

Forum for internal medicine: opinions and controversies

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New medical directions have developed, which usually do not require internship in internal medicine. Young doctors prefer to choose other specializations, which extremely shortens the process of professional training.

The question arises, which way is better? I personally believe that knowledge in internal medicine has great meaning for patients. A holistic diagnostic approach allows rapid implementation of a medical intervention or, if necessary, a referral to another specialist. Currently, a patient who visits a specialist is treated only for one disease entity. However, usually the very patient suffers from 2 to 3 or even 4 diseases at the same time. Therefore, such a patient requires a number of further consultations, which usually takes months and may adversely impact his or her general health. Many times, discouraged by long waiting lists, patients neglect their illness and postpone a medical visit. At the same time, specialists deal with excessive numbers of patients who do not in fact require a specialist consultation and who could be successfully dealt with and cured by internal medicine doctors, which in turn would reduce the number of subsequent consultations with other specialists.

It takes a long time for a specialist in internal medicine to complete the specialty (5 years). In some other specialties, the duration of a specialty is much shorter. Specialists in internal medicine usually have extensive knowledge, verified by a written exam (test) and oral exam. At the same time, they possess sufficient skills to find links between numerous different diseases in a patient.

In my opinion, internal medicine is a useful and necessary specialization. I also support the view that internal medicine wards in hospitals as well as outpatient internal medicine clinics where patients can get a direct access to a doctor should be retained.

Note The opinions expressed by the author are not necessarily those of the journal editors, Polish Society of Internal Medicine, or publisher.

Relatively recently, specialization in internal medicine was absolutely necessary to continue professional development in various subspecialties. The medical community used to consider a specialty in internal medicine as very significant. However, time passes quickly. Internal medicine does not play the major role in medicine any longer and has lost its prestige.