




Ecosystem Building and Enrichment Opportunities

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What is the ecosystem?

Definition: a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.
(in general use) a complex network or interconnected system.

Ecological theories of systems encompass a range of concepts of how and why systems change and how and why they respond to change

www.google.com/dictionary

Medical Education 2017: 51: 1250–1259 doi:10.1111/medu.13406

What is the ecosystem?

Apply this to medicine and medical education: complex network of learners, teachers, patients and health care system

Thinking of how and why each component of the medical education ecosystem changes and how and why they respond to change and the interaction of all.

Physicians go through a lifecycle as a living component of the ecosystem (pre-med, medical student, resident, attending, faculty, mentor, administrator, etc.)

Each stage of physician lifecycle interacts with and depends upon other components of the ecosystem for survival and growth (mentors, teachers, advisors, learning specialists, support staff, other learners, physicians, etc.)

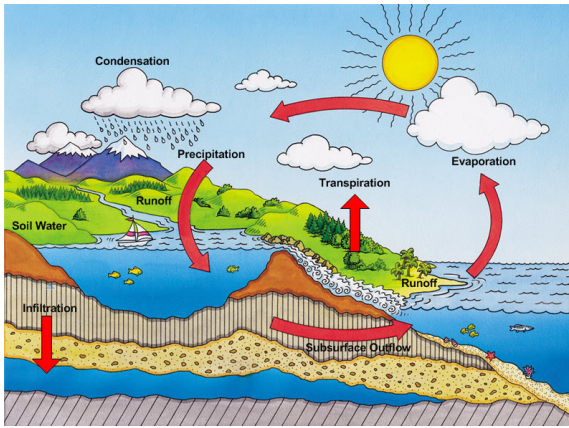
What is the ecosystem?

In order for physicians to survive and thrive, grow and change and to be sustainable need to have robust environmental support and fertilizer.

- STEM exposure in K-12
- Role models
- Robust education system
- Hands on exposure to health care
- Strong and equitable pre-medical advising
- Access to pre-medical experiences
- Unbiased evaluation of pre-medical candidates
- Support structures for all medical students
- Support structures for resident physicians
- Academic institutions with room for faculty from diverse groups
- Alumni and attending physicians to serve as mentors, role models, etc.

The same can be said about the health care system and the need for robust, fertile environment.

Example: Can think of physicians as water



- Moving through the cycle:
 - Premed = ground water, subsurface outflow
 - Medical student = evaporate into atmosphere
 - Resident physician = condensation
 - Attending physician = precipitation
 - Faculty = runoff
 - Alumni/mentors = infiltration
- Soil, flora/fauna, sun, etc. are all necessary for water to cycle = enrichment opportunities and other components of health ecosystem

What about the pipeline?

- Pipelines – negative connotation in some communities
- Uni-directional
- Have to push contents through
- Have potential to break, leak, single outcome
- Need to try to connect different parts over time
- Often built by those not directly affected by the impact, usually without input from the communities they are in





We are building the ecosystem together