



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

June 10, 2010

Honorable Ewa Kopacz
Minister of Health
ul. Miodowa 15
00-952 Warsaw
Republic of Poland

Dear Dr. Kopacz:

On September 14, 2009, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) met to evaluate the documents submitted by Poland describing the current accreditation standards and processes used to accredit medical schools in your country.

The purpose of the NCFMEA's review was to determine the comparability of Poland's medical accreditation system for Doctor of Medicine programs, or the equivalent, to the systems used to accredit such programs in the United States (U.S.). Under U.S. law, accredited schools in a country that the NCFMEA finds comparable may apply to participate in the U.S. William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) Program. Then, if a medical school participates in the Direct Loan Program, U.S. students attending the school may apply for Direct Loans to help cover educational expenses. For more information about foreign schools' transition to the Direct Loan Program, access the new Foreign School Information Web page at <http://ifap.ed.gov/ForeignSchoolInfo/ForeignSchoolInfo.html>.

The NCFMEA reviewed the reapplication submitted by the Accreditation Committee of Polish Universities of Medical Science (ACPUMS) regarding its medical education accreditation activities and heard testimony from Poland's representatives. The NCFMEA wishes to thank Dr. Leszak Paczek, Dr. Roman Danielewick, Dr. Adam Fronczak, Dr. Marek Konarzeski, and Dr. Grazyna Zebrowska for attending the meeting to provide additional information regarding the ACPUMS' activities. Their testimony was very helpful, and the NCFMEA valued their participation in the meeting.

The NCFMEA formally deferred a determination that the standards and processes used to accredit medical schools in Poland are comparable to those used to accredit medical schools in the United States until the Spring 2010 NCFMEA meeting, pending the receipt of a report that addresses the following specific issues:

- Since the interactions between the statutes (issued by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education) and the related health matters (covered by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare) likely entail overlapping responsibilities, the NCFMEA inquires further as to how the two distinct Ministries cooperate in practice.

- The NCFMEA requests evidence that the ACPUMS process consistently evaluates the adequacy and efficiency of each medical school's administration.
- The medical school faculty, the minister concerned with health matters, and ACPUMS appear to have no input regarding the admission process for medical students. Please explain.
- It is unclear whether complaint procedures relating to the areas covered by the accreditation standards must be published, and whether contact information is provided for processing complaints that cannot be resolved at the school level. Please clarify.
- It is unclear who has responsibility for examining and ensuring that the physical facilities continue to be adequate throughout the accreditation period. Please clarify.
- It appears that ACPUMS makes no judgment regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of medical school faculty. With regard to faculty conflicts of interest, ACPUMS does not require medical schools to address these matters. Please explain.
- It appears that ACPUMS does not specifically visit previously unexamined core clinical clerkship sites within 12 months of the accreditation review. As well, ACPUMS does not specifically revisit (within the current period of accreditation) those sites that were visited under a previous accreditation cycle. Please explain.
- As previously noted, ACPUMS does not specifically consider student complaints. Please explain.
- It remains unclear why the written policies of ACPUMS cannot clearly indicate the requirements of ACPUMS regarding substantive change notifications. Please clarify.

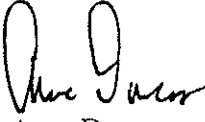
There is a change concerning the NCFMEA's decision about the timing of Poland's next scheduled review. Since the September 2009 meeting, the membership terms of all of the NCFMEA members have expired. Because of a lack of members, the Department decided to cancel the Spring 2010 NCFMEA meeting. Therefore, the NCFMEA will review Poland's submission at the Fall 2010 NCFMEA meeting.

During the Fall 2009 meeting, the NCFMEA also approved the revised 2009 NCFMEA Guidelines that now must be used when applying for a comparability determination. The revisions include changes concerning remote sites and site visits. A copy of the revised Guidelines is enclosed for your convenience.

If you have any questions regarding the information requested, please feel free to contact Dr. Nancy Regan, Director, Accreditation and State Liaison Unit, at (202) 219-7018 (telephone), (202) 219-7005 (fax), or Nancy.Regan@ed.gov (e-mail). If you have any questions about the Fall 2010 NCFMEA meeting, please contact Melissa Lewis, NCFMEA Executive

Director, at (202) 219-7009 (telephone), Melissa.Lewis@ed.gov (e-mail), or at the fax number listed above.

Thank you for providing the information regarding Poland's accreditation of its medical schools. We appreciate your ongoing interest in maintaining high quality standards for medical education.

Sincerely,

Arne Duncan

Enclosure
September 2009 NCFMEA Guidelines

cc: Dr. Adam Fronczak, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Health
Dr. Roman Danielewick, Director of the Department of Science and Education, Ministry of Health
Dr. Marek Konarzeski, Minister Counselor, Embassy of the Republic of Poland
Dr. Grazyna Zebrowska, Science and Technology Affairs, Embassy of the Republic of Poland
Dr. Leszak Paczek, Chairman, ACPUMS