

Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in
Medicine and Other Health Professions

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To Our Readers

This is a special issue of our newsletter publication.

CAAM-HP Creates History- International Recognition Granted!

Following a formal review in 2011 of the standards and processes of the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education in Medicine and Other Health Professions (CAAM-HP) by a team of experts from the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) and the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), the **WFME Recognition Committee** granted “*Recognition for a ten year term with certain follow-up actions required*”.

The background to this new development is as follows:

Regulatory bodies have experienced challenges in evaluating medical schools and their graduates due to the variation in oversight measures by an external body, rigour and transparency of the process and standards used.

As a result, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG), the body responsible for certifying international medical graduates who wish to enter graduate medical education programmes in the USA, recently came up with what is regarded as a more viable system of evaluating and ‘recognising’ the various national and regional bodies which

accredit international medical schools. It is felt that the evaluation and recognition of accrediting bodies by a single international agency using globally accepted criteria would create a meaningful system of international accreditation. To obtain approval, national or regional accrediting bodies would need to document their accreditation processes and demonstrate that those processes ensure a certain level of quality in medical education. Such a demonstration of quality would be manifested by the accrediting bodies’ evaluation of individual medical schools within their jurisdiction. Graduates of medical schools accredited by a body that is approved by this international agency would meet the ECFMG’s accreditation requirement for ECFMG certification.

“physicians applying for ECFMG certification will be required to graduate from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited.”

Associated with this is the new policy announced on September 21, 2011 that effective 2023, physicians applying for ECFMG certification will be required to graduate from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited. To satisfy this requirement, the physician's medical school must be accredited through a formal process that uses criteria comparable to those established for US medical schools by the Liaison Committee for Medical Education (LCME) or that uses other globally accepted criteria such as those put forth by the WFME.

The CAAM-HP accepted the invitation to be the first accrediting body reviewed in this pilot process which involved completion and submission of the **Criteria for Recognition of an Accrediting Agency Questionnaire**. In addition, a four-member observer team of representatives from the WFME and FAIMER accompanied the site visit team to St George's University School of Medicine to Grenada and six hospitals in the New York region, March 7-11, 2011. The team later attended the CAAM-HP meeting held in Jamaica, June 24-25, 2011.

News came on May 10, 2012 that CAAM-HP's accreditation standards and processes were approved by the WFME. CAAM-HP is the **first** accrediting body recognized through this new process.

The Recognition Committee noted and agreed to the following areas of strength of the accreditation system used by CAAM-HP:

- ◆ It is characterised by a high degree of transparency
- ◆ Its policies and procedures are in accordance with internationally accepted best practice
- ◆ It provides easily accessible information regarding the accreditation process
- ◆ It provides comprehensive guidelines and instructions
- ◆ The site visit teams are highly qualified Caribbean and international experts

Such a recognition by the WFME attests to the credibility of the policies and procedures of the CAAM-HP *"to assure the quality of medical education in the programmes and medical schools that it accredits"*.

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