



INTRODUCTION

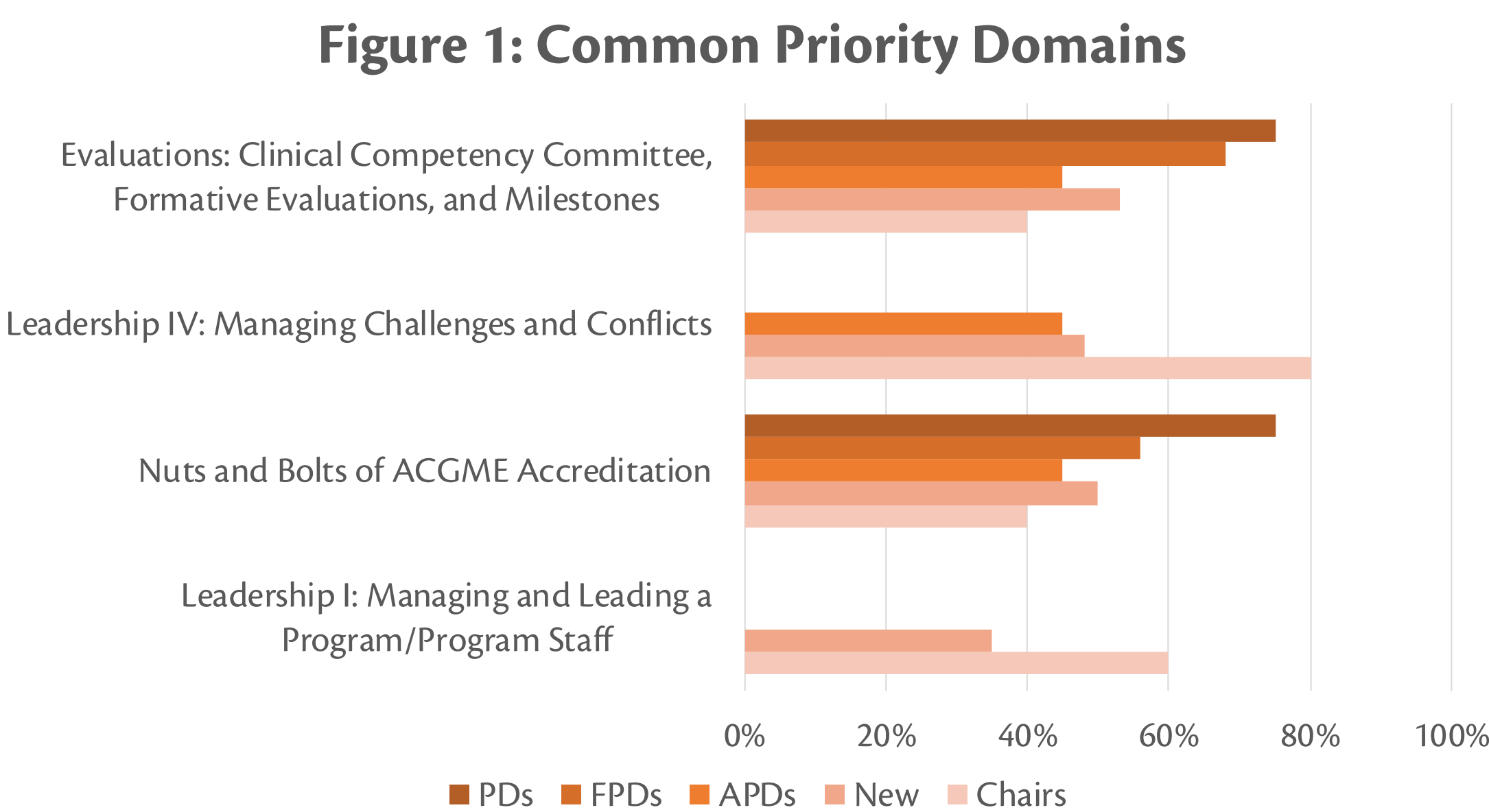
- Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program Director turnover is a common problem in many disciplines
  - In some specialties, the percentage of program directors who have been in their role for fewer than 3 years is as high as 50%
  - Program director turnover can disrupt the administration of residency programs and adversely impact resident education
- At the University of Wisconsin, the mean tenure of program directors is 6.6 years, with a median of 3.9 years; only 40% of programs have a program director who has been in the role for more than 5 years
- Project Aim: To develop a robust orientation process for new program directors, in order to increase a sense of competency and satisfaction in the role

METHODS

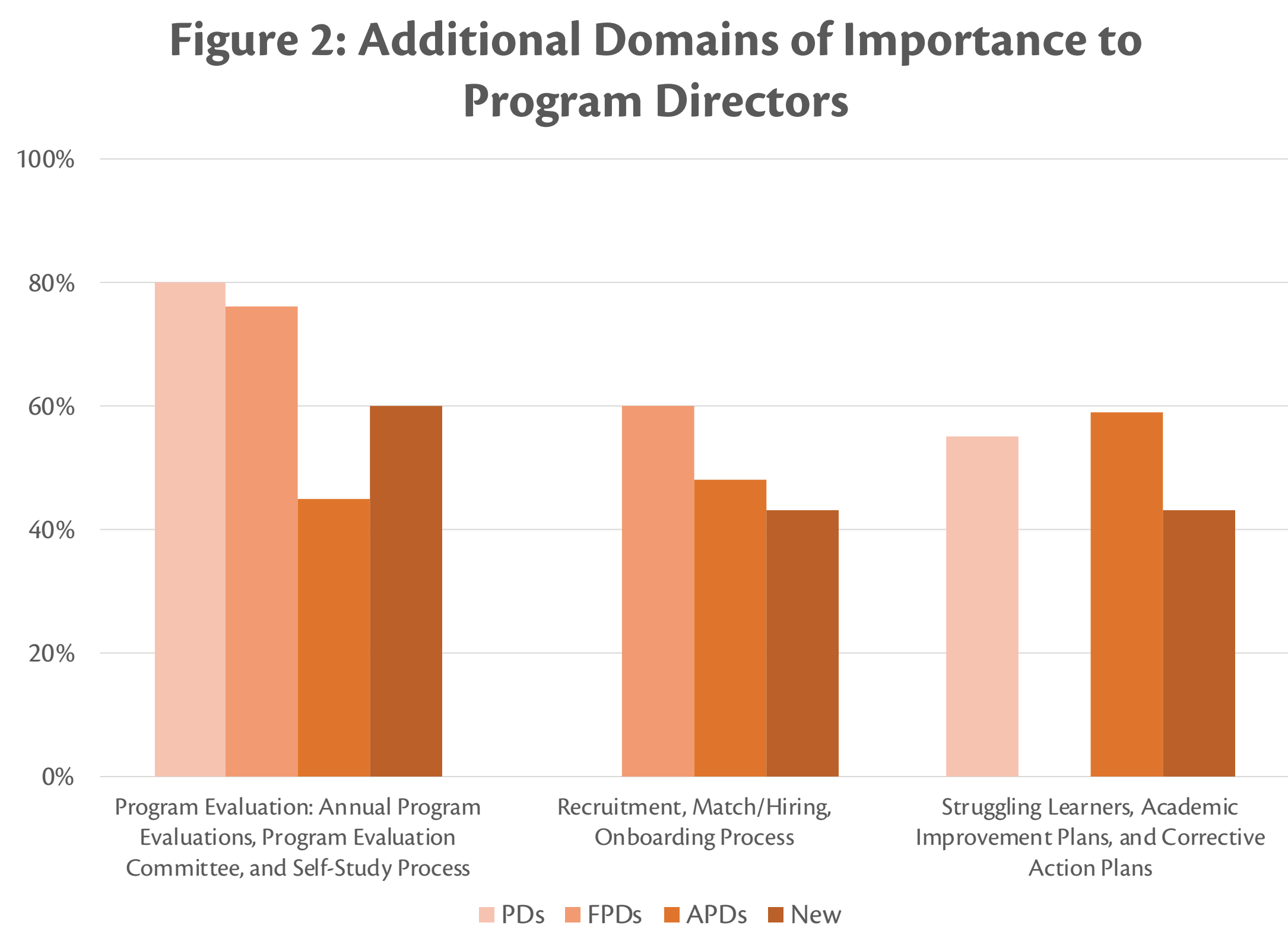
- We developed a needs assessment for current GME program leaders [program directors (PDs), associate program directors (APDs)] and department chairs
- Using a web-based survey, participants were asked to identify the five most important topics for new program directors from a list of common educational/administrative tasks
  - They were also asked to list the five most critical things to know or skills needed for a program director to succeed
  - Open-ended text responses were also collected to identify information about the most essential thing that they wish they knew when they took on the role
- Responses were compared across program leader subgroups and for New leaders (those with 0-3 years in the role)

RESULTS

- Response Rates
  - 71 of 128 (55%) Program Leaders
  - 5 of 16 (31%) of Chairs
- Both program leaders and Chairs identified a similar set of topics that are essential for new program directors (Fig 1)



- Program leaders also identified 3 additional domains (not rated by the Chairs) as important for new program directors (Fig 2)



RESULTS

- Most Important Knowledge and Skills**
- When asked about the five most important skills or areas of knowledge for new program directors, respondents identified 224 elements. We categorized these elements into eight themes: Leadership Skills (n=52); Accreditation Knowledge (n=45); Personal Characteristics (n=41); Team Management Skills (n=24); Recruitment and Managing Residents (n=19); Faculty Relations (n=16); Skill as an Educator (n=12); and Networking Skills (n=10). Representative elements for the most common themes include:

- Leadership Skills*
- “Ability to promote change”
  - “Conflict management/resolution”
  - “Meeting management”
  - “Time management”

- Accreditation Knowledge*
- “Getting to know the routine of each year -- when to start working on the APE, WebADS, etc., is helpful. There is a cyclic nature to the role, and the more familiar you are with the ‘seasons’ of the position, the more proactive you can be.”
  - “Knowing the ACGME program requirements is probably the most important thing. It seems basic, but understanding exactly what is required and why helps be sure the program is in compliance and makes subsequent program evaluation and Self-Study preparations simpler.”
  - “Nuts and bolts of program building/ improvement (SWOT analyses, data acquisition systems, etc.)”

- Personal Characteristics*
- “An honest desire to train future colleagues”
  - “Emotional intelligence”
  - “Maintaining a sense of perspective and good humor”
  - “Professionalism”

- What Program Directors Wish They Knew**
- In terms of what PDs wished they knew when taking on their roles, themes included:
    - Burden of administrative tasks (31%)
    - Importance of accreditation (19%)
    - Having a well-functioning team (14%)
    - Need for time management (11%)

CONCLUSIONS

- Program leaders and Department Chairs identified a shared set of knowledge and skills for program director success
  - Department Chairs highlighted leadership skills as most important
  - Program leaders additionally selected a set of program management skills that are important: Program Evaluation, Resident Recruitment, and Working with Struggling Learners
- Program leaders described specific elements of the skills and knowledge needed; these elements can be used to develop a focused orientation program for new program directors
- A significant number of program leaders wished that they knew about the administrative burden in these roles; addressing this concern is important to decreasing burnout and program director turnover

NEXT STEPS

- Using the common list of topics that were felt to be important for program director success, we developed a set of interactive workshops for program directors and coordinators
  - These sessions were presented in March 2020
- We will continue this work by developing a set of resources and ongoing mentoring for new program directors

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