A global perspective on medical education and accreditation

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Structure of this talk

• What is WFME and what does it do?
  • A word about the World Directory of Medical Schools
• The support of accreditation, and the recognition of accrediting agencies
• Making sure regulators – the accrediting agencies - meet the criteria for good practice
  • Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?
• Influence and authority
About WFME

- Mission: to enhance medical education worldwide
- In official relation with the World Health Organization (WHO) as the NGO representing medical education and medical schools worldwide
- Founded by the World Medical Association (WMA) and WHO in 1972
- Promotes standards and sharing good practice
- Three main programmes (among many others):
  - Standards in medical education (BME, PG and CPD)
  - World Directory of Medical Schools
  - Promotion of accreditation, and the recognition of accrediting agencies
Executive Council
Member Associations
World Directory of Medical Schools

www.wdoms.org

The World Directory of all medical schools:

• Offering a complete program of instruction
• Awarding basic medical qualification
• Recognised by the government of their host country
• Existing and historical
• A joint venture of WFME and FAIMER

The World Directory is NOT:

• Accredited schools only
• An indicator of quality or endorsement, by WFME, FAIMER, WHO or anyone
• Therefore, even bad schools are included in the World Directory
Inclusion in the World Directory is not a measure of quality
Accreditation

• “The accreditation of medical education – certification of the suitability of medical education programmes, and of the competence of medical schools in the delivery of medical education – is of the highest importance”

• Use of standards to support accreditation

• What is practical?
Reasons for accreditation (1)

• To enhance the quality of medical education, by verifying that medical schools are competent in the delivery of medical education, and that medical education programmes are suitable.

• To ensure that medical schools are educating doctors fit to serve the needs of the population where they will function
Reasons for accreditation (2)

• To demonstrate to outside organisations and territories that the medical schools accredited are competent, and producing doctors at an accepted international standard
Reasons for accreditation (3)

• Less important, but significant: To meet the 2023 deadline set by ECFMG:

• “...effective in 2023, physicians applying for ECFMG Certification will be required to graduate from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited. To satisfy this requirement, the physician’s medical school must be accredited through a formal process that uses criteria comparable to those established for U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) or that uses other globally accepted criteria, such as those put forth by the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)”
Definitions (our own)

Medical schools are **accredited** measured against **standards** for medical education

Accrediting agencies are **recognised** using **criteria** for recognition
In the local context

You are accredited by CAAM-HP, measured against the standards CAAM-HP requires for medical education.

CAAM-HP is recognised by WFME, using the WHO/WFME criteria for recognition.
Criteria - an accreditation system

• Is agreed by all relevant parties (medical schools, students, the profession, the health care system and the public), is trusted, and is transparent

• Operates within a suitable legal framework and be supported by national law

• Has a suitable organisational structure, governance, management and operation, and is medicine-specific

• Works to predetermined, agreed and publicly available standards and criteria

• Works using internationally acceptable processes, including self-assessment, and site visits

• Publishes its decisions
WFME Recognition of Accreditation Programme

• 2005 WHO-WFME criteria for accrediting agencies
• WFME advisers review evidence and observe site visits & decision making: WFME Recognition Team
• Not a substitute for national (regional?) accreditation but an evaluation thereof
• 90+ Accreditation Agencies listed in the Directory of Organisations that Recognise or Accredit medical schools (DORA - FAIMER)
• 7 WFME-recognised agencies; 8 for decision in 2017, 20+ in active discussion and evaluation (papers submitted, site-visits and so on)
# Applying for WFME Recognition

1. **Preliminary discussions**  
   8 to 12 months before the recognition assessment

2. **Recognition submission**  
   2 to 8 months before the recognition assessment

3. **Appointment of team members**  
   2 to 5 months before the recognition assessment

4. **Submission of application**  
   1 to 2 months before the recognition assessment

5. **Final arrangements**  
   1 to 2 months before the recognition assessment

6. **The recognition assessment**

7. **The recognition report**  
   0 to 2 months after the recognition assessment

8. **The recognition decision**  
   2 to 6 months after the recognition assessment

9. **Follow up**

- Application process takes up to 10-18 months
- Costs are borne by the accrediting agency
What are the standards for education and the criteria for accreditation?

What will change?

Why?
Why? (1) Schools that are in WDoMS, have to be there, but ...
Why? (2)

"Rampant fraud at medical schools leaves Indian healthcare in crisis"

The Reuters probe also found that recruiting companies routinely provide medical colleges with doctors to pose as full-time faculty members to pass government inspections. To demonstrate that teaching hospitals have enough patients to provide students with clinical experience, colleges round up healthy people to pretend they are sick.

"The best medical schools in India are absolutely world class," said David Gordon, president of the World Federation for Medical Education. But, he added, the Indian government's process of accrediting a "huge" number of recently opened, private medical schools "has at times been highly dubious."
Criteria – changes under consideration

• “The accrediting agency monitors medical schools throughout the duration of an accreditation period. Annual reports include verifiable information, such as staff and student numbers, financial stability, and viability of the school. Monitoring also includes monitoring school websites and other publicly available material to detect any publication of false or misleading information.

• The accrediting agency can perform additional assessments, with or without a site visit, and with or without prior warning to the school.

• The accrediting agency has a policy regarding the reporting of any substantive or anticipated changes to the educational programme or other aspects of an accredited medical school.

• The accrediting agency requires medical schools to be re-evaluated periodically after a positive accreditation decision.”
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Conclusions of this talk

• What is WFME and what does it do ..... ?
  • WDoMS – not a measure of quality

• The importance of accreditation, and of the recognition of accrediting agencies

• Making sure regulators meet the criteria
  • A tougher regime for us all
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