

Tufts Managed Care Institute—July/August 2002

New Competency Requirements in Graduate Medical Education

Graduate medical education programs in the United States are facing major changes. The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) has launched an Outcome Project that is impacting two fundamental aspects of training.

- The ACGME has broadened the required content of physician education by adopting six general competencies, including new categories of Systems-Based Practice and Practice-Based Learning and Improvement.
- The standards for accreditation are shifting focus to outcomes and assessment of learners using competency-focused evaluation tools.

The timeframe for transforming residency training is quite extended, but programs need to be acting now. The ACGME has specified a four-phase process.

- Phase 1 - "Forming an initial response to changes in requirements," ended in June.
- Phase 2 - "Sharpening the focus and definition of the competencies and assessment tools," runs from July 2002 through June 2006
- Phase 3 - "Full integration of the competencies and their assessment with learning and clinical care," extends through June 2011.

- Phase 4 - "Expansion of the competencies and their assessment to develop models of excellence" is an ongoing process of improvement in training across the country.

On September 26-28, 2002, Tufts Managed Care Institute and Partnerships for Quality Education are co-hosting a national conference devoted exclusively to educating physicians in two of the six competencies: Systems-Based Practice and Practice-Based Learning and Improvement. For more on this event, see the Conference Home Page, http://www.tinci.org/prog_serv_prod/9_02ReqCompConf.html. TMCI has also been developing courseware, assessment instruments, and other instructional resources that are described and/or posted at www.tinci.org.

A growing body of information for GME programs is available online. Listed below are some websites and resources that program directors, faculty, and residents can access to learn more about the Outcome Project overall and about innovations and best practices for meeting the new requirements in specific competencies and content areas.

- Perhaps the best place to start is the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education's own website. Under the heading "Competencies and Outcomes Assessment" you can find the ACGME Outcome Project. The extensive set of information and resources include descriptions of the project and competencies,

bibliographies, sample assessment instruments, reports of initiatives at different programs, and links to other websites and resources. Also on this site, you can download the March 2002 issue of the ACGME Bulletin, focused entirely on the Outcome Project and the general competencies. <http://www.acgme.org>

- The Association for Hospital Medical Education offers resources for members and others on topics of interest, including the new GME requirements. AHME News Online has published reference materials on core competencies. Also available are presentations on the Outcome Project from the spring 2002 Education Institute. <http://www.ahme.org>
- Academic organizations are beginning to provide resources for their members. One group that has posted a variety of materials including links and member-created resources is the Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine. Items are accessible to anyone visiting this website. <http://www.apdim.med.edu/locker/index.html>
- The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has collaborated with ACGME in defining the competencies and adapting them for each specialty. In addition, the ABMS guidelines on maintenance of certification also require assessment of the same set of general competencies for practicing physicians. A brief essay by James Youker, MD, on Systems-Based Practice can be found in the

ABMS Record, Summer 2001.
<http://www.abms.org/News.asp>

- Some articles of interest are cited at the end of this piece.

TMCI will continue to devote much of its website and resources, including these Topics, to helping program directors and faculty meet the challenge of training physicians for the new practice environment. We invite you to send information about resources, online and in print, that are worth recommending to colleagues. Please contact Ralph Halpern, TMCI Director of Content Development and Program Evaluation, at Ralph_Halpern@tufts-health.com.

Selected readings on competency-based education and graduate medical education.

- Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. ACGME Bulletin. March 2002. Special Issue, Ushering in the second phase of the outcome project. www.acgme.org
- Bell HS, Kozakowski SM, Winter RO. Competency-based education in family practice. *Family Medicine*. Nov-Dec. 1997;29(10):701-4.
- Bordley D. Making the New ACGME Competencies Work In and For Your Residency Program. Workshop presentation at the 2002 Spring Plenary of Association of Program Directors in Internal Medicine. <http://www.apdim.med.edu/locker/index.html>
- Carraccio C, Wolfsthal S, Englander R, et al. Shifting paradigms: from Flexner to competencies. *Academic Medicine*. May 2002;77(5):361-367.

- Epstein R, Hundert E. Defining and assessing professional competence. JAMA. January 9, 2002;287(2):226-235.
- Youker J. What is Systems-Based Practice? The ABMS Record, Summer 2001;X(3):2. American Board of Medical Specialties.
<http://www.abms.org/News.asp>