

U.S. Department of Education

Staff Analysis  
of the Annual Report Submitted by  
Poland

Prepared August 2000

Background

Poland appeared before the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) in October 1997. At that meeting, the NCFMEA determined that the standards used by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to evaluate the medical schools in Poland are comparable to those used to evaluate programs leading to the M.D. degree in the United States. As part of its decision, the NCFMEA requested that the Ministry submit annual reports of its activities with respect to its accreditation of the medical schools in Poland. The country's third annual report is the subject of the staff analysis that follows.

Summary of Findings

Based on its review of the annual report submitted by Poland's Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, Department staff concludes that Poland has satisfied all of the reporting requirements imposed 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

The annual report submitted by Poland consists of six documents:

- (1) A letter describing the Ministry's activities since the last annual report and focusing primarily on the initial accreditation activities of the Accreditation Committee for Polish University Medical Schools (ACPUMS).
- (2) Site Visit Regulations (in both Polish and English) establishing the protocol of the site visit, including the size and selection of the team, duration of the visit, and reporting timelines.
- (3) Two site visit schedules (in both Polish and English) for the site visits to Wroclaw University Medical School and Warsaw University

Medical School. These detailed agendas outline a schedule of interview activities with administrators, faculty, and students and an inspection of the facility, including lecture halls and libraries.

- (4) Two preliminary site team reports (in both Polish and English) of site team reviews of Wroclaw University Medical School and Warsaw University Medical School. These reports describe the teams activities, program strengths, and areas requiring further action. For reasons of confidentiality, the contents of the site team reports are not discussed in this analysis.

With regard to the initial accreditation activities of ACPUMS, the Ministry reports that during the past year ACPUMS received requests for accreditation from four universities: Wroclaw, Warsaw, Lublin, and Katowice University Medical Schools (UMS). Self-studies were received from Wroclaw and Warsaw UMS, and site visits were conducted to the institutions in accordance with ACPUMS procedures. Those procedures addressed not just the conduct of the site visit but the selection of site visitors and protections against conflicts of interest as well. The Ministry reports that after completion of all of the steps in the ACPUMS accreditation process, a decision was made in July 2000 to accredit Wroclaw UMS for five years, while an accreditation decision for Warsaw UMS is expected in the fall of 2000. Both Lublin and Katowice UMS are scheduled for review during the January – June 2001 time frame.

Department staff's review of the information provided by Poland about the results of the site visits to the two medical schools, while not discussed for reasons of confidentiality, confirms that the reviews were quite thorough and examined all of the relevant areas of the schools' medical program.

With regard to other activities and initiatives of ACPUMS during the past year, the Ministry reports that a special accreditation workshop for Deans and Vice Rectors is planned for October 2000. Dr. Donald Kassebaum, former Executive Director of the Liaison Committee on Medical Education, has been providing assistance to ACPUMS on the organization of the workshop.

In addition, although ACPUMS has only recently begun its accreditation activities, it has been requested by the Deans of Faculties of Pharmacy to accredit the pharmacology program, which is an integrated part of the UMS in Poland, as well. ACPUMS currently is examining the feasibility of this request.

Finally, ACPUMS is participating in the European Union Program Tempus called "Medique". As part of this program, during international seminars, accreditation procedures of different countries are shared.

A special note: The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in Poland continues to support the move to an independent accrediting body and is participating in the

evolution of this process. Until all UMS are reviewed, however, the Ministry is continuing in its role as the approval body for medical education in the interim, and all medical schools in the country still have valid accreditation through the Ministry.

As is evident from the above discussion of the very thorough annual report submitted by Poland, it is clear that Poland has complied with the NCFMEA's request to provide a report of its activities with respect to its accreditation of medical schools in that country during the past year.