Altering the Course
BLACK MALES IN MEDICINE

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Association of American Medical Colleges
While many initiatives and programs supported by foundations, medical schools, and government have contributed to increasing diversity in the physician pipeline, the number of applicants from one major demographic group—black males—has not increased above the number from 1978. That year, 1,410 black males applied to medical school, and in 2014, just 1,337 applied. A similar trend is observed for first-time matriculants: in 1978, there were 542 black male matriculants to MD-granting institutions, and in 2014, there were 515. In addition, of all racial and ethnic groups, the proportion of applicants to medical school who were male compared with female is lowest for African-Americans—despite an overall increase in the number of black male college graduates over the past two decades.

The AAMC sought to understand the decline in black males applying and matriculating to medical school by gathering the perspectives of 11 black premedical students, physicians, researchers, and leaders. The interviews explored factors that may contribute to low application rates, experiences along the career pathway, and the role of academic medicine in altering the course of black males in medicine.

This report captures the major themes from the interviews and highlights research and data from various sources to build the narrative to understand these trends and find broad-based solutions to alter the trends for black men.

The hope is that this report will prompt leaders in academic medicine to redouble their efforts to improve opportunities for minorities, with specific attention to African-American men. They could rethink and renew their existing initiatives, including reviewing and updating current admissions policies and practices, thinking creatively about formal and informal efforts to engage black men and their communities, and conducting community outreach.

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