LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Teaching Health Policy to Residents

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Authors Reply:—We are delighted to see additional opportunities identified by Goetz et al. for both residents as well as students to learn about and engage in health policy. It is our hope that as interest in such experiences continues to rise, health policy will receive more attention in medical school and residency curricula across the country. Some schools and programs may even be able to coordinate their on-site education with intensive Washington-based initiatives, such as the ACEP Leadership Day. Furthermore, beyond residency, many internal medicine departments offer more in-depth training in health policy education and research through general internal medicine fellowships,¹ and graduates of any specialty are eligible for similar training through the Robert Wood Johnson Clinical Scholars Program.²

We also agree that greater engagement by physicians in the political process is a laudable goal for health policy education, which is underscored by current health reform efforts. Indeed, low civic engagement by physicians³ might even be partially explained by missed opportunities to address gaps in health policy knowledge starting at medical school.⁴

Thus, the future challenge to JGIM readers as both educators and researchers is to seek better ways to teach health policy to

physicians in training and to show that such training can make a difference in practice. Towards that end, we can think of few more gratifying rewards for our own efforts than to see students such as Ms. Goetz already engaged in this challenge along with her faculty!

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