

Abstract Preview

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Topic:15. Preventive cardiology and various

Title:Pediatric Cardiology Training in Germany: First National Survey of Pediatric Cardiology Residents and Fellows by the “Junges Forum” of the DGPK

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Text:Objectives: Treatment of patients with congenital heart disease (CHD) requires highly qualified specialists. Residents who wish to undergo such a demanding specialization will become rare in the near future. To increase the number of trainees, the attractiveness of pediatric cardiology training needs to improve. Because of the lack of data, the aim of this study was to assess the labor situation and quality of training during the pediatric cardiology fellowship as well as to get suggestions to improve the training.

Methods: We conducted a national survey from 09/2017 to 05/2018 using the online platform SurveyMonkey. All pediatric cardiology fellows during training or 3 years after completion of specialization in Germany at maximum were invited to participate anonymously. The survey contained 62 questions that aimed to assess sociodemographic data and data concerning working place and atmosphere, workload, structure of education at the respondent's institution, activity in research, and plans for personal future. Suggestions how to improve the attractiveness of the training could also be made.

Results: We received 102 responses, reflecting a participation rate of about 50%, assuming approximately 200 pediatric cardiology fellows in Germany. All pediatric cardiology centers were represented. More than 60% of all participants work more than 50 hours per week, 10% even more than 60, while 90% prefer weekly working hours less than 50. 50% of the participants are engaged in research, which is mostly done in spare time. While 84% would again start a fellowship if they had the choice, only 12% are very satisfied with their current training. There is a lack in practical training, especially in transesophageal echocardiography, spiroergometry, and right and left heart catheterization. To improve training, several proposals were made: 69% of the participants favor a tutoring system, 70% wish to pass on paramedical work to assistance staff, and 78% want a reliable rotational system.

Conclusions: The survey achieved a high number of participants from various German pediatric cardiology institutions, implying a high interest in the optimization of pediatric cardiology training. There is significant room for improvement with regards to various aspects. This survey might serve as a basis for discussion to improve pediatric cardiology training and work life to improve the attractiveness of pediatric cardiology fellowships in Germany.