

# **The Future of Our Family Medicine Residency Graduates: Outcomes from a Family Medicine Residency Program Success Story in Haiti**

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## **Background**

Healthcare systems in low income countries face several challenges, including shortages of well trained and qualified healthcare professionals, inequity in geographic coverage and limited access to primary care. In 2012, Zanmi Lasante (ZL), a local NGO and Partners in Health, working with the Ministry of Health (MOH) at Hopital Saint Nicolas in St. Marc, Haiti, launched a Family Medicine Residency Program (FMRP) designed to train high quality, skilled and versatile professionals who would be capable of transforming the Haitian Health System (HHS).

## **Objectives**

To describe the demographic and medical practice profiles of the four cohorts of graduates and their integration in the HHS.

## **Methods**

We conducted a cross-sectional descriptive study of all graduates between 2014 and 2017. The FMRP database and an exit questionnaire were used to develop the data set. The data were extracted to Excel and analyzed via EpiInfo using proportion, central tendency and dispersion measures.

## **Results**

A total of 20 residents graduated from the FMRP. At the time of the interview, 50% were at least 32 months post-graduation. Their median age at the time of enrollment in the FMRP was 30 years old (interquartile range 27-33), 55% were female, 45% came from the national public school of medicine, and 40% came from a national private school. All of our graduates remained working in Haiti, 80% started within 3 months after graduation, 85% in rural areas and 60% in public facilities. As non-clinical duties, 55% were in leadership positions and 35% were teaching faculty. Finally, all were involved in clinical care, including inpatient care (70%), ambulatory medicine (65%), and emergency care (45%). 20% of the graduates continued to perform surgical procedures such as circumcisions, lumpectomies, and caesarian sections.

## **Conclusions**

All graduates are practicing in Haiti, with the majority in rural areas and in public healthcare facilities as leaders, teaching faculty and clinicians who deliver high quality care and strengthen the HHS. The FMRP in Saint Marc is a successful program that can serve as example of the benefit of training more family medicine physicians in order to reach the goals of the strategic plan of the MOH.