

U. S. Department of Education



Staff Analysis
of the
Standards Used by

Canada

for the Evaluation of Medical Schools

March 9, 2001

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Prepared February 2001

Background

The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education Accreditation (NCFMEA) originally determined that the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) accreditation standards and processes were comparable to the standards of accreditation applied to M.D. programs in the United States during its February 1995 meeting. The NCFMEA reviews the comparability of countries' standards on a periodic basis, and in June 2000, Canada was provided a copy of the NCFMEA's new guidelines and requested to provide information to demonstrate compliance with those guidelines. The information provided by the CACMS in response to that request is the subject of this analysis.

• **Summary of Findings**

The standards of accreditation used by Canada to accredit medical schools offering programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree are the same standards of accreditation that are applied to M.D. programs in the United States.

• **Staff Analysis**

The National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation is charged with determining whether the standards of accreditation used by a foreign country to accredit medical schools offering programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree are comparable to standards of accreditation applied to M.D. programs in the United States.

Canada's current request for redetermination of comparability consisted of a letter from Dr. David Hawkins, the Executive Director and Secretary of CACMS, dated August 4, 2000, and a copy of the May 2000 edition of the LCME publication, 'Functions and Structure of a Medical School.' The 'Functions and Structure' document officially covers the CACMS. The letter formally provided the CACMS's assurance that since NCFMEA last reviewed our standards for

medical school evaluation in February 1995, nothing has changed, and if anything the links with LCME have become even stronger."

All Canadian medical schools are accredited by both the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), the accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary for the accreditation of programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States.

CACMS is jointly sponsored by the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges, the Canadian counterpart of the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Canadian Medical Association. LCME is jointly sponsored by the Executive **Council of the**

Association of American Medical Colleges and the Council on Medical Education of the American Medical Association.
American medical schools.

For many years, there has been cross representation between LCME and CACMS. There is one full voting Canadian member on the LCME, and the Secretary of CACMS attends all meetings of the LCME. Conversely, there is a full voting member from the LCME who sits on the CACMS, and the two co-Secretaries of the LCME attend all meetings of the CACMS. An American appointed by the LCME participates in all Canadian on-site evaluations, and survey reports concerning Canadian schools are reviewed and acted upon by both the LCME and the CACMS.

The accreditation standards and processes used to evaluate medical schools in the United States and Canada are identical. This means that the key LCME document, 'Functions and Structure of a Medical School,' which specifies the LCME accreditation standards and processes, applies to both Canadian and American medical schools. As the title page of the 'Functions and Structure' document makes clear, changes to the accreditation standards and/or processes go through an identical process of consultation and formal ratification by both the LCME and the CACMS.

The guidelines used by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation to determine if the standards of accreditation used by a foreign country to accredit medical schools offering programs leading to the

M.D. (or equivalent) degree were developed after thorough review and consideration of the LCME standards (since the LCME is the recognized accrediting agency for M.D. programs in the United States).

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Documentation:

Letter from the Executive Director and Secretary of the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools to Dr. Karen Kershenstein, Director, Accreditation and State Liaison, US Department of Education, dated August 4, 2000 LCME publication, 'Functions and Structure of a Medical School,' edition of May 2000