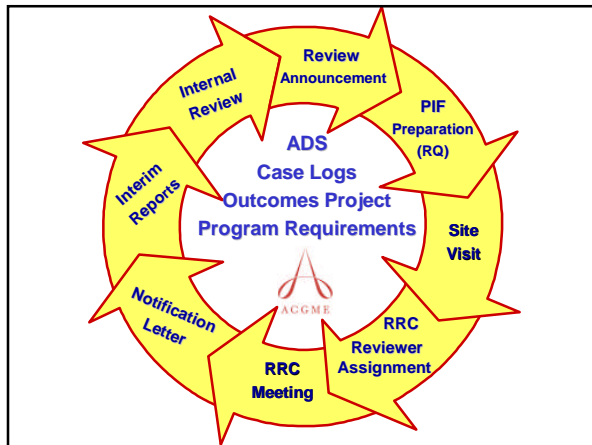



What to Expect When You're Expecting a Site Visit

Debra L. Dooley
Associate Executive Director
Review Committee for Internal Medicine
2007 Rheumatology Training Director's Conference



Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education 

Session Overview

- ACGME and the RC-IM
- RC-IM Review Process
- Preparation for the Site Visit - the PIF
- The Site Visit
- What Happens After the Site Visit



ACGME Statistics

- More than 8,000 accredited programs
- ~2,000 accreditation site visits (most full accreditation reviews are preceded by a site visit)
- Remainder based on document review
- On average, programs seen every 3.7 years (range 1 to 5 + years)
- Field staff conduct ~ 1,900 surveys




What's New at the ACGME?

- Four Strategic Priorities
- Notification Letters
- Institutional Requirements
- Common Program Requirements
- Common Program Information Form
- No Competency Assessment Form
- Development of EVE/ADAM
 - *Non-CAARIZED Subspecialty Program Information Forms*

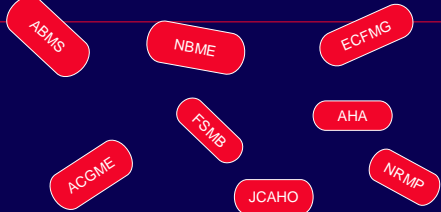


How the RC's Accredit Programs

- Develop standards
- Regularly review programs for substantial compliance with the standards
- Determine accreditation status and cycle length
- Request interim reports

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Alphabet Soup



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Acronyms for the Internal Medicine Review Process

- ADS
Accreditation Data System
- RC-IM
Review Committee for Internal Medicine
- DIO
Designated Institutional Official
- RQ and RS
Resident Questionnaire and Resident Survey

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Top Review Process Acronym

PIF

Program Information Form



How Does the Site Visit Process Begin?

- Initiated by e-mail to core program director approximately 6 months prior to approximate SV date
- Notifies the program director of programs due for survey
- Provides instruction as to where to access the PIF to download
- Describes the resident questionnaire process
- Identifies due dates
 - 90 days to complete PIF
 - 60 days to complete RQ



What is the PIF?

- Tool that the RC uses to gather a comprehensive description of programs and its compliance with program standards
- Collects data regarding all components of your program
- Is your opportunity to present your program and its structure to the RC



Preparing the PIF

- KNOW THE REQUIREMENTS
- ORGANIZE THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS
- SET A TIMELINE AND SHARE DUTIES
- USE THE NARRATIVES
- DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP
- REVIEW BEFORE SUBMISSION



A Few Pointers on PIF Preparation

- The PIF is a self-study document that describes how your program complies with the requirements
- Know your program
 - Prior citations and efforts to address
 - Issues from the last institutional review that affect your program (read LOR)
 - Current rotations and their role in the total educational program
 - Faculty strengths/contributions to program
 - Unresolved/irresolvable issues residents may raise



A Few Pointers on PIF Preparation (cont)

- Start EARLY
- Read questions carefully, create new responses
 - Clear, concise, accurate and complete
 - Provide key to abbreviations
 - Complete competencies addendum
- Check spelling and proof carefully for content
- Review prior citations, know how they were addressed, highlight in PIF and interviews



A Few Pointers on PIF Preparation (cont)

Fix internal inconsistencies in the PIF

- # residents in program vs. resident roster
- Block diagram vs. rotation schedule
- # procedures per resident vs. program total
- Narrative should agree with data/blocks

Ask faculty, residents to review and suggest edits

- Improves the PIF
- Informs residents and faculty

REMEMBER: A good PIF is the key to the good site visit



Resident Questionnaires

- Mailed to program based upon number of residents identified in ADS
- Asked to administer questionnaire
- Peer-selected resident returns in ACGME-Business Reply envelope 30 days from the due date of PIF materials



Checklist for Return of Accreditation Materials

- ✓ **Program information Forms**
 - ✓ Original and two copies with attachments
 - ✓ Must be signed off on by the DIO and Core PD
 - ✓ Returned by deadline date (90 days)
- ✓ **Resident Questionnaires mailed by designated date (60 days)**



Site Visit Announcement

- Letter from Ingrid Philibert, Director of Field Activities announcing date of visit
- Lists name of site visitor and special instructions regarding preparation of forms



Who are the Site Visitors?

Field Staff

- 31 individuals (23 MDs, 6 PhDs, 1 DMD)
- Lots of experience (most senior 20 years, 10 with over 10 years)
- Employed by the ACGME
- One site visitor, one program per day (exceptions for complex programs, evaluating complaints)



The Site Visitor's Role: the Eyes and Ears of the RC

- Arrange logistics of on-site visit
- Study the requirements and the PIF or IRD
- Travel to program's city and conduct the site visit
- Write a succinct, information-rich report
- Know the requirements in 120 specialties/subspecialties
- Learn through updates, professional development meetings, observing RRC Meetings
- Provide input into process improvement



ACGME Expectations for Accreditation Site Visits

- Based on Program Information Form (PIF) 2007: Effort to reduce collection of routine data in PIF
- Conducted in accord with established policies
- Addresses all relevant aspects of program
- Contains no recommendation for RC action
Does include "the RC may wish to pay particular attention to..."
- Educational and non-adversarial
- Informs RC accreditation decisions



The Actual Site Visit

- Explain process to participants (program director, residents, faculty, others)
- Verify, clarify and, if needed, help correct the PIF
- Meet with:
 - Program Director, Administrators
 - Faculty
 - Residents
- For some programs:
 - Meet with faculty from "customer" programs
 - Tour facilities



What Program Directors Should Know

- Focus of the site visit is the PIF
- Must show compliance with the requirements
- PIF should indicate knowledge of requirements
- Program Director is responsible for the PIF
- Incomplete or inaccurate PIF can result in deferral, request for information or citation for non-compliance



What Program Directors Should Know (cont)

- Residents' perceptions very important (as is protecting the confidentiality of resident sources)
- RC-specific resident surveys
- Follow-up on complaints from residents



The Site Visit Report

What goes in:

- Program History, review of previous citations, actions to correct
- Review of relevant data from last institutional review
- Clarification and verification of the PIF, using comments from faculty, residents, others
- Other information (varies by specialty)

What does not go in:

- Site visitor opinions, biases, judgments
- Individual resident's axe to grind



What Happens Next?

Program is assigned to reviewer

The reviewer


- Evaluates all the information available on the programs assigned
- Submits a written summary of program evaluation and recommendations to the RRC
- Presents each program to entire RRC and defends recommendations



How is an Accreditation Decision Reached?

After discussion, recommendation, and any competing recommendations are subjected to a vote

The majority decision of the entire RRC establishes the accreditation status, citations and/or concerns for the program, and sets the cycle length.

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How Do I Find Out the Decision?

E-mail within 1 week of the meeting

Notification Letter

- Official Record of Actions of RRC
- Lists Program Information
- Identifies Areas of Non-Compliance (Citations)
- Sets Approximate Date of Next Site Visit

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Site Visit to Site Visit: An Ideal Timeline

Ongoing

- Review and know the requirements
 - ACGME and RC-IM website
 - Contact RC staff if uncertain

Mid-point between reviews

- Internal Review occurs
 - Candidly explores strengths and weaknesses
 - Identifies areas for improvement

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Site Visit to Site Visit: An Ideal Time Line (cont)

3-4 months before the visit (PIF has already been completed)

- Letter arrives announcing the date, site visitor name and contact info
- Other important information



Site Visit to Site Visit: An Ideal Time Line (cont)

4-6 weeks before the site visit

- Contact site visitor to set up schedule
- Confirm what information is needed

Site visit occurs

1-4 weeks after the visit

- Site visit report is completed

2-8 months after the site visit

- RC meets and makes decision
- Notification letters are sent 4-6 weeks after the meeting
