, and increase interest in emergency medicine (EM) and WM specialties.

Methods.—This study is a descriptive, cross-sectional assessment of the medical students participating in a WWMR between 2011 and 2014. Qualitative data were obtained by focus group interviews, and quantitative data were collected by medical knowledge assessments before and after the race.

Results.—Between 2011 and 2014, 122 preclinical medical students from a midwestern allopathic medical school participated in the study. Overall, the mean scores for pre- and post-race knowledge assessments were 48% and 85%, respectively, indicating a 37% increase in scores ($P < .0001$). Participants cited improvisational and communication skills as the most important educational feature of the race. Some students said that the race motivated them to pursue interests in EM, rural medicine, and international medicine. However, no students said that the race had inspired them to focus their careers on WM.

Conclusions.—The WWMR enhanced preclinical medical students' WM knowledge, teamwork skills, and improvisational abilities. Although the event stimulated interest in EM, students did not feel more inclined to choose or pursue WM as a career.

Leah M. Feazel, MS
Jason M. Block, BA
Christopher T. Buresh, MD
Iowa City, IA, USA

Survey of Illnesses and Injuries in Offshore Great Lake Sailboat Racing

Background.—Injuries and illnesses during ocean sailboat racing are well studied, but little if anything has been published about such events in the Great Lakes. Sailboat races vary in distance and duration, and take place regardless of weather conditions. Sailboat racing is a relatively safe sport given its