

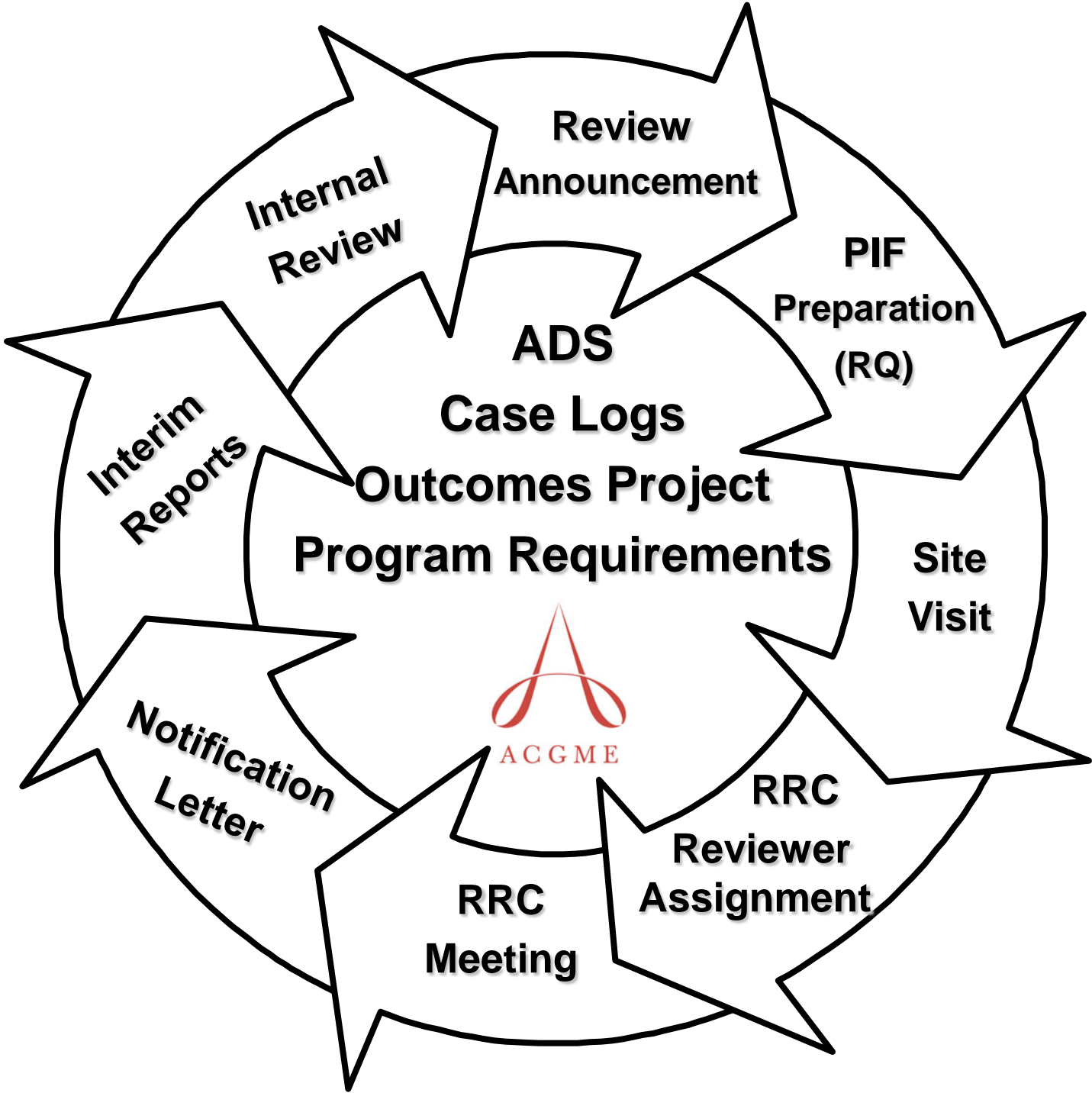
What to Expect When You're Expecting a Site Visit

Debra L. Dooley

Associate Executive Director

Review Committee for Internal Medicine

2008 Rheumatology Training Director's Conference



- ACGME and the RC-IM
- RC-IM Review Process
- ACGME and the Site Visit
- Preparation for the Site Visit - the PIF
- The Site Visit – Practical Advice
- The Day of the Site Visit
- Site Visitor Perspective
- What Happens After the Site Visit

What's New at the ACGME?

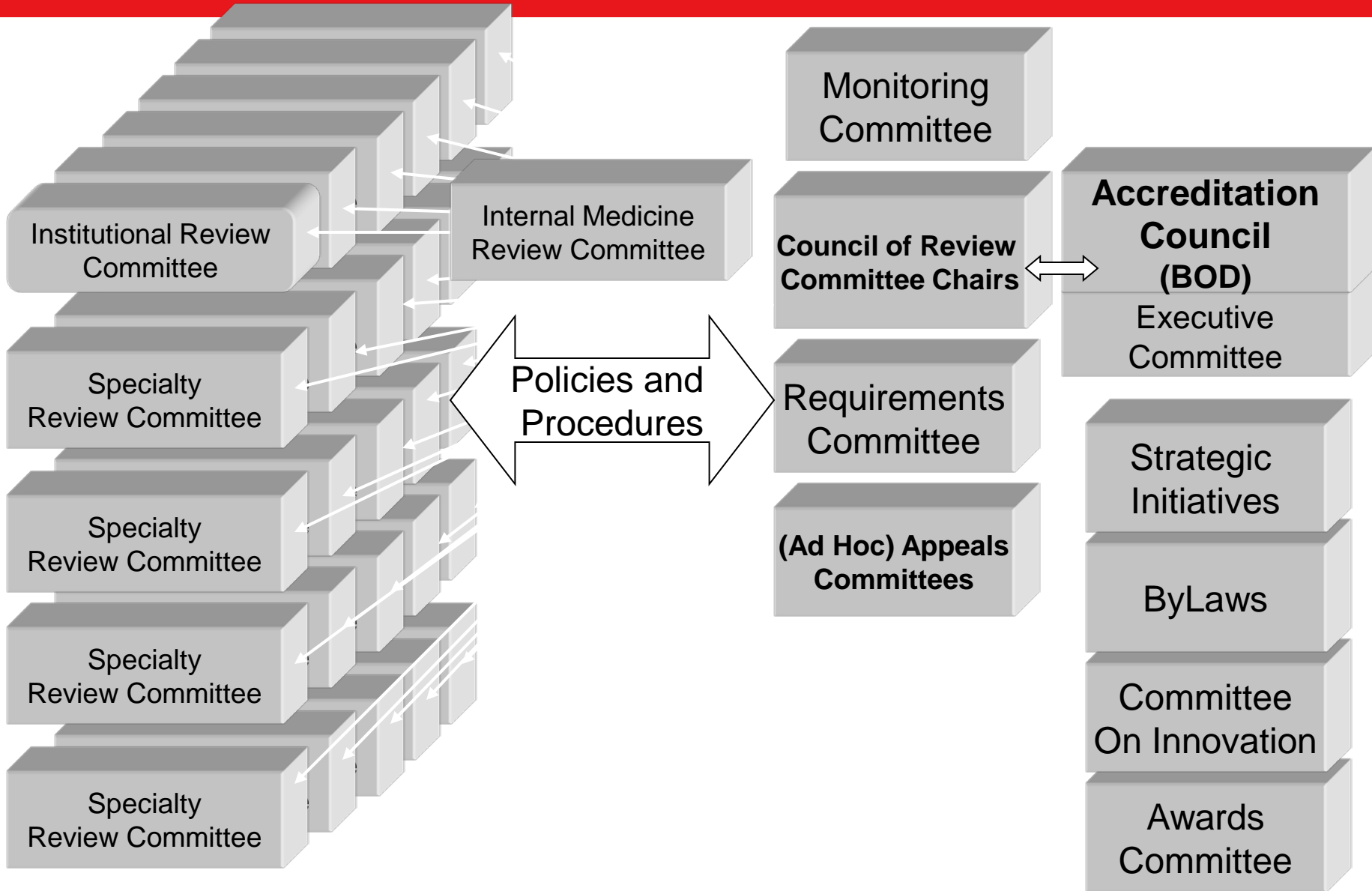
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- **New CEO**
- **Four Strategic Priorities**
- **Notification Letters**
- **Common Program Information Form**
- **Electronic Subspecialty Program Information Form**

The ACGME and the RCs

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How the RC's Accredit Programs

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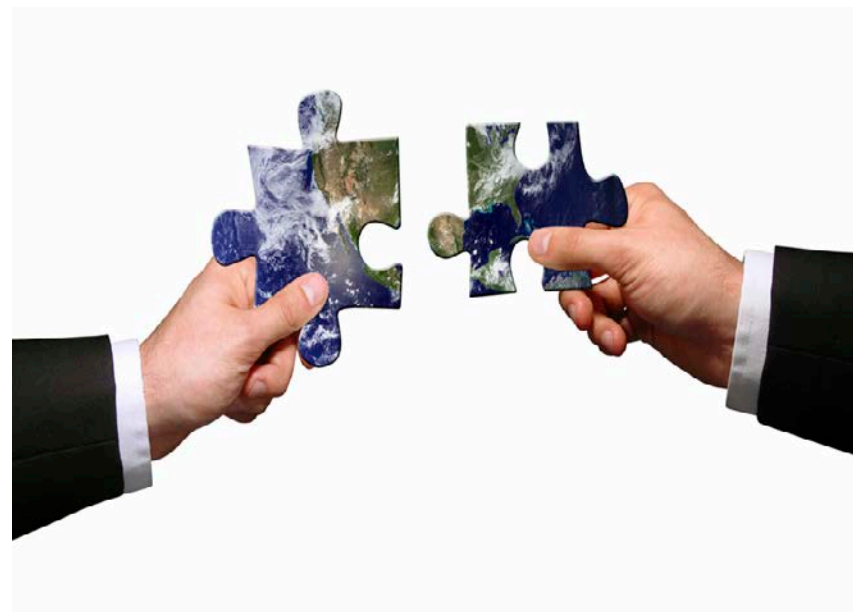
- **Develop standards**
- **Regularly review programs for substantial compliance with the standards**
- **Determine accreditation status and cycle length**
- **Request interim reports**

ACGME and the Site Visit

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- 45% of programs undergo review each year (2,000 of these preceded by a site visit)
- 3.6 year average between reviews
- 5,500 citations annually
- 12,000 residents interviewed annually as part of the site visit



- 2004 to 2006, ACGME surveyed all residents/fellows in accredited programs
- 2007 new resident survey format, programs are surveyed every two years
- Programs with fewer than four residents are exempted (Site Visitors ask the survey questions during the site visit)
- 10 million procedures in the ACGME procedure logs

Site Visit to Site Visit – *An Ideal Time Line*

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- On-going
 - *Know changes in requirements and the site visit process*
 - *Sources: ACGME web site, DIO News, ACGME Bulletin,*
 - *RC/IRC Staff, Field Activities Staff*

- Internal Review at mid-point between last review and next visit date
 - *Involves broad, representative group*
 - *Candidly explores strengths and weaknesses*
 - *Identifies areas for improvement (addressed by the time of the next visit)*

Site Visit to Site Visit – An Ideal Time Line

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- 6 to 18 months before the visit
 - *Residents complete ACGME resident survey (all programs with 4 or more, surveyed every two years)*
 - *ACGME expects programs to reach a 70% level of total responses*
 - *Aggregated results are ONLY available to program and DIO with 70% response rate*
 - *Intent: (1) focus resident interview; (2) identify serious non-compliance with duty hour standards for RC follow-up*

- DIO involvement is important
 - *Requests for changes in the site visit date*
 - *PIF review*
 - *Actions that require DIO approval (new programs, complement changes, requests for voluntary withdrawal, submitting new program director)*

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

- **PIF**

Program Information Form

What is the PIF?

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- **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**

How Does the IM Site Visit Process Begin?

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- **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**

Site Visit / PIF Preparation

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The screenshot shows the ADS website interface. On the left is a navigation menu with the following items: Home/Annual Update Status, Contact ADS Staff, Log Out, Update Program Info, Update Resident Info, Request Changes, Resident/Fellow Survey, PIF PREPARATION, COMMON PIF, Accreditation Information, Respond to Citations/Major Changes, Participating Sites, Faculty/Teaching Staff, Resident Appointments, Evaluation, Resident Duty Hours/Board Pass Rates, Print/Preview PIF, PIF Tutorials, Specialty Specific PIF, Site Visit Results, and Tools/Reference. A green arrow points from the 'COMMON PIF' section to the main content area. The main content area shows a 'Cancel' button and a form with the following fields: Accreditation Effective Date: November 8, 2007; Origin: October; Program Format: Standard; Program Requires Prior or Additional: YES; If Yes, Number of Prior or Additional Ac: 1; Last Site Visit Date: February 13, 2007; Approximate: [unclear].

- Use ADS to generate the PIF Common / Part 1
- IF information in ADS is kept up to date, generating the electronic PIF is quicker

Common PIF Sections

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- Accreditation Information
- Response to Previous Citations/Major Changes
- Participating Sites
- Faculty/Teaching Staff
- Resident Appointments
- Evaluation
- Resident Duty Hours/Board Pass Rates

COMMON PIF

Accreditation Information

Respond to Citations/Major Changes

Participating Sites

FACULTY/TEACHING STAFF

Program Director Information

Physician Faculty Roster/CV

RESIDENT APPOINTMENTS

Number of Positions

Actively Enrolled Residents

Residents Completing program

Transferred, Withdrawn and Dismissed

Evaluation

Resident Duty Hours/Board Pass Rate

SPECIALTY SPECIFIC PIF- GASTRO

Participating Sites - Additional Information

Administration of the Fellowship Program

Graduates of the Program

Rotation Schedule - Year 1

Rotation Schedule - Year 2

Rotation Schedule - Year 3

Rotation Schedule Narrative

Continuity Clinic Experiences

Other Ambulatory Experience

Research and Scholarly Activity

Research & Scholarly Activity - Graduates

Evaluation – Additional Information

Evaluation Narrative

Performance Improvement

Institution Information

General Competencies - Internal Medicine

Educational Program Part 1

Educational Program Part 2

Educational Program Part 3

Educational Program Part 4

Educational Program Narrative

Procedures & Technical

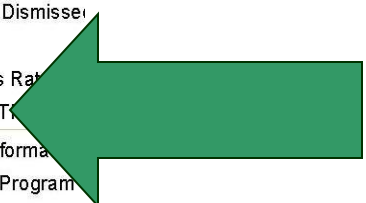
Print/Preview PIF

PIF Tutorials

Site Visit Results

Tools/Reference

ADS Menu for the Subspecialty PIF



- Participating Sites – Additional Information
- Administration of the Fellowship program
- Graduates of the Program
- Rotation Schedule – Year 1-3 and Narrative
- Continuity Clinic Experiences
- Other Ambulatory Experience

Subspecialty PIF Sections (cont)

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- Research and Scholarly Activity
- Evaluation – Additional Information
- Evaluation – Narrative
- Performance Improvement
- Institution Information

Subspecialty PIF Sections (cont)

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- Educational Program Part 1
- Educational Program Part 2
- Educational Program Part 3
- Educational Program Part 4
- Educational Program Part 5
- Educational Program Narrative
- Procedures and Technical Skills

A Few Pointers on PIF Preparation

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- 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)

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- 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

- Filling Out the PIF
 - *Answer questions clearly, briefly, directly*
 - *Paginated correctly*
 - *No extra attachments*
 - *No binders, staples, or large clips*
 - *Check for grammar and spelling errors*

Additional PIF Hints...

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- Ask several people to read the PIF and help you identify internal inconsistencies
- Common inconsistencies Site Visitors have seen:
 - *# residents in the program*
 - *Block diagrams*
 - *# months on rotation vs narrative*
 - *# procedures/resident vs program totals*
 - *Faculty lists and CV's*
 - *Narrative should agree with data/blocks*
 - *Be direct and to the point when answering questions!*

Resident Questionnaires

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- 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

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✓ 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)

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

Requests for Changes in the Site Visit Date or the Site Visitor



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1. Program staff should contact Field Activities staff within 14 days of receiving the site visit notification blast email
2. Date change policy seeks to be fair to all programs
3. First seek stand-in or work it out within the week or sequence
4. For dependent subspecialties, date changes are coordinated by the office of the core program director
5. Call Ingrid Philibert if you think the Site Visitor may have a conflict of interest
6. Late requests, DIO approval a must, fee may be assessed

Requests for Changes in the Site Visit Date

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Contact Jim Cichon or Penny Iverson Lawrence
within 14 days of date of letter at:

312.755.5015 or jcichon@acgme.org

312.755.5014 or pil@acgme.org

Please do not contact the Site Visitor,
RC Staff, or RC Chair 

What Happens on the Visit Day?

The Site Visitor Will...

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- Explain the survey process to PD, residents, & others
- Clarify, confirm, verify, and sometimes help correct PIF - it needs to be accurate!
- Meet with:
 - *Program Director, residents, faculty, administrators*
- At times: Tour areas of the facilities



Made up of....

- 30 individuals
- 6 PhDs, 23 MDs, 1 DMD
- Significant years of experience (most senior 21 years, 7 more with 10 or more years, 6 more with over 5 years)
- All are employed by the ACGME

Field Staff- Past (1982)

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2007 Field Staff- Present

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

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- **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**

What Goes Into the Site Visit Report?

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- Review of program history
- Review of previous citations & actions taken to correct them
- Review of institutional issues/citations
- Clarification/verification of the PIF (based on interviews with faculty, residents, program director and others)
- Clarification of resident complaints if any have been submitted to the ACGME Complaint Officer
- Clarification of residents' response to ACGME survey

What Program Directors Should Know

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- 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

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

- ACGME Expectations for the Site Visit
 - *Conducted in accord with established policies*
 - *Provide accurate, meaningful data*
 - *Verify/clarify information in the PIF*
 - *Address all relevant aspects of the program*
 - *Contain no recommendation for RRC action*
 - *Are educational and non-adversarial*
 - *Inform RRC accreditation decisions*

- Continuously demonstrated
 - *Shows on the day of the visit*
- PIF accurately reflects the program
 - *No embellishing - Site Visitors can tell*
- Don't ask, "How did we do?"
 - *Site visitor cannot answer, he/she is not the decision-maker*
- Don't "prepare" your residents before the visit
 - *Site visitors find out*
- Don't grill them after the visit

- Feedback critical to improving ACGME field staff performance
- Feedback is collected via on-line survey
- Surveys are aggregated, comments are scanned and, if warranted, receive phone follow-up
- If the experience with the Site Visitor did not go well or was wonderful please let the Department of Field Activities know

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?



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- 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.

How Do I Find Out the Decision?

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- 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

Next....

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- Congratulate yourself and your entire team!

