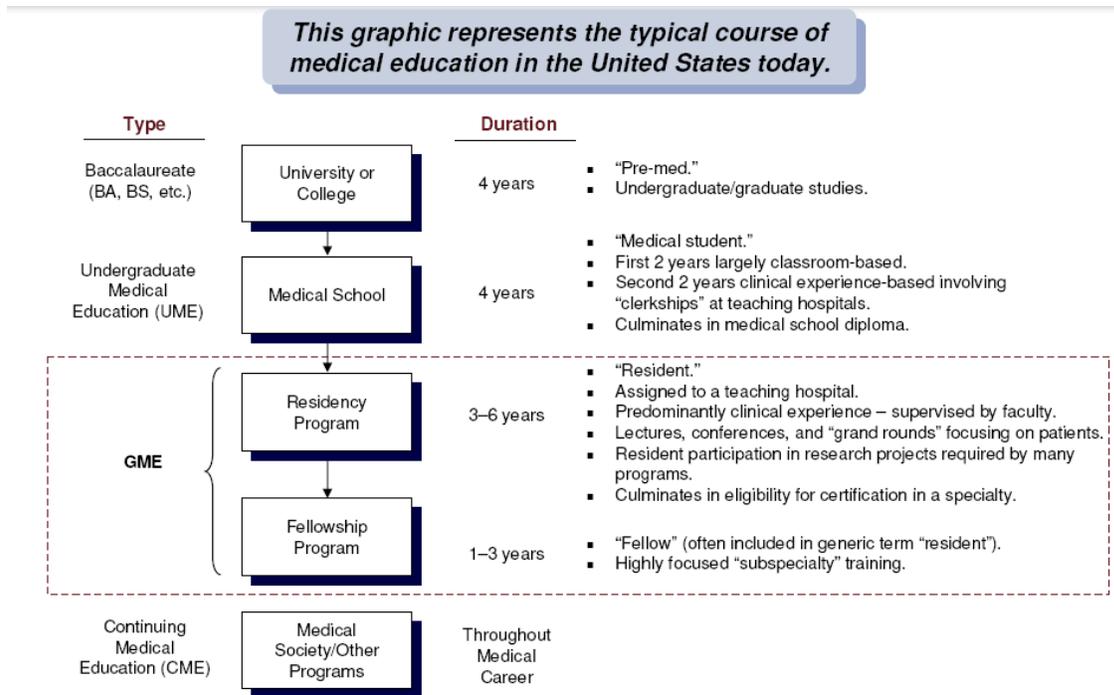


**The creation of a new physician takes years.** There are a number of decision points throughout the medical education process that influence a new physician's decision of where to establish a medical practice.



Understanding this process provides insight into the factors that influence a new physician's choices. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the location of residency/fellowship program likely has a stronger influence on where a physician ultimately chooses to practice than the location of the baccalaureate or undergraduate medical experience.

There are other considerations that influence a physician's decision of where to establish a medical practice. These include, but are not limited to the following: physician compensation and related factors (i.e., reimbursement environment, medical malpractice rates, levels of other practice expenses, etc.), family obligations, practice group dynamics, and job sharing opportunities.

Another key factor for retaining new physicians is the community's ability to retain local medical school graduates within the area after they complete their undergraduate medical training. This has been a significant challenge for the northwest Ohio region and University of Toledo Medical Center in particular.

Studies indicate that the greatest physician need exists in rural areas, such as northwest Ohio. A proven strategy for retaining physicians in these high need areas is to reserve positions in local GME programs for graduates who are originally from the region. This increases the likelihood that well-trained physicians are available to serve these high-need communities. Such an initiative would require a conscious effort to recruit local candidates at the medical school level and provide them opportunities within local residency programs