The Self-Study and 10-Year Site Visit: Clarifying the Timeline and Action Steps

Webinar for Designated Institutional Officials

March 11, 2015

Ingrid Philibert, PhD, MBA, Senior Vice President for Field Activities
Disclosures

• Employed by the ACGME
• No other items requiring disclosure
Objectives

• Describe the elements of the self-study
• Detail the sequence of self-study and 10-year site visit
• Introduce the VOLUNTARY self-study pilot visit
• Summarize the ACGME’s program evaluation plan for the self-study pilot visit
• List relevant information and education materials under development
The Next Accreditation System (NAS)

• Annual data collection and review

• A program self-study and an accreditation site visit every 10 years

• Increased focus on continuous improvement
  • Institutional oversight
  • Ongoing assessment and improvement using the Annual Program Evaluation

• Programs with a status of Continued Accreditation free to innovate

Today’s Focus
Self-Study Scope

• Assesses program performance and ongoing improvement effort

• Initial period: since last accreditation review, at minimum since entry into the NAS
  • July 1, 2013 for Phase I programs; July 1, 2014 for Phase II programs

• Ultimately, a 10-year interval

• Reviews improvement activities, successes achieved, and areas in need of improvement
  • Based from successive Annual Program Evaluations, ACGME Resident and Faculty Survey data, other relevant information, and stakeholder input
Familiar Components: Strengths and Areas for Improvements

- **Strength**
  - Important to acknowledge and celebrate
  - What should definitely be continued (important question in an environment of limited resources)

- **Areas for Improvements identified by:**
  - Citations, areas for improvement and other information from ACGME
  - The Annual Program Evaluation
  - Other program/institutional data sources

- **Expected:** Longitudinal tracking of strengths and areas for improvements through successive Annual Program Evaluations
New Area: Program Aims

- Program aims
  - Aims as a way to differentiate programs
  - Self-study will ultimately evaluate program effectiveness in meeting these aims
  - Moves beyond improvement solely based on compliance with minimum standards
  - Assessment of relevant initiatives and their outcomes
Defining Program Aims

- Set aims as part of the annual program evaluation
- Relevant considerations
  - Who are our residents/fellows?
  - What do we prepare them for?
    - Fellowship
    - Academic practice
    - Leadership and other roles
  - Who are the patients/populations we care for?
Benefits of a Focus on Program Aims

- Suggests a relevant dimension of the program:
  - What kinds of graduates do we produce for what kinds of practice settings and roles?
- Allows for a more “tailored” approach to creating a learning environment
  - Focus on specific aims can produce highly desirable “graduates” that match patient and healthcare system needs

Hodges BD. “A Tea-Steeping or i-Doc Model for Medical Education?,” Acad Med 85(9) Sept Suppl 2010, pp. S34-S44.
New Area: Opportunities and Threats

- Factors and contexts external to the program (institutional, local, regional and national) that affect the program
- Opportunities: Factors that favor the program, that the program may take advantage of
- Threats: Factors that pose risks
Defining “Opportunities”

• Opportunities are external attractive factors that, if acted upon, will contribute to the program flourishing

• What are capabilities for further evolving the program; how can the program capitalize on them?

• Has there been recent change in the program’s context that creates an opportunity?

• Are these opportunities ongoing, or is there a narrow window for them? How critical is the timing?
Defining “Threats”

- Threats include external factors that affect the program
- **While the program cannot fully control them, beneficial to have plans to mitigate their effect**
  - What external factors may place the program at risk?
  - What are changes in residents’ specialty choice, regulation, financing, or other factors that may affect the future success of the program?
- Are there challenges or unfavorable trends in immediate context that may affect the program?
  - E.g. faculty burdened with heavy clinical load that prevents effective teaching and mentorship
Benefit of a Focus on Context

- Facilitates assessment of the program’s performance in its local environment/context
- In this context
  - What are program strengths?
  - What are areas for improvement?
    - Prioritize by relevance to program aims, compliance, importance to stakeholders
- How are they affected by context
- Useful, particularly for high-performing programs: “What will take our program to the next level?”
Who Should Organize and Conduct the Self-Study?

• Not defined by ACGME

• However, members of the Program Evaluation Committee are the logical choice
  • Natural extension of improvement process through the Annual Program Evaluation

• PEC requirements\(^1\)
  • The PEC must be composed of at least 2 faculty members and at least 1 resident\(^{(core)}\);
  • must have a written description of responsibilities\(^{(core)}\)

• PEC membership may be expanded

\(^1\) ACGME Common Program Requirements
Self-Study Data Gathering

- Annual Program Evaluation data, ACGME Resident and Faculty Survey data, other program and institutional data
- Focus on data gathering as a learning exercise
- Evaluate strengths and areas for improvement
- Explore opportunities and threats
- Reflect stakeholder (residents, faculty, and relevant others) participation, input and perspective
- Data as evidence to support conclusions
Tracking Improvements

- Design and Implement solutions
  - Identify individual or group that will be responsible
  - Identify and secure resources
  - Timeline
- Follow-up is key: ensure all issues addressed
- Documentation to facilitate ongoing tracking
  - A simple spreadsheet recording improvements achieved and ongoing priorities
  - Record improvements over multiple years
Resident Participation in the Self-Study

- Resident participation critical:
  - They are the beneficiaries of the educational program
  - They have first hand knowledge of areas that need improvement
- Double benefit:
  - Residents help improve their own education
  - Resident participation in “educational QI effort” can be used to meet the requirement for resident involvement in quality and safety improvement
Coordinated Self-Study for Core and Subspecialty Programs

- Coordination of curriculum and program resources
  - Needs of core and subspecialty programs taken into account
  - Subspecialties can access core resources
  - Core oversight of fellowships
- Assess common strengths, areas for improvement
  - Action plans for areas for improvement
- Increase efficiency
  - Less time and resources spent, coordinated collection and review of data

© 2015 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education
After the Self-Study: Complete the Self-Study Summary

• Brief document prepared by the program, uploaded through ADS

• ACGME Template: 2300 words (~4-5 pages) for core program, less for small subspecialty programs

• Sections: Key Self-Study dimensions
  • Aims
  • Opportunities and Threats
  • Self-study process
    • Who was involved, how were date collected and interpreted
    • How is ongoing improvement achieved through sequential Annual Program Evaluations

• Omitted by design: Information on strengths and areas for improvement
The 10-Year Site Visit and the Voluntary Self-Study Pilot Visit
NEW: Allowing 12-18 months between the self-study and the 10-year site visit

Rationale:

- Allowing for a self-study without a concurrent site visit allows for a frank and forthright review of the program
- 12 to 18-month time lag between self-study and 10-year visit allows programs to make improvements
  - The program communicates improvements are to Review Committee for the 10-year site visit
  - At the time of the site visit, the program can provide an addendum to summary document if as needed
NEW: A Pilot of a Voluntary Self-Study Pilot Visit

• Programs Eligible
  • All Phase I programs with an initial 10-year site visit between April 2015 and July 2016
  • The Program volunteers for the self-study pilot visit

• What it entails
  • Not an accreditation visit
  • ~2-3 months after the program has completed its self-study
  • Team of ACGME accreditation field representatives staff with added training
  • Team offers feedback on the self-study to further progress toward improvement and meeting aspirational goals
NEW: A Pilot of a Voluntary Self-Study Visit (cont).

- Future Decision: Extending the Pilot (to other Phase I and Phase II programs)
  - To be made once initial results from the self-study pilot visits are available
  - Decision anticipated in winter 2016/17
Terms of the Pilot

• Participation Process
  • Completely voluntary; ACGME staff contacts eligible programs and asks if interested in participating

• Cores and subspecialty programs
  • If the core volunteers, subspecialty programs can opt in or out of the self-study pilot visit
  • If the core does not volunteer, subspecialty programs are not eligible for the self-study pilot visit
Self-Study and the Self-Study Summary (All Programs)

• The program conducts its self-study
• After the self-study, the program uploads the Self-Study Summary through ADS
  • Information on areas for improvement identified in the self-study not included in the Summary
• Timing Consideration:
  • Sight Delay for Programs with a very early 10-year visit
  • Programs with an initial 10-year site visit date in April-June 2015 moved back to a July 2015 timeline to allow adequate time for their self-study
  • All other programs expected to upload the self-study summary in the month the Review Committee indicated for their first site visit in NAS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>ACGME</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2015</td>
<td>DFA sends notice to begin self study</td>
<td>Conducts Self Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asks program to volunteer for self-study pilot visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By July 2015</td>
<td></td>
<td>Uploads SS summary to ADS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August – October 2015</td>
<td>If program volunteers: The Self-study pilot visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August – October 2015</td>
<td>Site visit team sends report to program</td>
<td>Program may update self-study summary if desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD April to September 2016</td>
<td>Sends notice of 10-year site visit (60 – 90 days notice)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 days before 10-year visit date</td>
<td></td>
<td>Updates ADS data, uploads summary of improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD July – November 2016</td>
<td>10-year site visit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2016/17 meeting</td>
<td>Review Committee reviews 10-year visit and self-study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Self-Study Pilot Visit
(Only Programs that Volunteer)

• Non-accreditation site visit based on the program’s self-study summary, ~ 2-3 months after uploading the self-study summary

• Site visit by specially trained team of 2 site visitors
  • Different team from the 10-year site visit

• Information on areas for improvement shared verbally only by program leaders during the site visit

• Team offers verbal feedback
  • Dialogue on strengths and areas/suggestions for improvement the program identified in its self-study

• Team prepares written report and shares with program
  • The report is NOT shared with the Review Committee
  • Program may update its self-study summary in response to the feedback
The 10-Year Site Visit
(All Programs)

- A full accreditation site visit
  - Review of all applicable requirements
- 12- to 18-month period is by design, to allow programs implement improvements
- “Summary of Achievements”
- ACGME template uploaded through ADS
- ~1200 words, describing key improvements accomplished from the self-study
  - Program provides information ONLY on the improvements that were realized from their self-study, no information on areas that have not been resolved
  - Program may provide an update to its self-study summary
The 10-Year Site Visit (All Programs) (cont.)

- Site visit by a team
  - For pilot programs: Different team of site visitors from those assigned for the self-study pilot visit
- Site visit team provides verbal feedback
  - Key strengths and suggestions for improvement
- Site visit team submits a written report through ADS for the Review Committee (RC)
Review Committee Review of the 10-Year Visit (All Programs)

- Available to the Review Committee
  - ADS Data
  - The program’s self-study summary and any updates
  - The program’s summary of improvements achieved as a result of the self-study (which does NOT include data on areas still in need of improvement)
  - The site visit report from the 10-year (accreditation) site visit

- Review of program aims and context from the self-study summary allows the RC to assess self-study effectiveness
  - Improvements the program reports are paired with program aims and context from self-study summary
  - Data on improvements achieved are 1 measure of effectiveness
• RC provides a Letter of Notification from the 10-year (Full Accreditation) Site Visit
  • Citations
  • Areas for improvement

• RC provides feedback on the self-study taking into consideration
  • Program aims and context
  • Improvements reported and verified during the 10-year visit
  • Effectiveness of the self-study, based on the improvements the program reported

• Formative feedback (no accreditation impact) for the initial RC assessment of self-study effectiveness
A Comprehensive Program Evaluation of the Utility/Benefit of the Voluntary Self-Study Pilot Visit

• Planned
  • Feedback from participants, site visitors, RC reviewers
  • Matched de-identified paired data
  • Under IRB approval

• Program Evaluation Aims
  • Learn if a “non-accreditation” site visit with feedback accelerates program self-improvement
  • Assess program dimensions associated with accelerated improvement
  • Learn about effective approaches for conducting the self-study
Information and Education Plan

- Individual communication with programs in the Self-Study Pilot eligible group
- Additional Planned Webinars
  - Self-Study Basics, PDSA, Program Evaluation
- Article on rationale for new approach to be published in the June issue of JGME
- Self-study web page to go live in March
- “Self-Study” mailbox for questions and feedback (ACGME monitors) self-study@acgme.org
Thank You