Season’s greetings!

This is the first of ongoing quarterly updates from me on graduate medical education and other AOA education issues. December 2017 marks the halfway point in our transition to the Single GME Accreditation System. The good news is the transition is proceeding smoothly and, in many cases, ahead of schedule. The majority of AOA programs have achieved ACGME accreditation or have submitted their application and are in the review process. Since day one, AOA has been committed to ensuring that all osteopathic residents are protected. We stand ready to assist all programs as they navigate the journey to ACGME accreditation and osteopathic recognition. I welcome your feedback and input along the way.

Thank you!

Adrienne White-Faines, MPA, FACHE
AOA Chief Executive Officer

Single GME Progress

The latest single GME statistics are reason for optimism and demonstrate how hard AOA programs are working to achieve ACGME accreditation. To date, 62% of AOA programs have transitioned, become ACGME accredited or submitted applications and 143 programs have sought osteopathic recognition (OR). Of those 143, 15% are ACGME programs that didn’t have a previous accreditation relationship with osteopathic medicine. With 70% of third-year osteopathic medical students surveyed saying they prefer to train in osteopathically recognized programs, residency programs see OR as a way to meet market demand and an opportunity to differentiate their programs.

The AOA is working very closely with the programs that are still applying for ACGME accreditation and those that are unsure about their next steps. We’re in weekly contact to support these programs as they move forward, and we continue to offer free support through our application assistance program. For assistance and free consultative services, contact the AOA’s Application Assistance Program at (312) 202-8272 or singlegme@osteopathic.org.

Before the Single Accreditation GME transition began, during an average year, 44 AOA programs closed. Over the past two and a half years, a total of 111 programs have closed, which tracks closely with the historic
rates of program closure.

Here’s a closer look at the data as of Dec. 11, 2017:

Dec. 31 Deadline for 3-Year Programs

Three-year residency and fellowship programs must apply for ACGME accreditation by Dec. 31, 2017, if they wish to participate in the 2018 AOA Match or accept new fellows (see Section X of the AOA Basic Documents for Postdoctoral Training). Programs that do not apply by that date will be unable to contract with trainees who would complete training after June 30, 2020.

Featured Single GME FAQs

Q: Is program size a limiting factor in earning ACGME accreditation?
A: No. The ACGME will not use program size as a reason not to accredit. The program may receive a citation for not meeting size requirements, but would achieve accreditation if the Review Committee determined the
program was in substantial compliance with the program requirements.

Q: How is the “substantial compliance” requirement interpreted? If there is one standard my program doesn’t meet, will we be denied ACGME accreditation?
ACGME review committees look at each program as a whole when deciding whether or not to grant accreditation. Programs are required to substantially comply with ACGME requirements, but they are not required to comply perfectly with every requirement in order to become accredited.

Q: What common application scenarios might result in an ACGME citation?
A: The ACGME may issue citations for:

- Incomplete applications (e.g. sections left blank).
- Lack of scholarly activity or lack of a plan for formally incorporating faculty/resident scholarship into the clinical learning environment.
- Lack of fully executed Program Letters of Agreement (view ACGME templates here). Note that Program Letters of Agreement are not the same as Affiliation Agreements.
- Program applications prepared and submitted by someone other than the Program Director, such as the program coordinator, DIO, or a consultant. Program applications must be completed and submitted by the Program Director.

View all FAQs on the single GME accreditation system transition.

AOA Application Assistance Program
The AOA’s Application Assistance Program supports osteopathic GME programs throughout the Single GME Accreditation System application process. We can review your ACGME application, help you prepare for your site visit, assist with Continued Pre-Accreditation, and provide guidance for your application for Osteopathic Recognition. For any questions and/or assistance with ACGME applications, including free consultative services, contact the AOA’s Application Assistance Program at (312) 202-8272 or singlegme@osteopathic.org. The ACGME website also has excellent application resources.

ACGME News

- The ACGME’s latest single GME video series covers the AOA and NRMP match, ACGME scholarly activity requirements, osteopathic recognition, 2017 Common Program Requirements, AOA board certification, and an overview of milestones and the Clinical Competency Committee. View the videos using the ACGME Bridge portal.
- The ACGME Annual Educational Conference, which includes an ACGME/AODME osteopathic pre-conference, is set for March 1-4, 2018, in Orlando. The osteopathic pre-conference takes place March 1 and will focus on ACGME accreditation and osteopathic recognition. Register now.

AOA Match 2018
The AOA Match will take place as usual in 2018. Key dates include:

- Jan. 9, 2018: Rank Order List for the 2018 AOA Match is open for programs and Match participants.
- Jan. 19, 2018: Rank Order List deadline.
Feb. 5, 2018: AOA Match Day! Results are released to all participants, programs, COMs, and OPTIs.

Three-year programs that have not applied for ACGME accreditation by Dec. 31, 2017, will not be able to participate in the 2018 AOA Match and will be removed from ERAS to ensure no residents match into them. Three-year programs that file after the deadline may accept students under specific conditions. Please see this policy for additional information.

The last AOA match will likely be in February 2019.

LEAD Conference

This year, the Osteopathic Medical Educators and Leaders (OMEL) and Advocacy for Healthy Partnerships (AHP) conferences will be combined into one program called “LEAD” (Leadership, Education, Advocacy and Development). Join us Jan. 25-26 in Austin, Texas, to sharpen your leadership skills alongside fellow medical educators, program directors, affiliate leaders, prospective DO educators, DOs and students. Topics include succession planning, faculty development, growing your scholarly network, COCA accreditation standards, advantages of academic partnerships, medical education trends and innovations, and public policy updates. Register now.

AOA Board Certification

Please know that AOA board certification will be as important as ever after the transition to the Single GME Accreditation System. That’s why we’re working to make it more cost-effective, easier to maintain, and more relevant to physicians’ practices. AOA certification is distinctive because it connotes not only clinical excellence and ongoing education, but also a commitment to high quality osteopathically focused whole-person care. As undergraduate medical education, GME, and certification continue to evolve, the AOA too will continue to align our programs and services to adapt to these changing needs and innovation opportunities. Learn more.

Research Updates

- **AOA grant funding** is available for DOs and PhDs conducting research in five key areas, with research funding applications due Jan. 31, 2018. For context, the AOA awarded more than $1 million for osteopathically focused research projects in 2017. Next year’s focus areas include:
  - How the osteopathic approach impacts empathy, provider-patient communication, and patient satisfaction.
  - Obesity and related disorders.
  - The effects of OMT on inflammation or on Parkinson’s disease.
  - How OMT can be applied to musculoskeletal injuries and prevention.
  - The osteopathic approach to chronic pain management.
  - The osteopathic approach to reducing nonmedical use of prescription drugs.

- The AOA is also offering research grant funding to DO residents and osteopathic medical students through its research training programs. The application deadline is Jan. 31, 2018. Learn more.

- Medical students with significant research experience can apply for a yearlong paid biomedical research fellowship through the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. The application deadline is Jan. 11, 2018. Learn more.
Scholarly Activities

The AOA continues to encourage osteopathic medical students, residents and program faculty to take part in scholarly activity. The JAOA's author resource center explains how to get involved in research, the steps in preparing and submitting a manuscript, how the peer review process works, and how to incorporate multimedia content into your work. ACGME scholarly activity requirements differ by specialty. Faculty should become familiar with their specialty's requirements for scholarly activity as outlined in the specialty Program Requirements for program directors and faculty, and clarified in the FAQs.

COCA Updates

- The COCA made several accreditation decisions at its Dec. 1-3 meeting in Chicago:
  - The Idaho College of Osteopathic Medicine's pre-accreditation status was advanced, allowing the school to begin recruiting its first class of students.
  - Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine received initial approval for an additional location and class size increase in Moultrie, Georgia.
  - Nova Southeastern University's Dr. Kiran C. Patel College of Osteopathic Medicine received initial approval for its application for an additional location and class size increase.
  - The accreditation status for Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine was renewed following its comprehensive site visit and review of the site visit report.
  - The accreditation status of New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine was extended to include its additional location in Jonesboro, Arkansas.
- Brian G. Kim, JD, was appointed Vice President of Accreditation and Secretary of the COCA in October. Before assuming his current role, which was preceded by several months as Interim Secretary of the COCA, Brian served as the AOA's Associate General Counsel, where he gave legal counsel on accreditation issues and consulted on advocacy and proposed legislation.
- The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) is in the process of reviewing the AOA-COCA for continuing recognition to accredit colleges of osteopathic medicine. It's anticipated that the USDE will communicate its decision in May or June 2018.

Why AOA Membership Matters for Residents

It’s critical that residents maintain AOA membership throughout their training so they can stay engaged with the osteopathic medical profession and experience the full value of belonging to the AOA. Resident members receive discounts on Doctors Without Quarters loan repayment consulting through the AOA's member value program, discounted OMED registration, and access to career opportunities through DO Jobs Online. If you have questions or would like to pay your residents’ AOA membership dues, please email us at aoabilling@osteopathic.org.

Save the Date

- AOA LEAD Conference | Jan. 25-26, 2018 | Austin, Texas | Learn more
- ACGME Annual Educational Conference | March 1-4, 2018 | Orlando, Florida | Learn more
- AACOM & AODME Joint Conference | April 18-21, 2018 | Washington, D.C. | Learn more