

Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education

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Thoracic Surgery

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Newsletter

Residency Review Committee for Thoracic Surgery August 2002

DUTY HOURS

If you have not read the report of the ACGME Work Group on Duty Hours, please access the report at: www.acgme.org.

The report permits a Residency Review Committee to request ACGME approval for a specialty-wide exemption of the 80 hour per week limit up to 88 hours. At their July meeting, the R.R.C. for Thoracic Surgery voted unanimously to seek the exemption on behalf of all programs. Seeking the exemption from the ACGME on your behalf will simplify the need for individual programs to seek relief through other administrative mechanisms.

Since the requisite policies and procedures for the exemption are in the process of being developed, the R.R.C. leadership will seek approval as soon as possible. As this activity proceeds and more information becomes available, we will notify you via a special Newsletter or by e-mail, if necessary.

As many of you know, based upon your many questions, recommendations for the standards were outlined in the Duty Hour Report. However, the report did not include the specific language for the standards. The full-text language for the resident duty hours standard is now in final draft. Following review and discussion at the September 9-10 ACGME meeting, the proposed standard will be available for comment on the website. The implementation date is July 1, 2003 for all ACGME accredited programs. Please note that the Chair of the R.R.C. will attend and speak on behalf of the specialty in this forum.

As with all common standards, an R.R.C. may elect to add criteria that make a standard more stringent, but an R.R.C. may not weaken a common standard. Likewise, be aware that State or Federal Statute takes precedence over an accreditation standard.

Many thanks to the program directors and their faculty, the TSRA, and related organizations who responded to the ACGME addressing the Duty Hour Report on behalf of the thoracic surgery community.

Requirement for program directors to attend TSDA meetings:

The members of the R.R.C. do not believe it is appropriate to mandate program director attendance at any meeting. However, they strongly agree that all program directors or associate directors should attend TSDA meetings at least once each year. The changes in graduate medical education affecting thoracic surgery are such that program directors may find themselves deficient in important policy issues if they do not attend.

ACGME General Competencies Project

Although the ACGME Competency Project is slated for long-term implementation, programs due for site visits this year have expressed concerns about how and when the R.R.C. will begin citing programs. We believe the concern was generated because the ACGME has requested all programs that are being site visited to complete an additional form on the competencies. The form reflects an honest attempt to ascertain where programs are in the process. At this time, it is not being used by the R.R.C. for evaluation purposes and programs **will not** be subject to punitive

action for noncompliance.

Program Information Form: Addendum for the Competencies

This special addendum to the existing PIF is available for downloading on the ACGME website. Please note that it must be used by all programs reviewed beginning July 1, 2002. Need ideas about the competencies? Please see the ACGME website at: www.acgme.org/competencies. All the information available on this site is free to use in your program.

ACGME Web Accreditation Data System

A reminder: It is mandatory for all accredited programs to annually update the program information in the ACGME Web Accreditation Data System (ADS). Every program director should have a username and password as well as a Manual. The online system at this time consists of two parts: the program's identifying information, and information for all residents enrolled in the program. Since this system serves as our accreditation data base, please comply in a timely manner.

Lost your information/have questions? Contact: jtruesdale@acgme.org

Mastering the Accreditation Workshop

This ACGME workshop is offered annually for new program directors, administrative staff, and faculty as an orientation to the accreditation process. This year's program is scheduled for:

March 6 - 7, 2003

Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, 2233 S. Martin Luther King Drive Chicago, IL 60616

Registration information will be available at a later date.

CURRENT RRC MEMBERS

Douglas Mathisen, Chair
William Baumgartner
Benson R Wilcox, Vice Chair
David Aaron Fullerton
Robert M. Vanecko
Edward D. Verrier
John Kucharczuk, resident member

William Gay, ex-officio, without vote
Ajit Sachdeva, ex-officio, without vote

Farewells

The R.R.C. members expressed their sincere appreciation to William Baumgartner, MD and John Kucharczuk, MD, resident member, on completion of their terms.

New Members

Richard H. Feins, MD and Russell Ronson, MD, resident member, were welcomed as new members.

RRC STAFF

Doris Stoll, Ph.D., Executive Director (312.464.5505, e-mail: das@acgme.org)
Eileen Keane, Senior Accreditation Administrator (312.464.4528, e-mail: etk@acgme.org)
Linda Roquet, Senior Secretary (312.464.4686, e-mail: ljr@acgme.org)

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Please note that we must establish cut-off dates for each meeting to ensure an orderly and efficient meeting. Please note these deadlines in the event you have submissions for future R.R.C. meetings:

January 17-18, 2003 - Agenda materials deadline: November 15, 2002

July 25-26, 2003 - Agenda materials deadline: May 30, 2003

We understand that emergencies occur and we will be sensitive to your needs in these situations. However, routine agenda items will be held for the next meeting after these cut-off dates.

MAILING ADDRESS

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We invite your comments and questions:

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www.ACGME.org

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