بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Accreditation

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OBJECTIVES

- State the purpose of accreditation in health professions education
- State the main elements in an accreditation process
- Describe the role of standards in the accreditation process
- Identify characteristics of a trustworthy accreditation system
- Determine possible adverse consequences of accreditation
- Consider the role of accreditation in continuous quality improvement

Definition.

- **Accreditation is the formal approval for a stated period of time of an institution and its programme by a recognized body after self-review and external evaluation and based on predetermined standards.**

- **Accreditation is the process of judging whether or not an organization is working to the required standards, whether these are activity or outcome based.**

- **In some countries, such as the UK, this is called 'recognition'.**

Accreditation is both

a status   a process

- As a status, accreditation provides public notification that an institution or program meets standards of quality set forth by an accrediting agency.

- As a process, accreditation reflects the fact that in achieving recognition by the accrediting agency, the institution or programme is committed to self-study and external review by one's peers in seeking not only to meet standards but to continuously seek ways in which to enhance the quality of education and training provided

The outcome of a successful accreditation process, is that the school will be added to an official list of schools which are recognised as providing satisfactory education and training.

EXPERRIENCE OF STUDENT

MY EXPERRIENCE

One of us was once involved in a project about the quality of medical education in a region famous for its off-shore medical schools. He wanted to visit one of the listed schools, but could only find a post-office box number and even the government officials did not know where the school actually was located!

■The Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to "support the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) as it promotes international health professions education through programmatic and research activities."

■FAIMER's research and data resources on international health professions education and accreditation support educators, researchers, regulators, and policy makers.

■The World Federation for Medical Education is a non-governmental organisation concerned with education and training of medical doctors worldwide.

■ WFME's main objective is to "enhance the quality of medical education worldwide, with promotion of the highest scientific and ethical standards in medical education".

■WFME's mission is to strive for better health care for all mankind

■The World Health Organization originally published the World Directory of Medical Schools from 1953 to 2007.

■Responsibility to the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) which renamed it the AVICENNA Directory for Medicine.

■The Avicenna Directory was maintained by the University of Copenhagen in collaboration with   the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) in the years 2008-2015

■In March 2012, the AVICENNA and The International Medical Education Directory(IMED) directories agreed to merge into a single comprehensive directory. The new World Directory of Medical Schools officially launched in April 2014 managed by both WMFE and FAIMER.

■The International Medical Education Directory (IMED) was a public database of worldwide medical schools.

■World Directory of Medical Schools: is a public database of institutions that provide medical education. There are over 3,800 medical schools listed in the directory.

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates , ECFMG was founded in 1956, in response to the increase need for the evaluation of the readiness of international medical graduates entering the physician workforce during the 1950 expansion of US healthcare system.

The Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG) assesses the readiness of international medical graduates to enter residency or fellowship programs in the United States that are accredited by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).

international students admission

international patient admission

■Programme accreditation refers to the formal recognition of academic courses such as liberal arts, sciences, education or commerce. This means that individual courses of study are inspected against standards and, if successful, are listed as being of sufficient quality.

■In contrast, institutional accreditation refers to the formal recognition of the school, college or institution as a whole, based on its overall quality of educational management and provision.
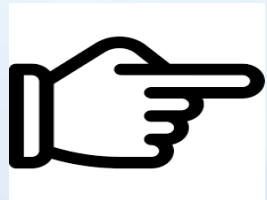
To avoid conflict of interest, any member of WFME staff involved in the evaluation of an accreditation agency may not be involved as an advisor or consultant to the agency concerned.

Purposes of accreditation

- • To assure the quality of the institution or programme

- • To assist in the improvement of the institution or programme

- • To describe the characteristics of institutions

- • To guide prospective students in their choice of school

- • To enable institutions to compare themselves with others

- • To assist careers advisers of prospective students

- • To stimulate improvements in education and training

- • To provide an assurance of quality to all interested parties

- • To be a stimulus to self-review

- • To stimulate appropriate innovation

- • To ensure patient safety

- • To ensure the quality of graduates and their fitness to practise

- • To enhance professional and national educational reputations.

some formal or legal requirements

some professional or academic requirements

The basic requirement is that the accreditation system is **trustworthy** and <u>recognised</u> by all, that is by the medical schools, the medical profession, the health care system, the government and the public.
 Such trust will be based on the <u>academic competence</u>, <u>efficiency</u> and <u>fairness</u> of the system.
These characteristics must be known by the users and the systems must possess a high degree of <u>transparency</u>.

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK 1

- Where there is a mandatory system of accreditation, it may well be <u>subject to legislation</u>.

- This does raise some issues of <u>political independence</u>, and some countries have <u>a legal process</u> which attempts to be independent of the current government.

- The accreditation system must operate within <u>a legal framework</u>.

- The statutory instrument will have rules and regulations <u>approved by government.</u>

THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK 2

- The legal framework must secure the autonomy of the accreditation system and ensure the independence of its quality assessment from government, the medical schools and the profession

- The legal framework **must** authorise the accrediting body to set the standards, gather data, conduct periodic inspections and confer, deny or withdraw accreditation of medical schools and their programmes in medical education.

In July 2008, the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament agreed on a Regulation that <u>for the first time</u> provided a legal framework for the provision of accreditation services across Europe. This might be a <u>good example</u> of how to frame legislation.

STANDARDS

- **standards for accreditation must be defensible, useable, relevant and sensitive to context.**
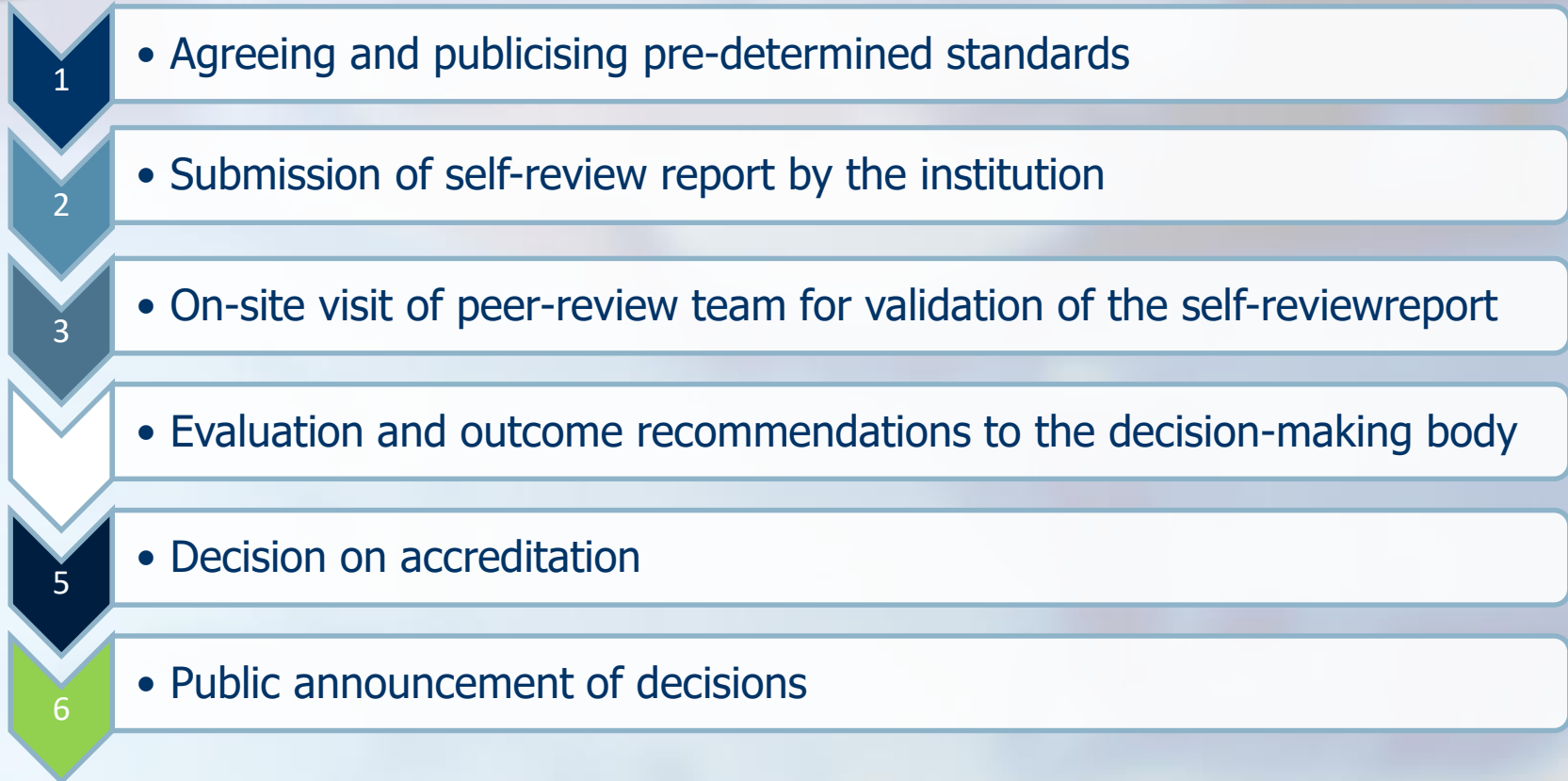
predetermined

agreed

well publicised

Conditions for success

■ Apart from the legal framework and appropriate standards that we have discussed already, we thought of the following additional conditions that might be required to make an accreditation system work:

■ Transparency, openness and a clear system of accountability and control for the accrediting agency itself, to ensure trust

■ A clear record system that shows all data, discussions and decisions

■ An open reporting system

■ Management and administrative systems

STAGES OF AN ACCREDITATION PROCESS

1. • Agreeing and publicising pre-determined standards

2. • Submission of self-review report by the institution

3. • On-site visit of peer-review team for validation of the self-reviewreport

• Evaluation and outcome recommendations to the decision-making body

5. • Decision on accreditation

6. • Public announcement of decisions

Most accreditation processes follow more or less the same steps which can be illustrated by the above diagram.

Pre-determined standards

- **It is important** *that the standards are <u>flexible</u> but are based on clear <u>evidence</u>, <u>values</u>, <u>theories</u> or accepted and analysed practice.*

- The 2015 WFME standards for basic medical education. included social accountability which was a current, and perhaps ephemeral, concern lacking an evidence base but having a value set.

- Most educational ideas in health professions education unfortunately derive from western settings and this might limit their validity in other locations.

- If the standards are to be global, the opportunity to say that they are not locally applicable must be given.

The self-review and The review team

- The purpose of the self-review is to elicit the institution's description and analysis of itself and its programme in relation to the predetermined standards and criteria.

👉 Self review is recognised as an important planning instrument to enable the institution to achieve insight into its strengths and weaknesses and to identify areas for quality improvement of its programme.
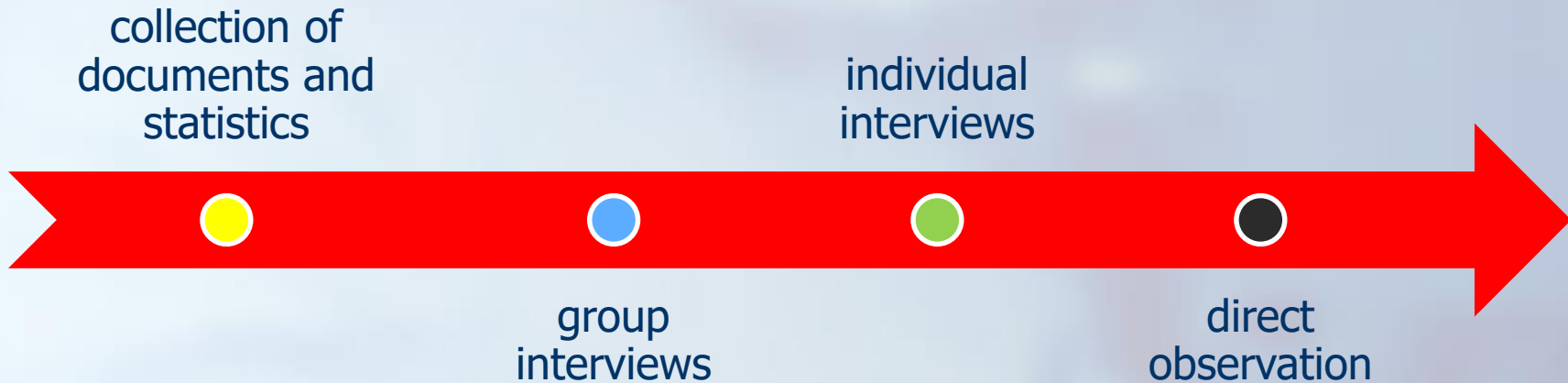
- The medical school should be informed about the proposed members of the review or site visit team and given the opportunity to draw attention to potential conflicts of interest.

- There should be a clear policy stated by the accrediting body about the size and composition of the team, and the required qualifications and experience of its members.

The site visit and Information gathering

■ The purposes of the site-visit are to provide an <u>external validation</u> of the conclusions of the self-review regarding fulfilment of standards and, if necessary, to acquire supplementary information.

collection of documents and statistics

individual interviews

group interviews

direct observation

☞ The site-visit should end with feedback from the review or site-visit team to the medical school.

Recommendations and decisions:

- As recommended in the WHO/WFME Guidelines for Accreditation there should be three options for recommendations and decisions:

- Full accreditation

- Conditional accreditation

- No accreditation.

- Some countries are operating with other numbers of options.

- One country is presently planning an accreditation system with only two options: Full accreditation and denial of accreditation.

- Decisions on accreditation must be based solely on the fulfilment or lack of fulfilment of the criteria or standards.

- Accreditation must be valid for a fixed period of time.

- The duration of full accreditation (e.g. 5–12 years) must be decided in general.

- Full accreditation for the maximum period must be conferred if all criteria or standards are fulfilled.

- <u>Conditional accreditation</u>, accreditation is conferred for the entire period stated but with conditions, to be reviewed after a shorter period to check fulfilment of the conditions.

- Conditional accreditation can be used in cases where a few criteria or standards are only partly fulfilled or in cases where more criteria or standards are not fulfilled.

- The seriousness of the problem is to be reflected in the specification of conditions.

- <u>Denial or withdrawal of accreditation</u> must be the decision, if many criteria or standards are not fulfilled, signifying severe deficiency in the quality of the programme that cannot be remedied within a few years.

- The draft report: The medical school should be provided with the external review or site visit team's written draft report, including the recommendations in order to correct errors of fact before the report and recommendations are submitted to the accreditation committee.

- The final report: The review or site visit team must, in its final report, state clearly the fulfilment or lack of fulfilment of the specific standards and must briefly give an account of the evidence supporting the evaluation. The report must conclude with recommendations concerning the accreditation committee or council regarding the decision on accreditation.

References:

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- State the negative aspects and consequences of accreditation and your counter

- arguments in the box below

Negative consequences:	Your counter-argument

- Think about your own country: Is your regulator entirely independent of political or financial interests?

- If not, how does that manifest itself? What effect does any relationship between regulators, politics and money have in practice?

■ Do you feel that your accreditation system does encourage continuous quality improvement overall? Or do you feel that there are some changes to be made?

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