



Q&A with Afif Hossain

May 29, 2023

1. What is your role as chief resident?

Chief residents serve as role models for a program. They are residents and fellows that set the standard for their peers when it comes to professionalism, patient care, interpersonal communication, and teamwork. Chief residents must be poised under pressure, be patient, understanding, and supportive. At the same time, they must be proactive, willing to have difficult conversations, and motivate others to do and be better. One of the most important qualities of a chief resident or fellow is to act as a manager for daily or administrative tasks and be a leader for his or her peers to exemplify behaviors and actions to strive towards. While a chief resident or fellow acts as a liaison between trainees and administration, they also can provide needed feedback to help trainees, and even their respective programs, grow and change for the better.

2. What is the importance of the retreat for fellow residents?

Having a retreat for chief fellows and residents allows leaders and trainees in positions of power to intermingle in a non-clinical setting. This is tantamount in the medical and hospital setting, where interdisciplinary care is the rule, not the exception, in order for our patients to receive the best care possible. By meeting one another in a non-clinical and more personable setting, it is easier to remember that we are all peers, despite our different fields, and at the end of the day, human beings who all want the same outcome- better patient care. While this might sound obvious, when overwhelmed and exhausted at the hospital, our emotions can sometimes get the best of us and collegiality can become elusive. By establishing a rapport outside of the hospital, we can grow closer as team members and see a perspective different than our own. For example, more procedure-oriented trainees have different work flows and priorities than non-procedural trainees. This may lead to differences in how patient treatment is approached, but both types of thinking are necessary in order to best serve our patients.

3. What can you tell me about this training and its impact on you and your team?

The medical profession is interdisciplinary by its very nature. No only amongst physicians, but also other medical staff, like physical/occupational therapists, nutritionists, speech-language pathologists, respiratory therapists, and imaging technicians, whose care requires coordination. If we fail to work as a team, not only does our care become much less efficient, but we do wrong

by our patients. The best way to learn is to learn from others, especially from other who share differences in thinking and practice than yourself. By working holistically, we become more empathetic, proficient, and caring practitioners.

About the retreat:

Chief Resident Retreat 2023

The third annual Rutgers Health Chief Resident Retreat took place on May 3, 2023 and was deemed a success by participating chiefs and seniors.

“Thought it was productive and gave good insights into the new oncoming challenges as chief resident,” said one participant.

This year was the pilot test of the hybrid approach with the morning sessions conducted virtually while the afternoon sessions were in-person at their home institutions. Chief Residents are an integral part of program leadership and the retreat was structured to support and equip them with their responsibilities such as mediating clinical issues, overseeing schedule coordination and educational activities, while serving as mentors and advisors to their fellow residents.

Administrative Chiefs gathered from Community Medical Center, Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center, Jersey City Medical Center, New Jersey Medical School/University Hospital, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, Monmouth Medical Center, Robert Wood Johnson Medical School, Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital-Somerset, and Trinitas Medical Center.