

# Impact of ECFMG's 2023 regulation on Caribbean medical schools' processes

Sateesh Babu Arja<sup>1</sup>, Simi Paramban<sup>1</sup>, Samir Fatteh<sup>1</sup>, Sireesha Bala Arja<sup>1</sup>

1. Avalon University School of Medicine, Curacao

## Purpose:

The numbers of Caribbean medical schools are increasing day by day, and the little is known about Caribbean medical schools. More than 50% of graduates from these medical schools are involved in primary care in the USA. And Caribbean graduates contribute significantly to the healthcare workforce in the USA. The accreditation requirements of local governments vary from one island to another island. Because of this, the announcement made by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) is significant, which enforces the Caribbean medical schools to go for accreditation by 2023 as graduates of these schools require ECFMG certification. This study aims to find out the impact of accreditation on Caribbean medical schools' processes.

## Results:

A total of 12 participants participated in the interview process. Out of these 12 informants, 4 of them are deans, 2 are clinical deans, 3 are associate deans, one is the director of quality assurance, one is a curriculum committee chair, and another one is a junior faculty member from 6 different Caribbean medical schools. Results have shown that themes derived from this study coincide with the themes of Blouin et al. (2018) study a study conducted across Canadian medical schools. Results have shown that Caribbean medical schools are changing their educational and self-evaluation processes.

Table 1: Analysis of the results for yes/no questions. Responses are categorized into yes, no, no opinion /not known	Yes	No	No opinion/ Not Known
<b>Questions</b>			
<b>Governance</b>			
Did your institution make any changes in the by-laws of the board to meet the accreditation requirement?	8 (67%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)
<b>Documentation (Data collection and analysis)</b>			
Is there any self-study committee in place at your institution?	11 (92%)	1 (8%)	
Did you make any changes in the data collection process to meet the requirements of accreditation standards?	7 (58%)	4 (33%)	1 (8%)
<b>Creation and revision of policies and procedures</b>			
Did you create any new policies as a requirement of accreditation?	11 (92%)		1 (8%)
Did you make any changes in the policies and procedures to meet the standards of accreditation?	12 (100%)		
Are there any changes in the admission policies and procedures recently for accreditation purposes?	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	
Are there any changes in the students' promotion policies and procedures lately?	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	
Did you make any changes in policies like technical standards of students or emergency plan or strategic planning to meet the accreditation standards?	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	
<b>Continuous quality improvement</b>			
Do you have an established <b>CQI</b> committee at your institution?	6 (50%)	6 (50%)	
Did you make any changes in the strategic planning or CQI committee as CAAM-HP included both of them in their revised standards in 2017?	6 (50%)	4 (33%)	2 (17%)
Is continuous quality improvement established in such a way to set up the culture of continuous improvement or to meet the requirements of the accreditation body?	3 said only for accreditation (25%)		9 (for both) (75%)
<b>Curricular reforms</b>			
Did you make any changes to the curricular model recently either partially or complete curricular reform?	12 (100%)		
Did you make any changes to the curriculum as suggested by the accreditation site visit report or as a requirement of accreditation standards?	9 (75%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)
Did you include any pieces of the curriculum like humanities, alternative medicine, social sciences or medical jurisprudence as a requirement of accreditation?	12 (100%)		
<b>Faculty Engagement</b>			
Are faculties involved in the governance of the medical school?	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	
Do the faculties feel that they are engaged in the educational programme or them accountable for the programme?	10 (83%)	2 (17%)	
Do you see any drastic faculty attrition after accreditation site visit?	2 (17%)	9 (75%)	1 (8%)
Does the negative accreditation report affect the morale of the faculty members?	8 (67%)	4 (33%)	
Does the positive accreditation report encourage and motivate the faculty members?	11 (92%)		1 (8%)
<b>Cost-effectiveness of accreditation site visits</b>			
Do you think benefits outweigh the costs involved?	11 (92%)		1 (8%)

## Methods:

This is a qualitative study, and data analysis was done by framework analysis. We employed the semi-structured interview method to interview the academic leaders (deans/associate deans) and faculty members from three different types of Caribbean medical schools; accredited medical schools, non-accredited medical schools, and a school never applied for accreditation.

**Conclusions:** Further studies are required to be conducted if the changes made by Caribbean medical schools are reactive changes to the accreditation site reports to satisfy the accreditation standards, or are they trying to set up the culture of continuous quality improvement?

**Reference:** Blouin, D., Tekian, A., Kamin, C., Harris, I.B. (2018). The impact of accreditation on medical schools' processes. Medical Education, 52: 182-191. email- [sarja@avalonu.org](mailto:sarja@avalonu.org)