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EVALUATION OF OPHTHALMOLOGY FELLOWSHIP TRAINING IN THE UNITED STATES

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Review

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Abstract

Evaluation of ophthalmology fellowship training in the United States (US). In order to evaluate ophthalmology fellowship training in the US, search engines such as Google Scholar and Pubmed, as well as the San Francisco Match (SFmatch) website, a large organization that plays a role in the introduction of fellowship training, were used between 03.04.2023 and 04.04.2024. Fellowship training after ophthalmology residency in the US takes between 1 and 2 years. Cornea, surgical retina, medical retina, glaucoma, pediatric ophthalmology, neuro ophthalmology, oculoplastic surgery, ocular oncology, and uveitis are the preferred branches. At the end of the programs, where various responsibilities and duties are determined according to the department, candidates are evaluated by the department faculty members and are certified after being deemed sufficient. Fellowship training in education and research after ophthalmology residency is provided in the USA under certain conditions. Upon completion of this training, individuals are considered competent in their fields.

Keywords: Fellowship, ophthalmology residency

Özet

Amerika Birleşik Devletleri'nde (ABD) oftalmoloji yan dal eğitiminin değerlendirilmesi. ABD'deki oftalmoloji yan dal eğitimini değerlendirmek amacıyla, 03.04.2023 ile 04.04.2024 tarihleri arasında Google Scholar ve Pubmed gibi arama motorlarının yanı sıra, yan dal eğitime girişte rol oynayan büyük bir kuruluş olan San Francisco Match (SFmatch) web sitesi kullanılmıştır. ABD'de oftalmoloji uzmanlık eğitiminden sonra yan dal eğitimi 1 ila 2 yıl arasında sürmektedir. Kornea, cerrahi retina, medikal retina, glokom, pediatrik oftalmoloji, nöro oftalmoloji, oküloplastik cerrahi, oküler onkoloji ve üveit tercih edilen dallardır. Bölüme göre çeşitli sorumlulukların ve görevlerin belirlendiği programların sonunda, adaylar bölüm öğretim üyeleri tarafından değerlendirilir ve yeterli görüldükten sonra sertifikalandırılırlar. ABD'de oftalmoloji uzmanlık eğitimi sonrasında eğitim ve araştırmada yan dal eğitimi belirli koşullar altında sağlanmaktadır. Bu eğitimin tamamlanmasının ardından bireyler alanlarında yetkin kabul edilmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yan Dal, Oftalmoloji uzmanlığı

1. Introduction

In the USA, individuals receive the title of 'Medical Doctor' after medical education. Medical doctors can work as ophthalmologists after choosing ophthalmology residency and completing their education by meeting the necessary conditions. After ophthalmology residency, there are various subspecialty training options for individuals (Jones, 1988).

The main ones are cornea, surgical retina, medical retina, glaucoma, pediatric ophthalmology, neuro ophthalmology, oculoplastic surgery, ocular oncology and uveitis. This training is possible for ophthalmologists in the USA after certain conditions, and for international medical school graduates outside the USA after certain certifications (Ali, Saeed, Zafar, Golnik, & Woreta, 2023).

After this training, individuals can work more competently in this field. In this way, they have better patient management, fewer complications and much more experience in conducting research in that field.

2. Material and Methods

In order to evaluate the fellowship training after ophthalmology residency in the USA, we used search engines such as Google Scholar and Pubmed, as well as the website of an organization called SF Match, which plays a major role in the introduction of subspecialty training after specialization, between 03.04.2023 and 04.04.2024.

3. Results and/or Discussion

Fellowship training can be in various branches after ophthalmology residency (Alsaloum et al., 2022).

Cornea: This branch deals with the medical and surgical treatment of the cornea, which is the front outer part of the eye. The training period is usually 1 year. Although there may be some differences between programs, the content of this subspecialty training includes patient management in the clinic under the supervision of the responsible physician at certain times during the training, participating in a certain number of surgeries as a primary or assistant in the operating room, and taking part in research projects.

Surgical retina: This branch includes the management of surgical diseases of the retinal layer located at the back of the eye. The training period is 2 years. It includes completing the training under the supervision of the responsible physician by actively taking part in clinics, operating rooms and research during the training period (John, Rayess, Pan, & Toy, 2022).

Medical retina: Clinical fellowship that undertakes medical treatment of the retina. Training period is 1 year.

Glaucoma: Clinical fellowship that covers the diagnosis, medical and surgical treatment of progressive optic nerve damage, of which increased intraocular pressure is among the factors. Training period is 1 year.

Pediatric Ophthalmology: Clinic fellowship that includes the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric eye diseases and adult strabismus. Training period is 1 or 2 years (Bernstein, Nelson, & Strabismus, 2020).

Neuro-ophthalmology: Clinical fellowship that includes the diagnosis and treatment of optic nerve diseases. Training period is 1 year (Lee & Keltner, 2015).

Oculoplastic surgery: Clinical fellowship that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of eye socket and eyelid area diseases. Training period is 2 years.

Ocular Oncology: Clinical fellowship that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of intraocular cancers. Training period is 1 year.

Uveitis: A Clinical fellowship that deals with the diagnosis and treatment of inflammatory diseases of the eye. The training period is 1 year.

All these subspecialties require active patient contact during the training period. Patient management is carried out in the clinic and, depending on the department, in the operating room under the supervision of the responsible physician and is completed. Afterwards, the certification process is given by the joint decision of the department faculty members.

4. Conclusion

In the USA, fellowship after ophthalmology residency includes certain standards and its duration varies between 1 and 2 years. During this process, it is an education that includes direct patient contact within a pre-planned program under the supervision of the responsible physician. It is known that individuals become much more competent in the relevant field in their subsequent professional experiences as their knowledge and skills increase after the training.

Today, specialization in subspecialties has become important with the increase in knowledge. It is necessary to help individuals reach the best level in their knowledge and skills by carrying out this process according to certain standards. In this way, it allows the person to provide better service in their subsequent professional life, to be able to successfully manage complications and to get much better results in the field of research. The evaluation of the person by competent people that they have received standard training in this field also protects the person in terms of medicolegal issues (Czyz, Kashyap, & Wayman, 2022).

There are some limitations of our study. Detailed data on all subspecialties could not be accessed. The data is not explained in sufficient detail on the websites of the subspecialty programs. While some programs are accredited by various institutions, some are not.

As a result, fellowship training after ophthalmology residency training in the USA has an important place in career planning and provides career planning options for both those who have completed their residency training in the USA and international medical graduates, at certain standards.

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Conflicts of interest

None

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