Development of an Interdisciplinary Wilderness Medicine Education Curriculum

Eric Hawkins MD, MPH

**Problem Identification**
- Wilderness Medicine is medical care administered in areas in which geographic challenges, austere conditions, and reduced resources make patient care and movement challenging.
- Medical residents, nurses, and prehospital providers receive little training in translating their knowledge and skills to backcountry settings and unique remote environmental medical problems.

**Needs Assessment**
- We conducted a survey of EM residents to assess their comfort with Wilderness Medicine topics and their interest in learning more about care in backcountry environments.
- We also conducted small focus groups with nurses to gauge their interest in Wilderness Medicine continuing medical education and training.

**Goals and Objectives**
- Provide evidence-based education to local healthcare professionals interested in learning more about Wilderness Medicine.
- Empower participants with knowledge and opportunities to use in real world situations to increase their confidence in deciding to act to care for others in remote and austere settings.
- Develop resident and nurse experts trained within the program to provide peer-to-peer teaching to others.
- Provide a group of like-minded individuals for networking and collaboration.

**Educational Strategies**
- Develop a longitudinal, interdisciplinary curriculum addressing common Wilderness and Environmental Medicine topics for medical residents, nurses, students and prehospital providers.
- Provide frequent skill sessions and practice of knowledge application in remote prehospital environments.
- Create an interdisciplinary community of individuals interested in Wilderness Medicine and provide opportunities to connect with like-minded medical professionals and students.

**Implementation**
- Develop and administer a longitudinal series of online lectures on common Wilderness and Environmental Medicine topics to provide background knowledge and information on austere and remote medical care.
- Provide quarterly skill sessions to practice hands-on application of this knowledge in wilderness settings and more remote prehospital environments.

**Evaluation**
- Questions after online educational modules required to pass for CME or CE credit.
- Direct observation of skills during quarterly practice sessions.
- Written evaluation by program participant via online surveys.
- Expansion of program to medical and nursing students, with similar evaluation methods.