



Editorial Comment

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Editor

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The increase in enrollment of medical students in Texas could potentially alleviate the shortage of healthcare providers in the state. But in order for this to occur, adequate funding of graduate medical education (GME) positions is necessary. Sadly, the GME funding in Texas has been repeatedly cut to the point that it is now 60% less than 4 years ago. In communities like El Paso, these cuts create lasting impact beyond the classroom. These cuts adversely impact the community's economic well being and add to the health disparities already present in border communities.

The shortfall in GME funding will ultimately result in medical students leaving the state making it less likely that they will return and practice in Texas. This problem is more dramatic in communities such as El Paso where attracting physicians is more difficult. Moreover, losing residents to other states results in economical loses for Texas as the investment in medical education is not recovered.

In order to improve the physician shortage in the state, Texas Medical Association has proposed the state create and support new formulas for GME funding, reinvest state funds in Medicaid GME support and expand the loan repayment program to recruit and attract physicians to underserved areas. As practicing physicians we need to support this proposal and educate our legislators about the positive impact adequate GME funding has on the livelihood of people and communities. The lack of adequate funding for GME ultimately jeopardizes the economic growth of the state and those communities that have medical schools.

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