

Clarification on Requirements Regarding Family Planning Review Committee for Obstetrics and Gynecology

Clarification of Program Requirements IV.C.7.-IV.C.7.e)

The ACGME accredits graduate medical education programs and the institutions that sponsor them. It establishes and maintains accreditation standards (Program Requirements) that reflect the practice of medicine in each specialty, as well as the program resources necessary to educate physicians in the full scope of practice of each specialty.

In the past, consistent with its role as an educational accreditor, the ACGME has not stated a “pro” or “con” position on pending legislation addressing family planning and induced abortion. Instead, it has responded to government inquiries relating to the potential accreditation effect of such pending legislation. It will continue to do this.

ACGME Obstetrics and Gynecology Program Requirements IV.C.7.-IV.C.7.e) state:

IV.C.7. Family Planning

- IV.C.7.a) Programs must provide training or access to training in the provision of abortions, and this must be part of the planned curriculum. (Core)
- IV.C.7.b) Residents who have a religious or moral objection may opt-out, and must not be required to participate in training in or performing induced abortions. (Core)
- IV.C.7.c) Programs must ensure residents’ clinical experience includes involvement in educating patients on the surgical and medical therapeutic options related to the provision of abortions. (Core)
- IV.C.7.d) Residents must participate in the management of complications of abortions. (Core)
- IV.C.7.e) Residents must have training in all forms of contraception. (Core)

The ACGME Review Committee for Obstetrics and Gynecology examines each obstetrics and gynecology residency program’s family planning curriculum to determine its substantial compliance with the above requirements. All programs must have an established curriculum for family planning, including the opportunity for direct procedural training in induced abortions for those residents who desire it. Programs with restrictions to the provision of family planning services or the performance of abortions at their institutions must make arrangements for this required resident experience to occur at another institution.

Access to experience with induced abortion must be part of residency education. Programs must be structured such that residents may “opt out” rather than needing to “opt in” to the induced abortion experience.

The program must allow those residents who do not desire to participate in the provision of induced abortions to “opt out” of this experience. Even if no residents have participated in the induced abortion experience, the Committee would consider a program with an “opt out” curriculum to be in substantial compliance with the requirements.

If a program does not have a specific family planning curriculum that includes direct procedural training in induced abortions, this may prevent a resident from acquiring desired competence in family planning and uterine evacuation techniques. In this situation, there would be no structured curriculum or experience in the program, unless it is requested by and developed for a resident’s desiring training. Such a program would be considered to have an “opt in” curriculum, and the Committee would find this program to be non-compliant with the requirements.

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