



Undergraduate Medical Education
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

**A SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS AND OUTCOME OF THE ACCREDITATION OF
THE UNDERGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM, 2012**

Dear Friends and Colleagues at the Faculty of Medicine,

As you may know, the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS) and the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) accreditation survey visit of the MD program concluded in May 2012. The visit was the culmination of eighteen months of intensive reflection and self-study by faculty, staff, and students regarding all aspects of the program. This included a rigorous evaluation of the institutional environment, the program curriculum, support for medical students, quality of faculty, and educational resources.

We are very pleased to inform you of the outcome of our efforts: **the MD program has received full accreditation for another eight-year term** by the CACMS and LCME.

For details about the process and outcome, please see:
<http://www.md.utoronto.ca/about/accreditation.htm>

The letter from CACMS-LCME in response to the survey team report (which contains the final decisions about compliance with each of the 128 accreditation standards) and the text of the CACMS-LCME Team Report of the Full Survey of the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine are both posted there. A summary of the process and outcomes is found below.

Sincerely,

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The Accreditation Process

Accreditation of medical schools in North America takes place every eight years. It is carried out as a joint American-Canadian process by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), an organization jointly sponsored by the American Medical Association and the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the Committee on Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS), an organization jointly sponsored by the Canadian Medical Association and the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada.

The accreditation process involves representatives from the LCME and CACMS judging whether the medical school is in compliance with each of 128 accreditation standards (<http://www.lcme.org/pubs.htm#fands>), that are included in a document posted on the Accreditation website. These standards are in five major categories:

- Institutional Setting
- Education Program
- Medical Students
- Faculty
- Educational Resources

A survey team reviews extensive written materials prepared by the school and then during a survey visit conducts detailed interviews with all relevant constituents

The preparation for accreditation by the medical school involves three inter-related elements involving a large number of faculty members, staff and students over an 18-month process.

- First, students conduct a detailed self-study that involves gathering student opinion about all aspects of the program that culminates in the preparation of a report (the Independent Student Analysis).
- Second, the medical school leadership completes a database, which provides answers to approximately 400 questions relevant to the standards.
- Third, a detailed self-study, conducted in the case of the U of T accreditation by six committees, reviews the student report, the database and other information, to self-evaluate the program for both areas of strength and areas needing improvement, compiled together into an “Institutional Self-Study Report”.

For the U of T accreditation, the “Independent Student Analysis” accompanied by the Faculty response and the Institutional Self-Study Report were posted on the Faculty website in February 2012 (<http://www.md.utoronto.ca/about/accreditation.htm>). These were submitted, together with the database and other materials, to the survey team in February 2012.

This exercise provided a valuable opportunity for the UME program to identify areas requiring attention and implement appropriate changes even before the conclusion of the accreditation process.

From May 13 – 16, 2012, a team of four accreditors from LCME-CACMS completed their survey visit, and subsequently submitted a report to the LCME-CACMS. The decision-making committee at LCME-CACMS met in October and determined the accreditation status of the medical school program.

Outcome of the Accreditation

Overall decision

The overall decision is that “After reviewing the report of the full survey team, the CACMS and the LCME voted to continue accreditation of the educational program leading to the MD degree at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Medicine for an eight-year term.” This is an excellent overall outcome for a medical school.

Furthermore, whereas often LCME-CACMS request a repeat visit to ensure that any identified deficits have been corrected, no such repeat visit will be required at U of T; instead, for the areas of non-compliance or those requiring monitoring (described below), only follow-up written reports are requested. The lack of a requirement for a follow-up site visit is especially notable since the accreditation process and the site visit coincided with the opening of a satellite campus at the Mississauga Academy of Medicine. In addition to the findings related to individual standards, LCME-CACMS often also comments on specific areas of exceptional strength at institutions.

Strengths

The LCME-CACMS identified several notable institutional strengths of the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine:

1. Institutional support for education is demonstrated by effective leadership at all levels, notably in the dean’s office, and extending to leadership of the affiliated partners.
2. Substantial financial investment and a commitment to collaborative work across many jurisdictions combine to create a supportive culture for excellence in education across all sites.
3. The academy structure provides an educational home base for smaller groups of students and aligns undergraduate medical education, post-graduate medical education and hospital practice. Broad support from the leaders of all hospitals underpins this success.
4. The medical school uniquely serves the City of Toronto with its population of 6 million people. It has effectively harnessed human, physical, financial and organizational resources to create a culture of healthy competition around excellence in education and research among its students, teachers and affiliated partners.

Judgments related to the standards

Of the 128 standards, 119 were judged to be fully in compliance.

There are three standards in non-compliance; for context, it should be noted that the average number of non-compliant standards for North American medical school accreditation determinations has varied between 8 and 10 in recent years. The areas of non-compliance included issues related to daytime duty hours for clerks, direct observation of clerks on some rotations, and faculty diversity initiatives.

There are six standards that were judged to be “in compliance with monitoring”. In the case of this accreditation process, this refers to situations where “The medical education program has the required policy, process, resource, or system in place, but there is insufficient evidence to indicate that it is effective. Therefore, monitoring is required to ensure that the desired outcome has been achieved.” The areas for which such monitoring is needed include our enhanced career and financial counselling services; the use of the "red button" on the UME website which is available to students to report issues of concern to them in the learning environment; new admissions diversity programs; some issues related to specific UME courses; and, timing of feedback to students

Each of these nine total areas had been identified during the self-study process as areas which required attention, and by the time of the visit processes had already been put in place to begin addressing the issues.

The detailed findings relating to each standard are also posted on the Accreditation website (<http://www.md.utoronto.ca/about/accreditation.htm>), together with a description of what the LCME-CACMS requires in follow-up. In general, expectations for each standard are that the institution has appropriate policies and procedures in place, that the institution is evaluating the impact of those policies and procedures, and that the appropriate outcomes are being observed.

Required follow-up

Although the results of the accreditation process are positive, the CACMS-LCME findings and status report requirements are being taken up as an opportunity to further refine, enhance and strengthen the MD program.

A follow-up report on measures we take to address the identified deficits is to be submitted to LCME-CACMS by August 15, 2013. While the number of areas to be addressed is relatively small, there is nonetheless considerable work to be done in the identified areas.

Working groups are currently being formed to address and then report on each identified area, building on the work that had already begun as part of the accreditation self-study process.

For your information, a copy of the CACMS-LCME report, as well as the full report from the accreditation survey team, are posted on the Accreditation website (<http://www.md.utoronto.ca/about/accreditation.htm>).

We sincerely thank the entire Faculty of Medicine community for its tremendous ongoing support of the MD program, and we especially wish to acknowledge the contributions of all those who participated directly in the accreditation process.

We are extremely proud of the efforts of all members of the Faculty of Medicine community, particularly our students, for the tremendous work they do to create the outstanding medical school as noted by this accreditation process. We look forward to addressing the various areas identified by the accreditation process, and to continue striving towards excellence in all that we do.