Specialist Training and Regulation: an International Perspective

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This presentation

An introduction to:

• the International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)
• international models of specialist training
• why accreditation of specialist training is important
• the characteristics of an effective accreditation body
• model accreditation standards
IAMRA’s Purpose

To promote effective medical regulation worldwide by supporting best practice, innovation, collaboration and knowledge sharing in the interest of public safety and in support of the medical profession.

IAMRA does not promote one model of medical regulation, but rather, encourages the exchange of ideas and examples of best practice.
IAMRA is an international community with 116 members from 48 countries.
Relevant IAMRA Goals

• Promoting appropriate accreditation processes to achieve high standards in medical education and training.

• Supporting and encouraging members to develop mechanisms for assuring the continued competency of doctors.

• Strengthening the evidence base for regulation by encouraging research and evaluation of regulatory processes, and the publication and sharing of findings.
The purpose of IAMRA Statements

IAMRA provides resources, such as statements, to assist medical regulators to lobby for, develop and use systems that demonstrate good practice in regulation.
Relevant IAMRA Statements

• *Statement on the Accreditation of Post-graduate (Specialist) Medical Education* (2018)

• *Statement on Continued Competency* (revised 2018)

All statements are on the IAMRA website: www.iamra.com
The Scope of Medical Regulation

Includes:

• setting and enforcing standards of practice
• requiring continued competency
• registration/licensure
• managing complaints
• managing impaired practitioners
• managing unsatisfactory professional conduct/behaviour
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International models of Specialist Medical Education

There is considerable diversity in the types of bodies offering postgraduate education programs, most commonly:

- profession-led through Colleges
- provision in the university sector

The quality of Specialist Medical Education programs varies considerably around the world.
International models of Specialist Medical Education

Workforce mobility is such that many providers of specialist medical education also assess the ‘equivalence’ / ‘comparability’ of specialists trained in other countries.
Purpose of IAMRA’s Statement on the Accreditation of Specialist Medical Education

To outline an accreditation framework and to encourage Medical Regulators to utilise accreditation systems to:

• ensure the provision of high quality postgraduate medical education
• identify inadequate programs
• assist education providers to improve the quality of their programs
• protect patients
Scope of IAMRA’s statement on accreditation

IAMRA’s statement addresses best practice in accreditation of programs that provide postgraduate education/training and award a qualification in a specialised area of medicine.

Internationally, graduates of such programs are referred by terms such as, but not limited to, ‘Specialist’, ‘Consultant’, ‘Board Certified’.
What is Accreditation?

**Accreditation:** the process by which a credible, independent body assesses the quality of a specialist medical education program to provide assurance that it:

- produces graduates that are competent to practise safely, effectively and independently as specialists

- provides an appropriate foundation for lifelong learning and further training in any branch of medicine (continued competency)
Accreditation Internationally

Internationally, it is common for postgraduate medical education programs to be accredited by:

• the Medical Regulatory Authority
• an independent body established by the government for the purpose
• a ‘commercial’ (for profit) body
Why Accreditation?

• enables the development of standards that are relevant to the local healthcare environment

• enables the community to be satisfied that a program meets the approved accreditation standards

• assists training providers to ensure that their programs respond to evolving health needs and practices, and educational and scientific developments, while retaining diversity and encouraging innovation
Why Accreditation? (cont.)

- enables postgraduate education providers to identify the weaknesses and strengths of their programs
- assists the local Medical Regulatory Authority to assess a graduate’s suitability for specialist practice and specialist registration/licensure
- assists other Medical Regulatory Authorities to assess the quality of an applicant’s specialist medical education, and therefore their suitability for registration/licensure.
Accreditation Framework

Ideally, an accreditation process should be underpinned by law to ensure that participation and outcomes are enforceable.
An accreditation body should:

• have an appropriate governance structure to oversee its accreditation activities

• be independent of the provider being assessed, and members of the accreditation team should have no personal conflict of interest

• respect each provider’s autonomy to set its educational policies and processes
An accreditation body should:

• ensure that members of assessment teams, committees and staff apply standards and procedures consistently and appropriately

• follow documented procedures, and implement the accreditation process openly and objectively
An accreditation body should:

• gather and analyse information from multiple sources and viewpoints, including from trainees

• review its processes and the accreditation standards on a regular basis

• gather feedback on, and evaluate its performance
Accreditation Standards

Accreditation should be undertaken with reference to clearly stated standards and requirements.

The accrediting body should develop standards for the delivery of postgraduate medical education in collaboration with stakeholders, e.g. training providers, employers, trainees, consumers
Accreditation Standards: domains

1. Governance – corporate and organisational
2. Curriculum - development process and content
3. Pedagogy - teaching and learning, assessment of learning
Accreditation Standards: domains

4. Provision of CPD / further training, remediation of graduates

‘IAMRA supports and encourages medical regulators to develop and implement Continued Competency systems that are designed to improve the quality of medical practice by promoting, encouraging or requiring career-long learning for all practising doctors.’
Accreditation Standards: domains

5. Trainees - selection, participation, wellbeing, support

Bullying, discrimination, and sexual harassment*:
• 49% of Fellows had experienced it
• 63% of trainees had been bullied
• 30% of female surgeons/trainees had suffered sexual harassment
• 71% hospitals reported seeing it

* 2016, Royal Australian College of Surgeons, *Let’s operate with respect*
6. Assessment of specialist international medical graduates

*Is their training program accredited by a credible, independent body?*

7. Program monitoring and evaluation
Accrediting the Accreditor

The reliability and value of work undertaken by an accreditation body can be further enhanced if the body is, itself, independently accredited. This is strongly encouraged, when available.

The World Federation of Medical Education accredits the accreditors of undergraduate medical education.
IAMRA’s statement on Accreditation of Specialist Medical Education

IAMRA supports and encourages the development and implementation of robust, independent postgraduate medical education accreditation systems that ensure the provision of high quality training, identify inadequate programs, assist providers to improve the quality of their programs, and ultimately, protect patients.
Upcoming IAMRA Events

Conference on medical regulation
  Johannesburg, South Africa, September 15-18, 2020

Symposium on Continued Competency
  Chicago, U.S.A., September 9-10, 2019
Thank you