



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202

MAY 23 2003

SENT BY FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

Dr. M. Hayat Zafar
President
Pakistan Medical and Dental Council
G-10/4, Mauve Area
Islamabad
Pakistan

Dear Dr. Zafar:

In March 1997, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) determined that the medical accreditation standards used by Pakistan were comparable to the standards used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States. On March 13, 2003, the NCFMEA reviewed the information recently provided by the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (Council) on its current medical accreditation standards to reassess the comparability of those standards.

I am pleased to inform you that the NCFMEA, based on the most recent information and materials received from Pakistan, reaffirmed its prior determination that the standards and processes used by the Council to accredit medical schools in Pakistan are comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States. This determination of comparability by the NCFMEA has a maximum duration of six years from the date of this letter, unless the Committee withdraws, extends or renews its determination prior to that date. Before expiration of the six-year period, the NCFMEA will seek to confirm that your standards and processes for accrediting medical schools in Pakistan are still comparable to the accreditation standards applied to medical schools in the United States. If so, its previous determination of comparability will be extended for another period.

As a result of the determination of continued comparability by the NCFMEA, any medical school in Pakistan that is accredited by the Council may apply to the U.S. Department of Education to participate in the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program. If a medical school's application is approved, students enrolled in the school who are either U.S. citizens or permanent residents of the U.S. may receive FFEL loans to finance their medical education if they meet all other eligibility requirements. Medical schools that wish to participate in the FFEL program may obtain the proper application forms from the Foreign Schools Team by calling (202) 377-3168 or by writing to the following address:

Foreign Schools Team
FSA/Schools Channel/CMO
U.S. Department of Education
Room 73C3
830 First St., NE
Washington, DC 20202-5340
U.S.A.

The NCFMEA also requested that Pakistan submit, for review at the March 2004 NCFMEA meeting, a report on Pakistan's accreditation activities. Please see the enclosure for specific details about the report. In addition to the report, the NCFMEA requested that Pakistan provide more detailed information on the following: (1) what policy, if any, the Council has pertaining to a medical school's humane treatment of animals that are used in medical research, and (2) what policies the Council has to deal with circumstances where the private interests of a faculty or staff member may conflict with that person's official responsibilities.

Please provide the requested policy information and the report on accreditation activities by December 1, 2003 to the U.S. Department of Education at the address below:

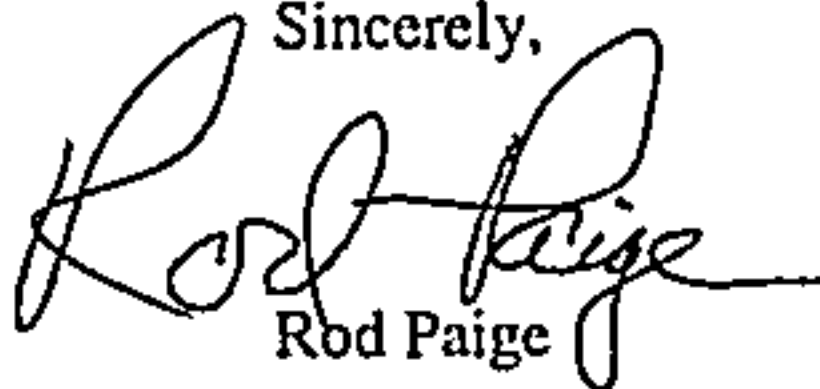
Carol Griffiths
Chief, Accrediting Agency Evaluation Unit
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, NW – Room 7105
Washington, D.C. 20006-8509
U.S.A.

If you have any questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact Ms. Griffiths at (202) 219-7011 (telephone), (202) 219-7005 (fax), or carol.griffiths@ed.gov (e-mail).

In the fall of 2003, Bonnie LeBold, the Executive Director of the NCFMEA, will contact you to provide information regarding the March 2004 NCFMEA meeting. In the interim, if you have any questions about the meeting, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. LeBold at (202) 219-7009 (telephone), (202) 219-7008 (fax), or bonnie.lebold@ed.gov (e-mail).

I want to thank you for taking the time to respond to our requests for information about your standards and processes for accreditation of medical schools. The NCFMEA members and I very much appreciate your ongoing interest and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,



Rod Paige

Enclosure

**Report Requested from the
Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC)
by the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA)**

Due Date: December 1, 2003

Submit to: Carol Griffiths
Chief, Accrediting Agency Evaluation Unit
U.S. Department of Education
1990 K Street, NW – Room 7105
Washington, D.C. 20006-8509
U.S.A.

Phone: (202) 219-7011
Fax: (202) 219-7005
E-mail: carol.griffiths@ed.gov

Content: The NCFMEA is requesting the following information (and any applicable supporting documents) regarding the following:

- ***Current status of medical schools:*** A list of the medical schools currently operating in Pakistan, indicating whether each school has gone through the accreditation process and what the outcome of that accreditation process has been; for example, whether the school is fully accredited, whether the school is provisionally accredited, whether accreditation has been terminated, etc.
- ***Overview of accreditation activities:*** A summary of key activities by the PMDC in 2003, such as a list of accreditation reviews conducted, accreditation decisions reached, and accreditation conferences or training sessions held.
- ***Laws and Regulations:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2003 in your country's laws or regulations that affect the accreditation of your medical schools, and, if so, what those changes were.
- ***Standards:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2003 in the accreditation standards that the PMDC uses to evaluate and accredit medical schools in the areas listed below, and, if so, what those changes were:
 - administration,
 - faculty,
 - curriculum,
 - admissions procedures,
 - student services,
 - methods for evaluating student achievement, and
 - facilities.
- ***Processes and procedures:*** An indication as to whether there have been any changes during 2003 in the accreditation processes or procedures used by the PMDC for the following –
 - conducting site visits,
 - selecting and training individuals who conduct site evaluations or who make accreditation decisions,

- periodically reevaluating and regularly monitoring medical schools,
 - reviewing substantive changes reported by medical schools,
 - ensuring the PMDC has effective controls against the conflicts of interest and the inconsistent application of accreditation standards, and
 - ensuring that accreditation decisions are based, in part, on the evaluation of student performance after graduation from medical school.
- *Schedule of upcoming accreditation activities:* A listing of upcoming accreditation meetings and on-site visits to medical schools and clinical clerkship sites for the period covering December 2003 through December 2004.

U.S. Department of Education



Staff Analysis

Pakistan

**For the March 13, 2003 Meeting
of the
National Committee on Foreign Medical
Education and Accreditation**

U.S. Department of Education
Staff Analysis
of the Standards Used by
Pakistan
For the Evaluation of Medical Schools

Prepared February 2003

Background

At its March 1997 meeting, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) determined that the standards of accreditation used by Pakistan to accredit medical schools offering programs leading to the M.D. (or equivalent) degree were comparable to standards of accreditation applied to M.D. programs in the United States. The NCFMEA reviews the comparability of countries' standards on a periodic basis. The U.S. Department of Education (Department), in September 2002, sent Pakistan a copy of the NCFMEA's new guidelines and requested that Pakistan provide information to demonstrate its compliance with those guidelines. The information provided by Pakistan in response to that request is the subject of this analysis.

Summary of Findings

The environment for the evaluation and recognition of medical schools in Pakistan is somewhat different from the system used in the United States to accredit medical schools. The Pakistani government completely regulates every aspect of public medical education in the country, with the Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PMDC or the Council) prescribing the medical curriculum and its objectives, the size and qualifications of the faculty, admissions criteria and other indicia traditionally associated with educational quality, and even the number of beds to be used in clinical studies in the affiliated teaching hospitals.

The function of the on-site evaluation teams (called inspection teams) is to verify whether the prescribed standards are maintained by each of the medical schools, and only those schools that meet the standards qualify for recognition by the PMDC. This is very different from the accreditation system used in the United States, which allows medical schools considerable freedom and flexibility to operate within generally established parameters. While the Pakistani system may be seen as focusing primarily on what would traditionally be called "educational inputs" in the United States, it nevertheless does require a very thorough on-site inspection of a number of variables, namely, the quality of a medical school's faculty and the adequacy of its facilities, including equipment, classrooms, laboratories, and libraries.

