

Evaluation of an International Peer Partnership Program for Research Capacity Building Amongst Family Medicine Registrars in Lesotho

Chelsea McGuire, MD¹; Ivonne, McLean, MD²; Brian Jack, MD¹; Sebaka Malope, MD^{1,3}
¹ Boston University Department of Family Medicine, ² Institute for Family Health of New York,
³ Lesotho Boston Health Alliance Family Medicine Specialty Training Program

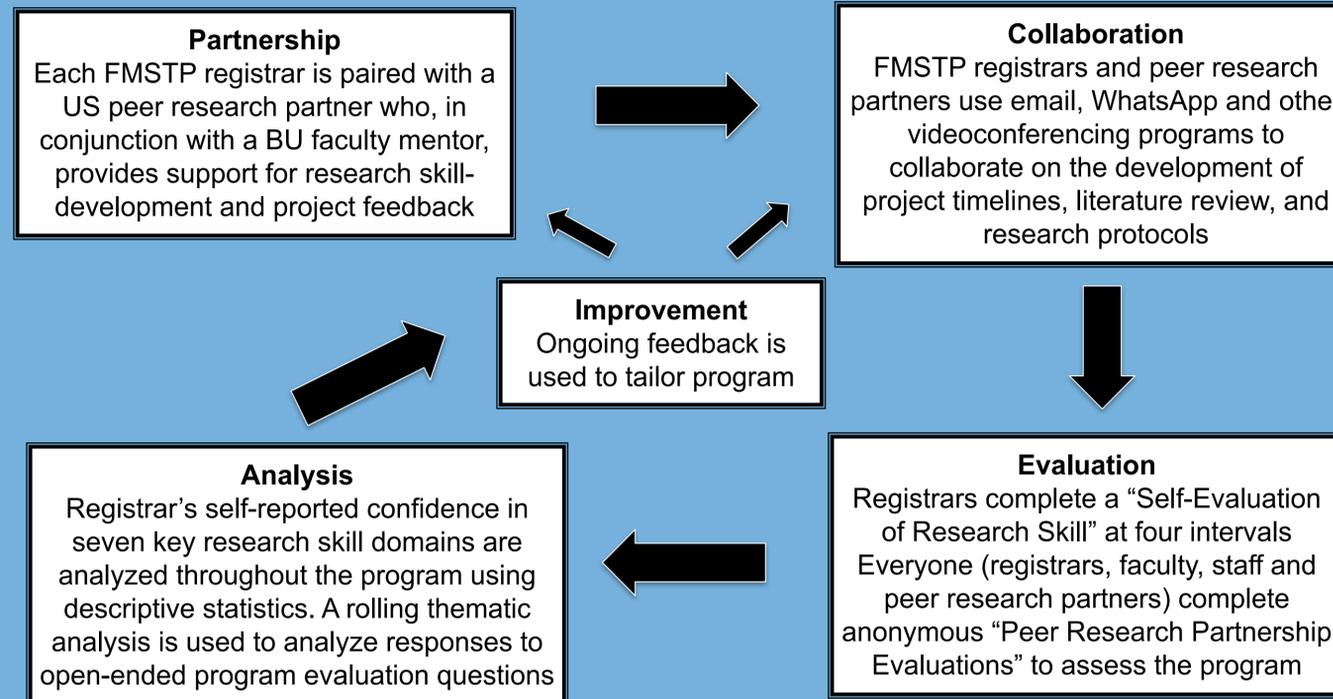
INTRODUCTION

- The Lesotho Boston Health Alliance (LeBoHA) Family Medicine Specialty Training Program (FMSTP) is a 4-year, fully accredited residency program that was developed through a partnership between Boston University (BU) and the Lesotho Ministry of Health
- All trainees, or registrars, must complete a research project in order to graduate; however, most have limited or no prior research experience and there is limited research expertise in-country
- A peer research partnership program that pairs FMSTP registrars with US post-graduate trainees was developed to help bridge this gap

BACKGROUND

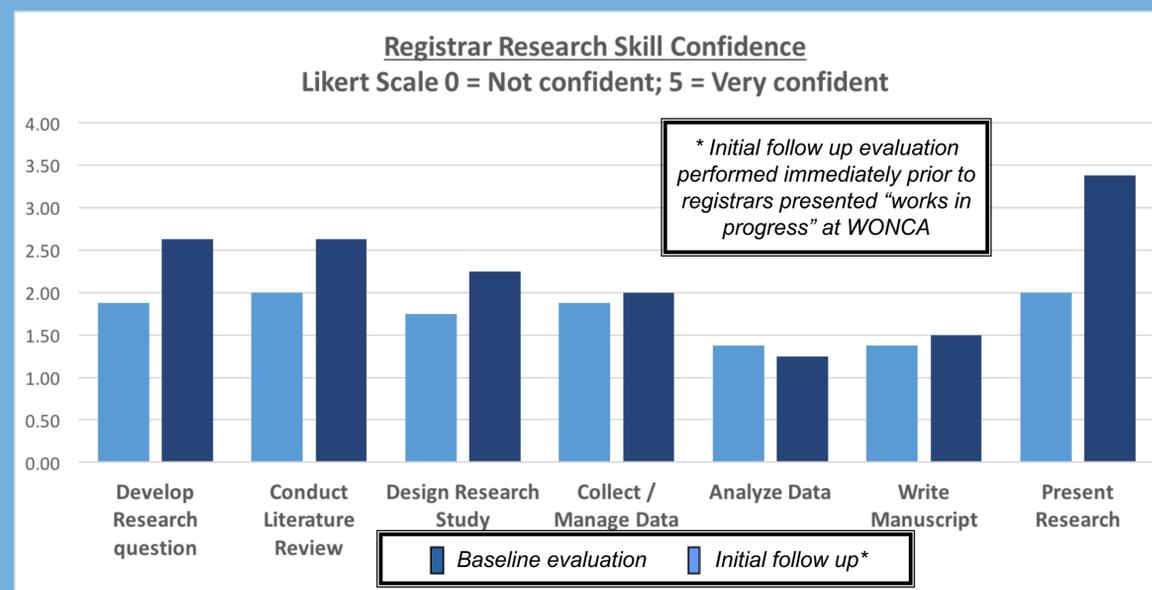
- Lesotho is a land-locked South African country of approximately 2 million people, of which 57% live below poverty line (World Factbook, 2016)
- Lesotho has a high HIV/AIDS prevalence of ~22.7% (UNAIDS, 2016) and a severe physician shortage. The FMSTP was designed to help to address this shortage
- Research training is a key component of the FMSTP and one that requires additional support from BU
- In the US, an increasing number of trainees (residents, master's students and medical students) are engaging in global health research
- Without guidance, global health research by US trainees can face ethical and logistical challenges including: overburdening of local staff, difficulty navigating between involved stakeholder groups and the tendency to develop projects that are poorly informed by the needs of the local community (Provenzano, et al, 2010)

METHODS



PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- "There is no pressure to impress the peer mentor" [Registrar]
- "Excellent for skills and knowledge transfer" [Faculty]
- "Open minded... quick feedback" [Registrar]
- "Interacting with a colleague is easier than a senior" [Registrar]
- "Very good, really guide in the whole process" [Registrar]

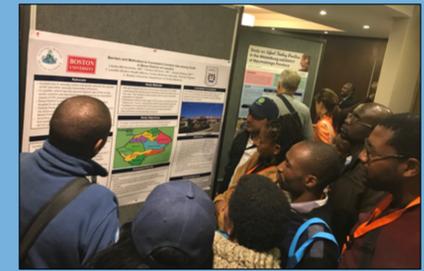


DISCUSSION

- International peer research partnerships are both feasible and mutually beneficial
- Administrative support is required for sustainability
- Challenges identified thus far:
 - IT Resources / Competing Demands: "Internet access" ... "actual time to do the research because of other hospital obligations" [Registrar]
 - Finding Ideal Partner : Registrar Ratio: "Avoid (one mentor) being overwhelmed with the work of many" [Registrar]
 - Pro/Con of Multiple Sources of Feedback: "Having a flood of ideas (on) how one can improve the study" [Registrar]; "Opportunity for more views of one subject" [Faculty]



FMSTP Registrars at AfriWon Renaissance pre-conference



Dr. Mochochoko (Registrar) presenting poster at WONCA

NEXT STEPS

- Registrars and peer partners are currently developing IRB protocols for submission to Lesotho IRB
- Program will be re-evaluated at two additional intervals
- Interest by BU's CIR Center for Health Equity residents in joining as peer research partners
- Grant awarded by CUGH for expansion of this model through AfriWon Renaissance Research Theme Group

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank-you to the FMSTP Registrars, Peer Research Partners, FMSTP Faculty and Staff, and to the BU Faculty and Staff who made this work possible. Thank-you to the Massachusetts Medical Social for funding this work through their generous International Health Studies grants. Finally, our gratitude to the Consortium of Universities of Global Health (CUGH) and Afriwon Renaissance for their support and partnership in the next steps for this work.

CONTACT

Contact Chelsea McGuire at chelsea.mcguire@gmail.com for all correspondence