

U.S. Department of Education

Final Staff Analysis of the Report Submitted by Canada

Prepared March 2012

Background

In February 1995, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education Accreditation (NCFMEA or the Committee) first determined that the accreditation standards and processes used by the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS or Canada) to evaluate medical schools in Canada were comparable to those used in the United States. The Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada and the Canadian Medical Association sponsor CACMS.

In 2001 and again in 2009, the NCFMEA reaffirmed its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the CACMS for the evaluation of medical schools remain comparable.

The NCFMEA also requested that the CACMS submit a report for review at the spring 2011 NCFMEA meeting updating the Committee on the two issues included within this report. The NCFMEA did not meet in spring 2011 due to the pending appointment of new NCFMEA members and the designation of a committee chair.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the information submitted by the country, Department staff concludes that Canada provided information in response to the NCFMEA's request for a report on two specific issues. The specific issues addressed in this report include the control local governments have over medical schools, and the CACMS' relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities.

Regarding the local government control, Department staff noted that the CACMS provided narrative information that provincial governments have the authority to close medical schools by virtue of their funding of and authority governing medical schools within their jurisdiction. However, the CACMS is not aware of any example where the provincial governments have exercised that authority and therefore could not provide documentation of such an occurrence

Regarding the CACMS' relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities, Department staff noted that the CACMS provided

additional documentation concerning its recognition by five associations and organizations as the accrediting body for medical schools in Canada, but did not provide any additional information or documentation regarding the CACMS' relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities, or that its accreditation is recognized by those governmental entities. Therefore, Department staff recommends the submission of additional information and documentation to demonstrate that the CACMS is the entity clearly designated as responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education, and that the CACMS has the clear authority to accredit the operation of medical schools in Canada.

Staff Analysis

Outstanding Issues

Whether local governments can close schools, and, if so, whether and how often local governments have closed them.

Country Narrative

Provincial governments could theoretically close medical schools but this has never happened.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The NCFMEA requested information concerning the operational authority of local governments in response to the information and documentation presented and reviewed at the March 2009 meeting. Specifically, the CACMS provided information that each provincial government is responsible for the approval or denial of the operation of medical schools because no federal Department of Health or Department of Education exists in Canada. However the CACMS did not provide information or documentation regarding the relationship between the provincial governments and CACMS, to include the operational authority concerning the establishment and closure of medical schools.

In this report, the CACMS provided information to indicate that provincial governments have the authority to close medical schools but that they have never exercised that power. While Department staff appreciates the statement provided by the CACMS, the staff recommends more information and documentation concerning the relationship between the CACMS and the provincial governments to provide a clear indication of the entities designated to have the authority to approve or deny the operation of medical schools in Canada.

Country Response

All medical schools in Canada are public and financially supported by provincial governments, and a university's authority to confer degrees is also granted by provincial governments. While provincial governments cannot close medical schools, they can theoretically withdraw funding and/or withdraw a university's authority to grant MD degrees. Should this happen, a medical school would, in effect, no longer be able to operate. To our knowledge, this has never happened in Canada.

Analyst Remarks to Response

The CACMS provided narrative information that provincial governments have the authority to close medical schools by virtue of their funding of and authority governing medical schools within their jurisdiction. However, the CACMS is not aware of any example where the provincial governments have exercised that authority and therefore could not provide documentation of such an occurrence.

Staff Conclusion: Comprehensive response provided

CACMS' relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities.

Country Narrative

There is no formal relationship with the federal or provincial governments however both levels of governments recognize CACMS as the accrediting body for Canadian medical schools. Furthermore, provincial governments only support school which are fully accredited, the most recent example being the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (founded in 2004).

In 1979, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) all recognized the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) as the accrediting body for Canadian Medical Schools and having final authority for accreditation decisions.

Analyst Remarks to Narrative

The NCFMEA requested information concerning the CACMS' relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities in response to the information and documentation presented and reviewed at the March 2009 meeting. Specifically, the CACMS did not provide information or documentation to demonstrate that the CACMS is authorized by the Canadian government (national or provincial) as the entity responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education.

In this report, the CACMS provided information regarding its relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities. Specifically, the CACMS stated that there is no formal relationship with the federal or provincial governments, but that those governments do recognize the accreditation of the CACMS. The CACMS also stated that various associations and organizations recognize it as the accrediting body for medical schools in Canada.

While Department staff appreciates the statements provided by the CACMS, the staff recommends the submission of documentation to support the information provided and to demonstrate that the CACMS is the entity clearly designated as responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education, and that the CACMS has the clear authority to accredit the operation of medical schools in Canada.

Country Response

In 1979, the Canadian Medical Association (CMA), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC), the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC), the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) all recognized the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) as the accrediting body for Canadian Medical Schools and having final authority for accreditation decisions.

We are attaching copies of the letters of recognition from CMA, AUCC, CFPC, RCPSC and FMRAC.

Analyst Remarks to Response

The CACMS provided additional documentation concerning the recognition of CACMS by five associations and organizations as the accrediting body for medical schools in Canada. While Department staff appreciates the additional documentation provided by the CACMS, it does not demonstrate its relationship to the Canadian government, the provinces, and the local authorities, to include recognition of its accreditation by those entities.

Therefore, Department staff recommends the submission of additional information and documentation to demonstrate that the CACMS is the entity clearly designated as responsible for evaluating the quality of medical education, and that the CACMS has the clear authority to accredit the operation of medical schools in Canada. This information should include a specific description of the relationship between the CACMS and the provincial governments to provide a clear indication of the entities designated to have the authority to approve or deny the operation of medical schools in Canada.

Staff Conclusion: Additional Information requested
