

Impact of ACGME Accreditation Process on Quality of Program and Patient Care in the Community

This letter is intended to offer a perspective about 1 residency program's experience with the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accreditation process, and its positive impact not only on the quality of our training program, but also on the overall quality of patient care in the community.

About 2 years ago, our program's accreditation was placed on "warning" status with multiple citations given. There was a change in leadership, and as the new leadership addressed the citations, we realized that all the steps taken to improve the program were having a positive impact on both the quality of training and the patient care of the community we serve.

To provide some examples, in response to the citation of "service versus education," additional social service staffing was provided by the hospitals. The role of case management was streamlined, and caps were placed on the number of patients resident teams could see. This resulted in both improved patient care and education of residents. The program's entire curriculum was revamped, resulting in improved satisfaction with the educational content. Furthermore, addressing the citation of "faculty support to resident scholarly activity" produced an increase in resident scholarly activity of more than 200% in the past 2 years. This has resulted in a stronger academic environment with more residents

interested in pursuing academic scholarship after graduation. An abstract was presented at the recent Pediatric Academic Societies Meeting highlighting the significantly increased resident scholarly activity in the program. As we developed a culture of being more responsive to resident problems and concerns, our clinic operations have improved as a result of residents' feedback and our willingness to incorporate their feedback into our departmental operations. In response to the ACGME identifying resources available to support the residency program (which were a concern), several new academic faculty members were recruited, and a strong academic pediatric practice has been developed with multiple subspecialists, resulting in improved care to the community.

As we changed our recruitment process for new interns, we are matriculating candidates with significantly improved academic credentials. Our faculty is pleased with their performance in the competencies and in clinical settings. The performance of the residency program on the ACGME resident surveys is at par or above national averages on most parameters, a significant improvement from 2 years ago when we were below national averages in multiple areas.

In our re-review, the Review Committee and the ACGME acknowledged the significant changes made in the program, resulting in full accreditation of the program and a commendation for the program leadership for making all the curricular changes that resulted in substantial improvements. With significantly improved resident quality and a stronger academic environment, we are confident that this will help serve the children of our region and nation.

Samrat U. Das, MD

Pediatric Residency Program Director, University of Nevada School of Medicine