

RRC Quarterly Update

Site Visits in the Next Accreditation System

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In the Next Accreditation System, there will be three types of site visits: *focused; full; and self-study*. None of the above will require completion of a Program Information Form (PIF). Programs applying for initial accreditation must complete an application form available on the RRC website.

Focused Site Visits

The RRC will request a focused site visit to conduct a timely, in-depth exploration of a potential problem arising out of the RRC's review of the annual accreditation data. For example, if the data indicates a trend of not achieving procedural minimums in several areas, the RRC may request a focused site visit to investigate the potential reasons for the deficiencies and the steps for improvement. A focused site visit may also be requested to assess the merits of a complaint against a program or for any other circumstances as deemed appropriate by the RRC. Programs scheduled for a focused site visit will be given a minimum of 30 days advance notice with the option of one postponement if the request meets ACGME justification criteria (i.e., request by telephone to the Department of Field Activities within 14 calendar days of receipt of the site visit announcement letter). The announcement letter will indicate the documents that must be available for review during the site visit. ADS data relevant to the areas of focus will also be verified and clarified. Therefore, the program should ensure the accuracy of all information in ADS by updating the response to citations and major changes sections prior to the site visit.

Full Site Visits

The RRC will request a full site visit to address broad concerns identified during the RRC's review of the annual data and all programs with a status of initial accreditation in order to ensure that the program has successfully established compliance with the accreditation standards. In addition, all programs (core and subspecialty) applying for initial accreditation require a full site visit. Programs scheduled for a full site visit will be given a minimum of 60 days advance notice with the option of one postponement, as noted above. The announcement letter will indicate the documents that must be available for review during the site visit. All ADS data will be verified and clarified during the site visit. Programs with Initial Accreditation status need to provide an update to their application document for the site visit. All other programs need to ensure the accuracy of all ADS data prior to the site visit.

Self-Study Site Visits

Almost all programs with Continued Accreditation have been assigned their first self-study date, which falls between July 2015-January 2025. Programs with Continued Accreditation that had a site visit earlier

this year or are scheduled for a site visit during academic year 2013-2014 will be notified of their first self-study date following RRC review of the program. Programs with Initial Accreditation or Probation will be notified of a first self-study date once Continued Accreditation status is achieved. The assignment of the first self-study date was largely random and does not reflect a program's most recent cycle length. The self-study date for a core program and all subspecialty programs sponsored by the same institution will take place on the same date. The second self-study date will occur 10 years following the first self-study date, regardless of what actions have taken place during the intervening 10 year period. Programs will be given a 12-15 month advance notice of the approximate month of the self-study, followed by a 90-110-day advance notice of the specific date and detailed information about the self-study visit. The format and other aspects of the self-study visit are currently under development.

During any type of site visit, the filed staff representative will use the ADS data and other information specific for the specialty. The site visitor will also review documentation the program has made available on site. The site visitor verifies and clarifies the information, interviews the program director, faculty, residents and the designated institutional official (DIO) and/or other administrative representatives. A tour of physical facilities may also take place. The clarification interview at the end of the site visit will include preliminary feedback from the site visitor, including a succinct summary highlighting key strengths and preliminary advice regarding areas in need of improvement based on the site visitor's understanding of the accreditation standards and familiarity with relevant best practices. The site visitor cannot offer any predictions about accreditation outcomes. Advice given by the site visitor may be superseded by feedback from the RRC.

Later this fall, the ACGME will offer a webinar on site visits in the Next Accreditation System. Program directors and DIOs will receive an e-mail notification approximately three weeks prior to the webinar date. The e-mail notice will provide instructions for registering for the webinar. Approximately three weeks following the webinar, the webinar slides and audio will be available for download from the ACGME NAS website.