

Holly LaBrecque, M.P.H., Amie Lopez, M.Ed, Hanni Thoma, M.Ed.
 Tayla Duntz, B.A., Eliza Appleton, B.A., & Mary Beth Bruder, Ph.D.

The University of Connecticut Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research, & Service

Background

- The percentage of self-reported disabilities among medical students in US medical schools has risen from 2.7% in 2016 to about 4.9% in 2019 (Meeks et al., 2020).
- Websites at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) are typically the first point of contact for students seeking academic accommodations (Aron & Loprest, 2012).
- Higher education websites should have accessible information about accommodations for students who require such support (Aron & Loprest 2012, Costello-Harris, 2019, McKee et al., 2016; Reichow et al., 2013).

Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to review the availability of information on student accommodations on the websites of U.S. accredited 4-year medical schools.

Methods

A national review of the 155 websites of MD degree granting medical schools in the US was conducted. Data on the following variables were collected:

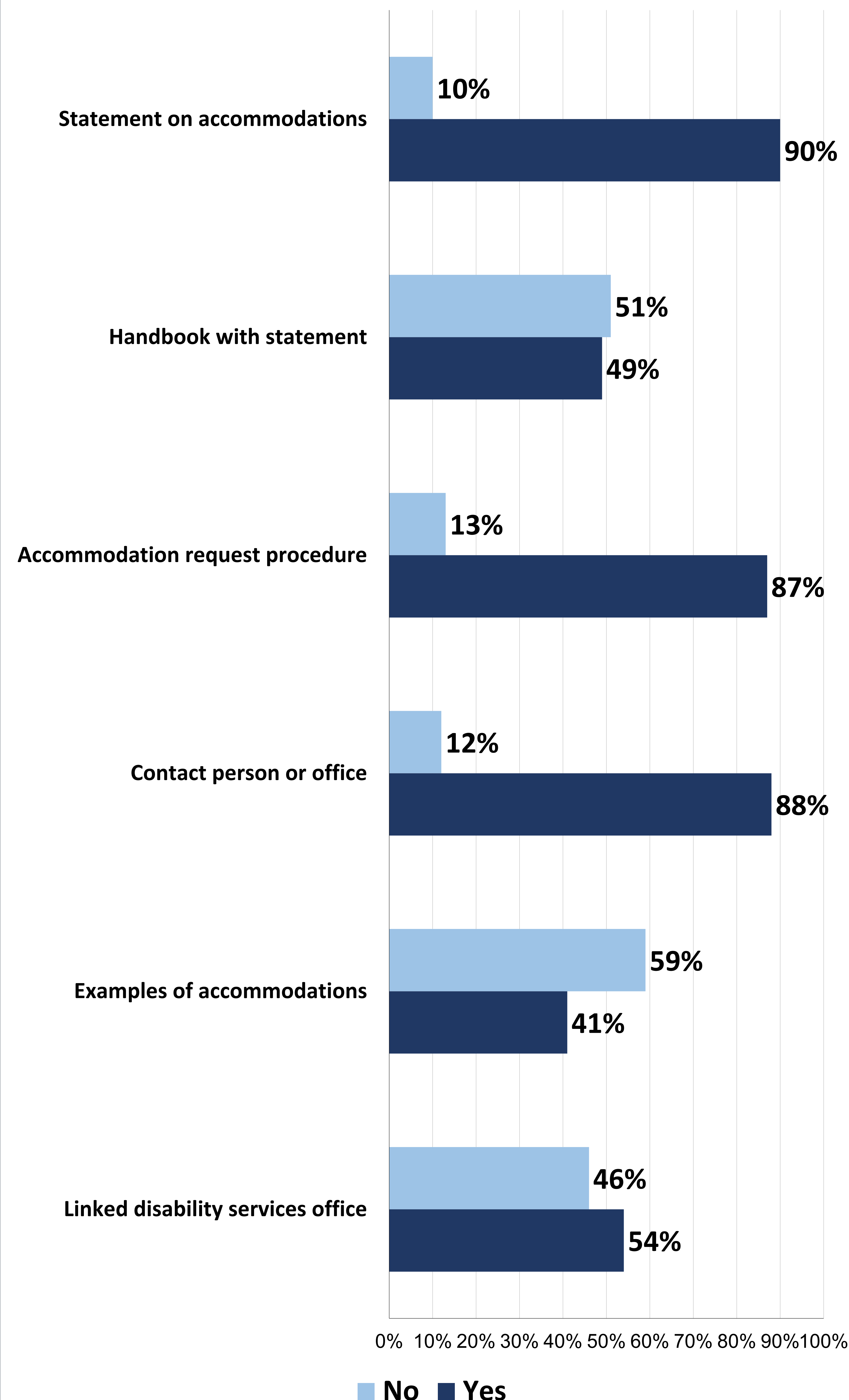
- Statements about the availability for student accommodations.
- Availability of a student handbook with a statement on accommodations.
- Procedures for students to request accommodation
- Types of accommodations.
- Presence of a disability service office (DSO) that handles requests.
- A contact person or office for accommodations.

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Results

Accommodation Information on Medical School Websites



Discussion

- Most websites provide general information on accommodations for prospective medical students. For example, most websites provided a statement on accommodations, a procedure to request accommodations, a designated person to contact for accommodations, or a linked disability services office.
- Future studies are needed to investigate the frequency, types, quality and effectiveness of accommodations provided to medical students.
- Training should be provided to medical school faculty to improve their knowledge and skills about academic accommodations for students who require them.

Limitations

- The data collected in this review are limited to what the study team was able to locate on public facing websites for medical schools in the U.S.

Conclusion

- These findings suggest that medical schools could improve access to information on the availability of accommodations for students.

References

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