

Winter 2008

## ACGME Welcomes New CEO



Thomas J. Nasca, MD, MACP, has been named chief executive officer of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

Dr. Nasca comes to the ACGME

from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia where he was dean of the Jefferson Medical College, senior vice president for academic affairs, and president of Jefferson University Physicians. Dr. Nasca is a board-certified internist and nephrologist, and brings 26 years of graduate medical education experience to the ACGME.

"I am honored to have the opportunity to join the ACGME and to succeed its outstanding and visionary leader for the past 10 years, David C. Leach, MD," said Dr. Nasca in an ACGME news release announcing his appointment. "I hope to enhance the ACGME's legacy of excellence and sustain our commitment to improve the health of the public through outstanding graduate medical education for the future physicians of the United States."

He succeeds Dr. Leach, who retired in Fall 2007.

## AUPO Meeting

The annual meeting for the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology (AUPO) will be taking place Jan 31-Feb 2, 2008 at the Ritz-Carlton in Sarasota, FL. At this meeting, Patricia Levenberg, PhD, Executive Director of the ACGME Ophthalmology RRC will be available to program directors for individual consulting regarding requirements, procedures, and any other program concerns. To arrange a meeting with Dr. Levenberg, call 415/561-8548 and ask for Denise Wilson.

## New "Program Director Guide to the Common Program Requirements"

To help clarify the meaning and expectations of the common program requirements, the "Program Director Guide to the Common Program Requirements" is available on [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org). RRC members, RRC staff, ACGME field staff, and program directors across specialties all provided review and input into the development of the document. The Guide will be regularly revised based on user feedback and as requirements change. Please email comments and suggestions to: [Guide@acgme.org](mailto:Guide@acgme.org).

## Beta Testing for ACGME Learning Portfolio

Seven Ophthalmology residency programs have been approved to participate in beta testing the ACGME Learning Portfolio (ALP).

The learning portfolio, currently in alpha testing, is a web-based tool that will not only foster good learning, but also be a key strategy for achieving the ACGME's strategic goals for increasing the accreditation emphasis on outcomes, increasing efficiency while reducing burden in accreditation, and improving communication and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.

Beta test site participants will work within specialty-specific teams to develop portfolio components, including evaluation tools that will be preloaded and used by beta participants. Following a testing period of 12-18 months, a rollout version of ALP for each specialty will be made available for voluntary use by any interested ACGME-accredited program.

FAQs regarding ALP are located at: [http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/portfolio/cbpac\\_faq.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/portfolio/cbpac_faq.pdf)

## Electronic Notification Letter Update

The ACGME has revised the process by which program directors receive notification of RRC decisions regarding their program's accreditation status. The current process sends an email notification immediately.

## Minimum Procedures

After reviewing the 2006-2007 data, the RRC decided to continue using the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile nationwide for each category as its minimum. The minimum operative numbers for each procedure also remains the same for a resident acting as surgeon.

## Residents' Conference Attendance

At the request of the ACGME, the RRC reconsidered the use of residents' conference attendance in their accreditation deliberations. The RRC decided programs should continue to monitor residents'

attendance at conferences. Attendance is a good indicator of resident participation in the educational program and of faculty involvement.

## Competency Tools

A template of core competency tools is available for all programs to use at: [http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/RRC\\_240/240\\_CoreAssessmentMethods.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/RRC_240/240_CoreAssessmentMethods.pdf). More information will be available to the program directors as the RRC begins to post additional information regarding competency assessment on its website.

## Program Director and Faculty Certification

The RRC considers program director and ophthalmology faculty board certification a high priority. The Ophthalmology program requirements state physician faculty must have current certification in the specialty by the American Board of Ophthalmology, or possess qualifications acceptable to the Review Committee. In addition, the requirements assert in II.B.2 that faculty have:

- requisite specialty expertise and documented educational and administrative experience acceptable to the Review Committee;
- current certification in the specialty by the American Board of Ophthalmology, or specialty qualifications that are acceptable to the Review Committee; and,
- current medical licensure and appropriate medical staff appointment.

The program requirements are located at: [http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/downloads/RRC\\_progReq/240ophthalmology\\_07012007.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/downloads/RRC_progReq/240ophthalmology_07012007.pdf)

## Documentation of Preliminary, PGY-1 Year

The RRC has determined that it is important to document the residents' experience during the preliminary year or PGY-1 year. The RRC will ask that a summative evaluation of the residents' level of competence be documented

at the time of entry into the ophthalmology residency. The evaluation of the resident should accompany the resident's transfer to the ophthalmology residency, even if the resident completed the preliminary year in the same institution as the ophthalmology program.

The competency based evaluation form is on the ACGME website, under the Ophthalmology menu:  
[http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/RRC\\_240/240\\_TYevaluationglobal06.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/RRC_240/240_TYevaluationglobal06.pdf).

### Accreditation Data System: Reminders and Updates

The ACGME's online Accreditation Data System (ADS) alerts the RRC to changes in programs. Program directors should update the ADS to:

- Notify the RRC of any changes in their program (i.e., new program director or adding or deleting a site)
- Request a change which needs RRC approval (i.e., an increase in resident complement)
- Submit the academic year "Annual Update" (ADS staff will e-mail the deadline for updating faculty and resident rosters)
- Prepare for an upcoming site visit (the ADS will populate many sections of the PIF with the data entered)

The ADS is a historical resource for programs, and includes recent notification letters and previous citations.

ADS allows accreditation statuses to be emailed within 2-3 days after meetings; proposed adverse actions can be emailed to the program director/DIO following the RRC meeting and proposed or confirmed adverse actions are posted within one month of meetings. Notification letters are no longer printed, and program directors are notified

via email that the pdf letter is available.

Address questions or concerns about ADS to the ADS representative for Ophthalmology, Emilio Villatoro, 312/755-7117, [evillatoro@acgme.org](mailto:evillatoro@acgme.org).

### Voluntary Withdrawal Requests

Programs must now enter requests to voluntarily withdraw accreditation (VW) using ADS only.

Programs initiate the request by answering a series of questions, including the proposed effective date, the reason for program closure, and presenting a plan to place any active residents in other programs. The request is emailed to the DIO for approval. After the DIO/GMEC approves the request, the RRC staff designee is emailed. After the program receives official notification from the RRC and the accreditation status is changed to VW, the request will automatically be removed from the report.

### CILE Pilot Projects

The Committee on Innovation in the Learning Environment (CILE) recently announced a set of duty hour and competency pilots. Ingrid Philibert, Senior Vice President, Department of Field Activities, quoted from the first formal report of the committee, which was approved at the September 2007 meeting of the ACGME Board of Directors: "The ultimate aim of these pilots is to test proposed revisions to the common duty hour standards and refinements to the approaches for teaching and assessing the general competencies to ensure they are based on valid and 'actionable' evidence of their effectiveness."

Among the incentives for pilot participation are:

- waiver of selected program requirements
- exempting programs from a site visit during the period of the pilot (unless the program requests a site visit for a specific reason such

as a request for a complement increase)

- contributing to improving the evidence base for the accreditation standards and processes

A final decision regarding the pilots will be made early in the spring of 2008.

More information regarding the pilot projects is available from the ACGME web site:

[http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/cile/cile\\_LIIPPilotProposalrev1007.pdf](http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/cile/cile_LIIPPilotProposalrev1007.pdf). For questions, contact Mary Joyce Johnston in the Department of Field Activities at 312/755-5013.

## Unsolicited Communications to Review Committees—Shifting the Focus to the GMEC

Program directors sometimes send unsolicited reports to the RRC, with the intention of clarifying a citation, or occasionally, asking for reconsideration of an accreditation cycle length not associated with an adverse action. Program directors can maintain updated information in the “Response to Previous Citations” field in the secure portion of the ADS section of their respective program information form (PIF). Unsolicited communications received by the RRC are maintained in the ACGME program file. The RRC includes these unsolicited communications as additional information at the time of the regular review of the program. Program directors should note that the ADS cannot be used for progress reports.

## Program Director’s “Virtual Handbook”

Located on one central web page, the “Virtual Handbook” contains links to RRC web pages, information for program directors and coordinators, ACGME policies

and procedures, ACGME organization and staff contact information, key to standard notification letters, site visit information, and ADS, among others. The “Virtual Handbook” is located at: <http://www.acgme.org/acWebsite/home/PDVirtuallHandbook.asp>.

## ACGME Educational Conference 2008

Save the date for the ACGME Annual Educational Conference. It will be held Feb 28-March 2, 2008 in Grapevine, Texas. This conference is designed for new program directors and residency coordinators, as well as anyone new to the accreditation process.

## RRC Meeting and Agenda Closing Date

In order to ensure an orderly and efficient RRC meeting, we must establish cut-off dates for requested agenda items. Please note these deadlines if you have submissions for future RRC meetings. The dates and deadlines are as follows:

Meeting:	May 16-17, 2008
Agenda Closing:	March 28, 2008

We understand that emergencies occur and we will be sensitive to your needs in these situations. However, routine agenda items will be held for the next meeting after these cut-off dates.

### Mailing Address:

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We invite your comments:

[plevenberg@acgme.org](mailto:plevenberg@acgme.org)

## Residency Review Committee

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Preston H. Blomquist, MD (vice-chair)  
Louis B. Cantor, MD (chair)

John G. Clarkson, MD (ex-officio)  
Martha J. Farber, MD  
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