

Background:

Chief residents in emergency medicine residency programs take on a considerable amount of administrative responsibilities. These responsibilities, when combined with their clinical shifts in the emergency department, may prevent them from studying appropriately for the Emergency Medicine Board Qualifying Examination. We sought to determine how chief residents performed on their In-Training Examination compared to their non-chief co-residents.

Methods :

The In-Training Examination scores for all residents in a three-year emergency medicine residency with approximately seven residents per class were reviewed for the past 11 years. Two residents were elected chief resident each year. The change in raw score and percentile score (relative to other residents in the same level of training nationally) on the annual In-Training Examination between a resident's second and third years were calculated. Difference between second and third-year scores for those residents who were chief and those residents who were not chief were calculated. A negative difference indicates a resident's percentile score decreased from second to third year. The differences between chief residents and non-chief residents were calculated with a 95% confidence interval (CI)

Results:

The In-Training Examination scores of 84 residents over 11 years were reviewed. Of the 84 residents, 22 were elected chief residents (two per year), and 62 were not. Between their second and third years, the difference between the two scores for chief residents in raw scores was 2.0 (CI: 0.2, 3.9) and in percentile was -5.8% (CI: -13.8, 2.1). The difference between the two scores for non-chief residents in raw scores was 2.8 (CI: 1.6, 4.0) and in percentile was -1.4% (CI: -7.1, 4.3). The difference between chief residents and non-chief residents in raw score was 0.8 (-1.5, 3.1) and in percentile was 4.4% (CI: -6.5, 15.2).

Conclusion:

Although chief residents tend to do worse year-over-year on the In-Training examination than their non-chief co-residents, the differences were not significant. Despite the insignificant differences, chief residents should be aware of the trend to ensure they spend enough time studying for the Board Certification Qualifying Exam.