

U.S. Department of Education

Staff Analysis
of the Report Submitted by

Poland

Prepared June 2004

Background

In October 1997 the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) first determined that the accreditation standards used by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (hereafter, Ministry of Health) to evaluate the medical schools in Poland were comparable to those used in the United States.

During its September 2003 meeting, the NCFMEA re-determined that the accreditation standards and processes used by the Ministry of Health and the Accreditation Committee of Polish Universities of Medical Sciences (ACPUMS) to evaluate medical schools in Poland were comparable to those used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States. ACPUMS was established in 1997 by the Conference of Presidents of Medical Universities. (Note: The current materials submitted by Poland often refer to the ACPUMS as the Accreditation Committee of Medical Universities, or ACMU. They are both the same entity. ACMU is a colloquial abbreviation.) ACPUMS is composed of one academic teacher from each medical school, one student, one representative of the Center for Postgraduate Medical Education, and an observer from the Ministry of Health. There are 11 well-established state-operated medical schools in Poland and no privately operated medical schools. Ten of the schools are freestanding universities; one is embedded within a university

Also during its meeting the NCFMEA requested that Poland submit a report in June 2004 on the evolving relationship between ACPUMS and the recently established state accreditation committee. In addition, the NCFMEA asked for a full report on accreditation activities involving Polish medical schools for review at its September 2005 meeting.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the documentation submitted by the country, Department staff conclude that Poland has provided all of the information requested by the NCFMEA. Department staff also concludes that the country's actions during the past year appear to be consistent with the NCFMEA guidelines.

Staff Analysis

Accreditation Committee of Polish Universities of Medical Sciences (ACPUMS) conducts accrediting activities on behalf of the Ministry of Health, although it has also been presenting the results of its evaluations to the Ministry of National Education and Sports (MoNES), which oversees all postsecondary institutions in Poland.

In 2002, a new government accreditation commission, the National Commission on Accreditation (NCA), was created under the supervision of MoNES. The NCA is responsible for presenting to MoNES applications for establishing a university or recognizing an institution's right to offer instruction in particular fields, and for evaluating the educational standards and curricula of its respective schools. The NCA can also request the closure of an institution.

The report notes that this structure--and the underlying laws--allows for the cooperation of NCA with other accrediting entities, such as the ACPUMS. The report further clarifies that ACPUMS's relationship with NCA and MoNES is informative only. ACPUMS notifies MoNES on the results and periods of accreditation that it has granted, but it cannot request the closure of an institution.

The report contains many assurances that MoNES as well as the Ministry of Health highly regard the activities of ACPUMS. The Ministry of Health continues to actively use the results of the ACPUMS evaluations since the law establishing the NCA does not prohibit it from doing so. In addition, while expressing its desire to continue to be kept informed regarding the ACPUMS accrediting activities, MoNES plans to ask the NCA to forward any evaluations it makes of medical curricula to the U.S. Department of Education.