



# Tele-Geriatric Research Fellowship - An Innovative Approach During the Pandemic

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## Introduction

- Between 2020 and 2030, the number of older adults is projected to increase by almost 18 million <sup>1</sup>.
- The Association of American Medical Colleges expects that an additional 42,600 to 121,300 doctors will be needed by 2030 <sup>2</sup>.
- There is a huge need for geriatric-trained health care providers <sup>3</sup>.
- Each year, there are more than 8 thousand Unmatched medical graduates [UMGs] in the US. Most of them are international medical graduates.

## Aim

The aim of this fellowship is to empower UMGs by improving their knowledge, skills, and experiences in geriatric medicine.

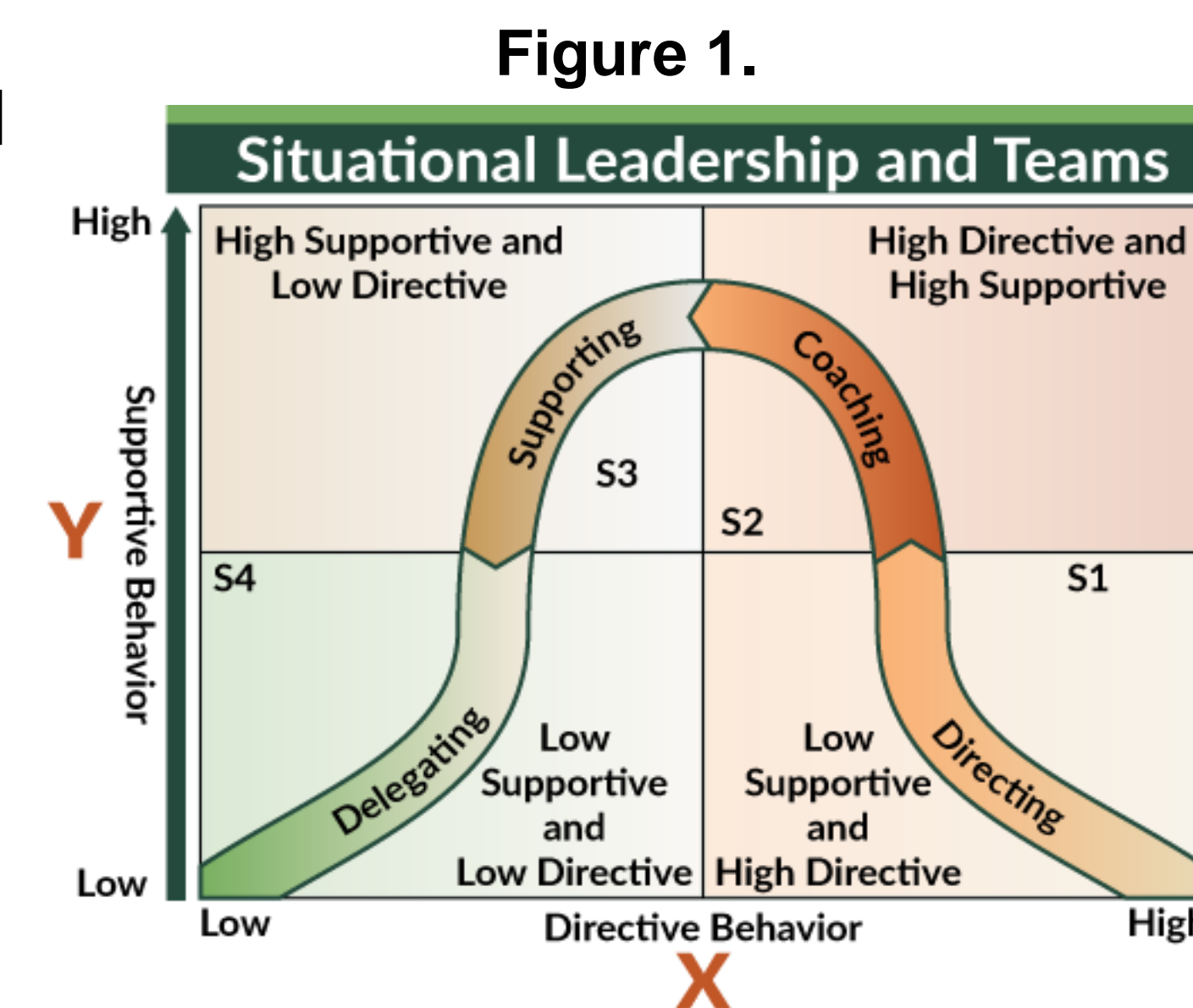
## Curriculum Development

- This curriculum was developed based on Entering Research course.
- The primary goals of this fellowship are to create a supportive learning environment to introduce UMGs to the culture of research and to teach them valuable skills needed to become effective researchers.
- The fellowship was designed to help medical graduates find a research mentor, explore the culture of research, write a research project proposal, and begin doing research.
- They informally share their research experiences and learn about the diversity of experiences available through their peers.
- Through virtual meetings, research basics, communication skills and common geriatric principles were reviewed.
- Early discussions included current pandemic topics ranging from COVID19 incidence, hospitalization and mortality to prevention and vaccination.
- The content of these discussions came from the students, and their engagement in the weekly, 2-hour-long meetings.
- The course facilitator provided a framework for the discussions, relevant background reading materials, and structured assignments designed to help students develop positive relationships with their research mentors, define themselves as a member of the research community, and understand and communicate their research.

## Description of Curriculum

### The following tasks were identified for this program

1. Recognize the research ethics principles.
2. Select a research topic.
3. Identify research question(s).
4. Describe various types of study designs.
5. Select appropriate study design.
6. Define study population.
7. Take an appropriate study sample.
8. Enumerate various study variables.
9. Discern various types of errors, including bias.
10. Identify confounding factors.
11. Select and use appropriate measurement tools.
12. Prepare for data management.
13. Set a work plan with time, budget, and a plan for dissemination.



### Tasks and Team approach

- Fellows were grouped into teams.
- Different tasks were assigned to each fellow.
- Teams leaders encouraged individual fellows
- Projects identified and project leaders assured completion of each Poster.

- Fellows learned the basics of literature review, statistical analysis (using SPSS) and reference management (e.g EndNote)
- Situational leadership skills and teams were incorporated using the four-box model <sup>4</sup> (See Figure 1)

## Results of Implementation

- A total of 6 Virtual posters were accepted in 2 national conferences: American Medical Director Association/The Society for Post-Acute and Long-Term Care (**PALTC21**: 2 virtual posters) and American Geriatrics Society (**AGS21**: 4 virtual posters).
- Eight of the fellows were matched into residency programs starting July 2021.

## Discussion

- This virtual research fellowship in geriatric medicine is considered unique and innovative as there is an immediate need for geriatric-trained health care providers.
- The conceptual framework allows training program directors to identify and select appropriate activities to use with their trainees based on need and career stage.
- Activities were designed to teach UMGs principles of research, research design, and critical evaluation of results while also giving them practice with the real-world experience of creating and presenting posters in virtual environment.
- This fellowship achieved its goals using online tools.
- In the coming year, we hope to expand this concept, and establish it as a model for implementation at other institutions.

## Disclosure

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