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**Allopathic and Osteopathic Medical Communities Commit to  
a Single Graduate Medical Education Accreditation System**

**CHICAGO, February 26, 2014** – The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), and the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) have agreed to a single accreditation system for graduate medical education (GME) programs in the U.S. After months of discussion, the allopathic and osteopathic medical communities have committed to work together to prepare future generations of physicians with the highest quality GME, ultimately helping to ensure the quality and safety of health care delivery.

“The commitment to a single accreditation system comes at a watershed moment for medical education in the U.S.,” said Thomas Nasca, MD, MACP, chief executive officer of the ACGME. “As we move forward into the Next Accreditation System, this uniform path of preparation for practice ensures that the evaluation of and accountability for the competency of all resident physicians – MDs and DOs – will be consistent across all programs.” Nasca added, “A single accreditation system provides the opportunity to introduce and consistently evaluate new physician competencies that are needed to meet patient needs and the health care delivery challenges facing the U.S. over the next decade.”

The single accreditation system will allow graduates of allopathic and osteopathic medical schools to complete their residency and/or fellowship education in ACGME-accredited programs and demonstrate achievement of common Milestones and competencies. Currently, the ACGME and AOA maintain separate accreditation systems for allopathic and osteopathic educational programs.

“A single system standardizes the approach to GME accreditation, and ensures that all physicians have access to the primary and sub-specialty training necessary to serve patients,” said AOA President Norman E. Vinn, DO. “Importantly, the system recognizes the unique principles and practices of the osteopathic medical profession and its contributions to the health of all Americans.”

Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH, President of AACOM commented, “Healthcare and medical education in the U.S. today face many challenges. We feel that this approach to GME accreditation not only streamlines but strengthens the postdoctoral education process, and will produce physicians who are able to meet those health care challenges, enhancing the ability for all physicians to learn the unique characteristics of osteopathic medical practice.”

Under the single accreditation system:

- AOA and AACOM will become ACGME member organizations and will nominate members to the ACGME Board of Directors.
- Two new osteopathic Review Committees will be created to evaluate and set standards for the osteopathic aspects of GME programs seeking osteopathic recognition.
- July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020 is an extended transition period for AOA-accredited programs to apply for and receive ACGME recognition and accreditation.
- Opportunity is created for MD and DO graduates who have met the prerequisite competencies to access any GME program or transfer from one accredited program to another without being required to repeat education.
- Efficiencies are realized since there is no need for institutions to sponsor “dually accredited” or “parallel accredited” allopathic and osteopathic medical residency programs.

For more information on the ACGME visit [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org), on the AOA visit [www.osteopathic.org](http://www.osteopathic.org) and on the AACOM visit [www.aacom.org](http://www.aacom.org).

#### **About the ACGME**

The ACGME is a private, non-profit organization that accredits approximately 9,300 residency programs in 133 specialties and subspecialties that educate over 117,000 residents. Its mission is to improve the quality of health care in the United States by assessing and advancing the quality of resident physicians' education.

#### **About the AOA**

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) represents more than 104,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students; promotes public health; encourages scientific research; serves as the primary certifying body for DOs; is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools; and has federal authority to accredit hospitals and other health care facilities. The AOA accredits more than 1,000 osteopathic GME programs with about 6,900 DO resident physicians.

#### **About the AACOM**

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) represents the 30 accredited colleges of osteopathic medicine in the United States. These colleges are accredited to deliver instruction at 41 teaching locations in 28 states. In the 2013-14 academic year these colleges are educating over 23,000 future physicians – more than 20 percent of US medical students. Six of the colleges are publicly controlled, 24 are private institutions.

AACOM was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. AACOM's mission is to promote excellence in osteopathic medical education, in research and in service, and to foster innovation and quality among osteopathic medical colleges to improve the health of the American public.

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