

Medical student training program for medical research - programs and efforts in the University of Tokyo

Shigeo Okabe

Dept. Cell Neurobiol., Grad. Sch. Med. Univ. of Tokyo

Multiple evidences show the clear tendency of less medical students selecting the careers of basic science researchers. There are multiple factors that influence the behavior of medical students for their choice of future careers. It is discussed that the following factors have major impacts. (1) less stable financial condition of basic medical researchers, (2) competitive situation of obtaining academic positions, (3) general trends in both the government and the society to emphasize application of scientific findings more than bottom-up strategies of basic medical sciences, and (4) shrinkage of research budget open to basic medical research. In my presentation, I will introduce the programs and efforts in the University of Tokyo to facilitate "research mind" of the medical students and help them select the best career path in the stage of postgraduate training in either basic research or clinical practice. We evaluate that the programs in the University of Tokyo have developed steadily with success in promotion of young basic researchers, which may be informative for other medical schools.