

# Development of a student-led, semi-structured, near-peer student guides program to help students navigate through medical school

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The NMS Guides Program is an effective and usable student-led, near peer mentorship program for medical students with high utilization and participant satisfaction.

## INTRODUCTION

Near-peer mentorship pairs senior mentors with junior peers to help navigate various aspects of training. In 2016, an institutional needs assessment completed by 60% of first-year and 50% of second-year medical students reported multiple barriers to cultivating peer-mentor relationships. In response, the Navigating Medical School (NMS) Student Guides Program was piloted in 2017. This pilot program paired first-year medical student (MS1) guidees with self-selected near-peer fourth-year medical student (MS4) guides.

## OBJECTIVES

- Assess the feasibility and usability of the NMS Student Guides Program.
- Assess the academic, professional, and social impact of the Guides Program on guides and guidees.
- Explore barriers to sustainability of the NMS Student Guides Program.

## METHODS

In this convergent parallel mixed methods study, we assessed the feasibility, usability, professional and social impact, and barriers to implementation of a 16-week near-peer, student guides program involving 39 MS1s and 18 MS4s. Guide-guidee meetings were tracked via RedCap. Meeting topics and barriers were assessed qualitatively.

Assessment Criteria	
Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• &gt;75% of guide-guidee groups meeting at least twice during the pilot period</li> </ul>
Usability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of guide-guidee interactions</li> <li>• Number of guidees who attended each meeting</li> </ul>

## RESULTS

22% of all MS4s and 46% of MS1s enrolled in the program; 67% of guides facilitated the requisite two meetings with their group, which was less than our predetermined feasibility criteria of 75%. 92% of guidees recommended the program, and 85% were satisfied with guidance received. Most common meeting discussions included summer plans and wellness strategies (Fig 1).

Mean (SD) of guidees in attendance at each meeting	2.89 (1.31)
% Guidee attendance at all meetings	88%
% Guidee attendance at meetings for Guides who met >2 times	97%

Figure 1: Guidee Meeting Attendance

Topic	Coder 1 - Incidence	Coder 2 - Incidence	Cohen's kappa
Summer plans	57%, 21	54%, 20	0.945
Interests and Wellness	57%, 21	59%, 22	0.945
Academics (excludes STEP)	51%, 19	51%, 19	1
Road map	35%, 13	30%, 11	0.757
Connection	30%, 11	30%, 11	1
STEP 1 Preparation	24%, 9	24%, 9	1
Administrative	22%, 8	22%, 8	1
Career goals and preparation	16%, 6	22%, 8	0.825
Research (excludes summer research)	14%, 5	11%, 4	0.875
Other	3%, 1	3%, 1	1

Figure 2: Meeting Topics and Frequency (n=37 meetings)

Guide-guidee interactions occurred over various platforms (Fig 3). Barriers included meeting coordination, infrequent meetings, and informal meeting structure.

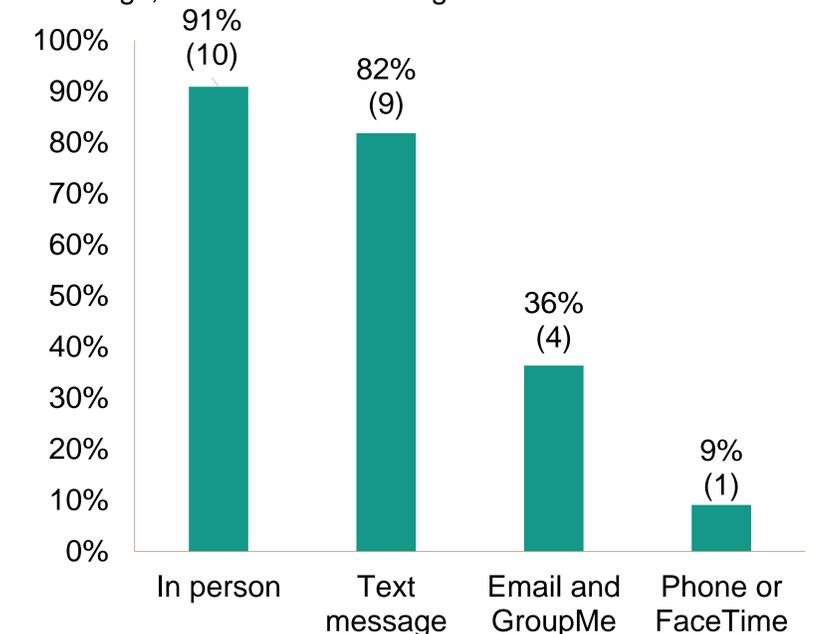


Figure 3: Interaction Formats (n= 11 surveys)

## CONCLUSIONS

While the program was infeasible by predefined frequency criteria, participant satisfaction was high and near-peers reported academic, professional, and social benefits. Various programmatic revisions have been implemented to address program barriers.

Key Programmatic Revisions
MS3-MS1 guide-guidee pairings instead of MS4-MS1
Formal guides leadership development training
Bimonthly guide debriefing meetings
School sponsored, large group guide-guidee social events