

INTRODUCTION

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Osteopathic Pediatricians advise pediatric residencies to address end-of-life care in their curricula^{1,2}. However, studies show pediatric residents do not feel prepared to deliver or discuss end-of-life care with patients and families³. This study's purpose is to investigate resident perceptions of pediatric palliative care and related resident training to determine gaps in resident education and guide curricular development.

OBJECTIVES

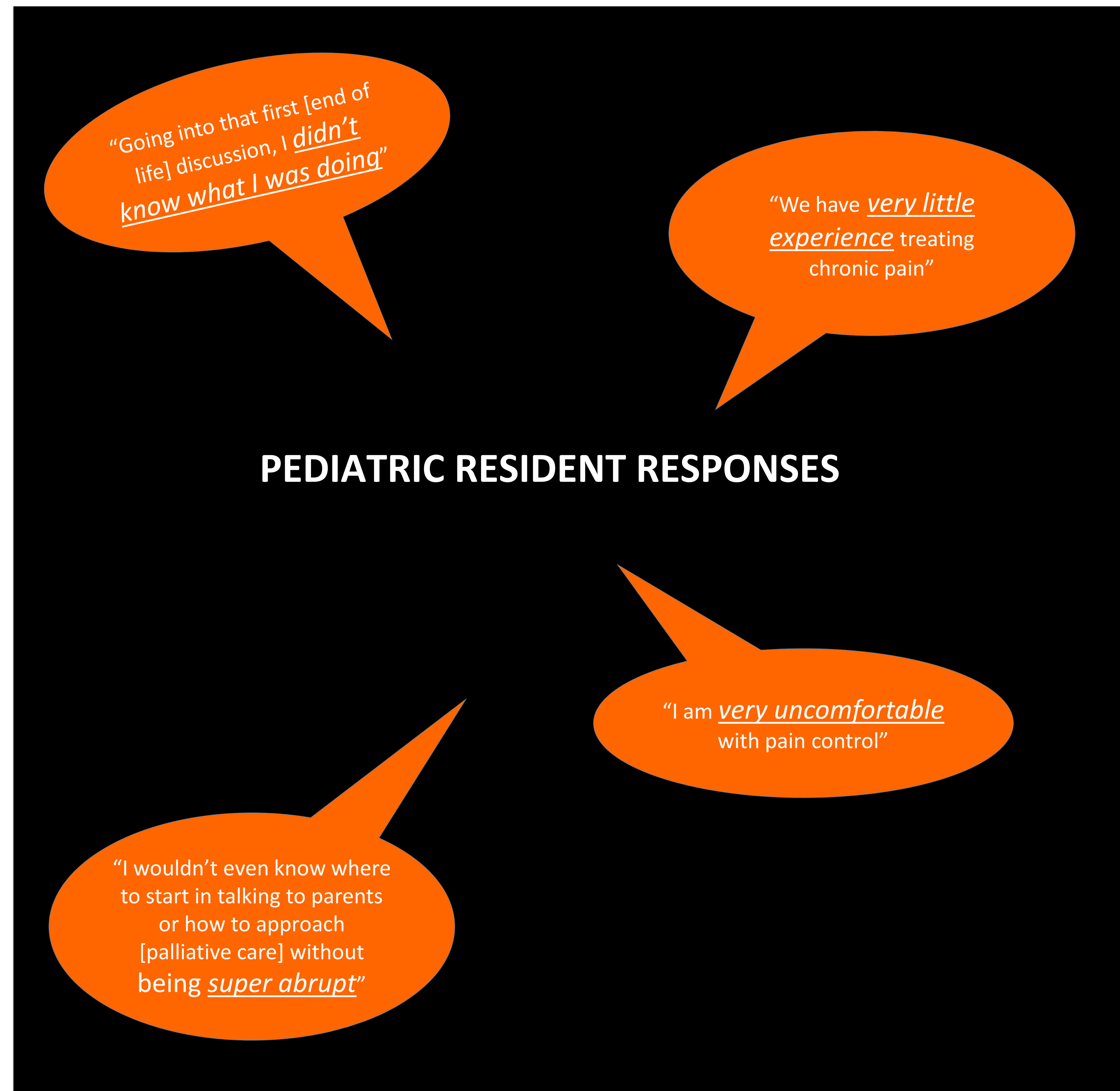
To investigate resident perceptions of palliative care in the pediatric population and related resident training in order to guide pediatric palliative care curricular development for pediatric residents at Oklahoma State University.

METHODS

This study was based on an optional 1 hour semi-structured focus group given to pediatric post-graduate trainees in April 2018 consisting of both males and females, 29 in total. We recruited participants by telling them our research purpose and by offering them optional participation in our focus group. All residents that participated were consented by the primary & sub investigators with written informed consent prior to the start of the focus group. No demographic information was collected. We asked open-ended questions & redirected the discussion as needed. No compensation was given to participants.

RESULTS

The focus group data identified gaps in residency training. OSU Pediatric residents reported they did not feel sufficiently trained in end-of-life care and revealed a collective desire to increase palliative care training.



PEDIATRIC RESIDENT RESPONSES

“Going into that first [end of life] discussion, I didn't know what I was doing”

“We have very little experience treating chronic pain”

“I am very uncomfortable with pain control”

“I wouldn't even know where to start in talking to parents or how to approach [palliative care] without being super abrupt”

CONCLUSION

Our study identified limitations and areas for improvement in resident education in regards to end-of-life care. We used this data to guide curriculum changes to the 2018-19 academic year. The study's primary endpoint included identifying if gaps in education were present and improving resident education in regards to competency in palliative & end-of-life care among resident physicians. Our study has the potential to change the way pediatric residency programs train their resident physicians to approach end-of-life care in their patient populations. The goal of this study is to lead to increased awareness of resident physician competency when caring for children in palliative care. Our hope is to provide better patient care through the results of this study.

REFERENCES

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