



Arsht Research on Ethics and Community Grant

The Right to Healthcare: A Survey of Future Physicians

2012-2013

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Abstract

Physicians and physician groups in the United States have historically played influential roles in either promoting or opposing government measures aimed at expanding access to healthcare. As such, physicians' beliefs can powerfully impact the laws and regulations governing healthcare systems. Contemporary healthcare policy is rapidly evolving and dramatically changing the environment in which current and future physicians will work. We are interested in determining the beliefs of the next generation of physicians – today's medical students – regarding individual rights and government role in healthcare delivery. Are their ideas in sync with practicing physicians and with the patients they will treat? We are proposing to survey medical students on their beliefs about a society's responsibility to guarantee healthcare access to its citizens and if, when they become physicians, others should have a right to their services. This survey, administered to first- and fourth-year medical students in several medical schools throughout the United States, will serve to illuminate students' healthcare beliefs and how these beliefs evolve from matriculation to graduation. We plan to publish our results in a journal and also produce a poster highlighting results for conferences.

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