



# Factors Influencing Career Path Decisions of Internal Medicine Residency Graduates

Naowanit Nata<sup>1</sup>, Chantrapa Sriswasdi<sup>1</sup>, Amnart Chairasert<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Internal Medicine, Phramongkutklao Hospital and College of Medicine, Bangkok, Thailand

## Background

Graduates from internal medicine residency program may work as internists or continue their studies in subspecialty fellowship program. Choosing the right career path is critical and there are several factors involving in decision making.

## Summary of work

The study was conducted in graduates from Phramongkutklao Internal Medicine Residency Program between 2016-2018. Demographic data were collected including grade point average (GPA), field of subspecialty electives and research work during training, subspecialty of the consultant, in-training summative scores, the Royal College of Physicians of Thailand (RCPT) formative and summative scores.

## Summary of Results

There were 107 graduates in the program during study period. Majority (83, 77.6%) opted to undertake fellowship training after graduation while the rest (24, 22.4%) pursued internal medicine practice. Mean  $\pm$  SD of GPA and in-training summative scores in the fellowship group were significantly higher than the internist group;  $3.39 \pm 0.28$  vs  $3.26 \pm 0.20$  and  $62.4 \pm 7.7$  vs  $57.8 \pm 8.5$ , respectively. In the multivariate analysis; factors associated with entering fellowship program were GPA (OR 12.3, 95% CI 1.3-121.8;  $p = 0.03$ ) and in-training summative scores (OR 1.07, 95% CI 1.00-1.15;  $p = 0.04$ ). In the fellowship group, factor influencing their subspecialty choices was the division which their RCPT summative scores were in the upper range.

**Table 1.** Baseline characteristic

	Total N=107	Fellowship N=83 (77.6%)	Internist N=24 (22.4%)	P
Male	57 (53.27%)	47 (56.6%)	10 (41.6%)	0.24
Free training	8 (7.48%)	8 (9.63%)	0 (%)	0.03
PMK-Main Program	54 (50.47%)	49 (59.03%)	5 (20.83%)	0.001
Elective (in PMK)	43 (40.19%)	34 (40.96%)	9 (37.50%)	0.82
Original affiliation-Army	40 (37.38%)	34 (40.96%)	6 (25.0%)	0.23
GPA (Mean $\pm$ SD)	$3.36 \pm 0.27$	$3.39 \pm 0.28$	$3.26 \pm 0.20$	0.03
In-training summative MCQ	$61.39 \pm 8.04$	$62.42 \pm 7.67$	$57.81 \pm 8.54$	0.01
Formative RCPT MCQ	$68.93 \pm 8.55$	$83.67 \pm 9.12$	$79.38 \pm 13.17$	0.07
In-training formative long case	$76.02 \pm 8.71$	$76.40 \pm 8.66$	$74.73 \pm 8.97$	0.41
Summative RCPT MCQ	$59.71 \pm 5.37$	$60.14 \pm 5.65$	$58.24 \pm 3.99$	0.128

PMK: Phramongkutklao hospital and college of medicine; MCQ: Multiple-choice question; GPA: Grade point average

**Table 2.** Multivariate and univariate analysis of characteristics of residency

Variable	Univariate		Multivariate	
	Odd Ratio (95%CI)	P-value	Odd Ratio (95%CI)	P-value
Gender	1.83 (0.728-4.588)	0.20	2.595 (0.908-7.418)	0.08
GPA	6.393 (1.110-36.831)	0.04	9.140 (1.050-79.58)	0.05
Formative RCPT MCQ	1.038 (0.995-1.083)	0.08	1.023 (0.971-1.078)	0.07
Summative RCPT MCQ	1.070 (0.980-1.168)	0.13	0.991 (0.887-1.108)	0.88
In-training summative MCQ	1.076 (1.014-1.142)	0.02	1.070 (1.002-1.143)	0.04

RCPT: The Royal College Physicians of Thailand

## Discussion and conclusions

Factors associated with entering the fellowship training were GPA and in-training summative scores; while field of subspecialty electives and research work during training, RCPT formative and summative scores were not. Choosing career path of subspecialty influenced by the division that graduates' RCPT summative scores were in the upper range. Subspecialty of the consultant, field of electives and research work during training had no impact on their choices of subspecialty.

## Take-home message

Most of internal medicine graduates pursue subspecialty training. Graduate's GPA and in-training performance affect the decision to continue study in fellowship program. Choosing career path in subspecialty is influenced by the knowledge competency in that field during residency training.