



Next Accreditation System-International

The Next Accreditation System-International (NAS-I) will begin in Singapore on 1 July 2017. The following is intended to provide a brief overview of basic information based on common questions from program directors, faculty members, and coordinators when programs in the United States transitioned to the Next Accreditation System (NAS) beginning in 2014.

Question 1. *Why is Singapore transitioning to NAS-I?*

Answer: Following requests from the Singapore Ministry of Health, designated institutional officials (DIOs), and program directors, the ACGME-I has taken the experience with the NAS in the United States and applied it to programs in Singapore. Programs in Singapore are well-positioned to move to this new model of accreditation. They have adopted American Board of Medical Specialties-International board examinations and have successfully implemented two of the foundational elements of the NAS: 1) using the Clinical Competency Committee (CCC) to review and provide formative feedback to residents/fellows; and 2) conducting annual program reviews using the Program Evaluation Committee (PEC).

Question 2. *What is the NAS-I, and how is it different from the current way the ACGME-I accredits programs?*

Answer: Since 2009, Singapore has been participating in the ACGME-I accreditation system, which is episodic and consists of a site visit and evaluation by the Review Committees-International every three to four years. This system is also process-based, requiring periodic documentation of detailed processes of education through the Program Information Form (PIF).

The NAS-I involves continuous review by the Review Committee-International of all programs, based on a set of defined indicators (see Question 3 below). For established programs with Continued Accreditation, there will be no PIF and no periodic internal review by the Sponsoring Institution. Instead, the Review Committees-International will use information already collected and updated in the Accreditation Data System (ADS) to annually screen and evaluate programs.

In the United States, review of the clinical learning environment as part of the Clinical Learning Environment Review (CLER) Program occurs independently, and is not used in accreditation decisions for individual programs. Because of the differences in health care between Singapore and the United States, CLER reviews will not occur as part of the NAS-I. Additionally, although evaluation of residents/fellows using the Milestones is an important component of quality graduate medical education, residents'/fellows' Milestones assessments are not used during the Review Committee-Internationals' evaluations of programs. Programs will only receive citations related to the Milestones if the data is not reported.

Question 3. *What data will the Review Committees-International use to make accreditation decisions in the NAS-I?*

Answer: Programs will be responsible for updating information in ADS each year. The NAS-I does not require programs to enter additional data; however, there is a need for enhanced accuracy and completeness of the information entered into ADS.

The Review Committees-International will use the following information to make annual accreditation decisions:

- ACGME-I Resident/Fellow Survey results
- ACGME-I Faculty Survey results
- Aggregated board pass rates for program graduates
- Information on clinical experience (such as Case Logs) completed by program graduates (NOTE: Although residents must enter procedures into the Case Log System throughout their educational program, only the Case Logs of graduating residents are used when the Review Committees-International evaluate programs.)
- Program responses to existing citations
- Scholarly activity of residents/fellows and faculty members
- Major changes reported by the program, such as changes in program director, faculty members, participating sites, etc.

Question 4. *What process do the Review Committees-International use to make accreditation decisions, and how will programs be informed about their accreditation status?*

Answer: Beginning in early 2019, all programs will receive an annual accreditation decision. The Review Committees-International will meet twice a year, once at the beginning of the year and again in late spring. Most programs will receive a Letter of Notification during the first few months of the year indicating whether they maintain Continued Accreditation status. Some programs will be asked to provide additional clarifying information the applicable Review Committee-International feels it needs before it can render an accreditation decision. A very small number of programs (in the United States, this is approximately one percent of programs) will undergo a site visit to clarify their annual data prior to the Review Committee-International's rendering of an accreditation decision. If additional clarifying information or a site visit is requested, the program will receive an accreditation decision and a Letter of Notification before June of each year. Note that in addition to making an annual accreditation decision, the Review Committees-International can add citations, extend citations, or resolve citations annually. One advantage of the NAS-I is that citations can be resolved annually without a site visit. The Review Committees-International can also provide feedback on areas that may need additional attention by the program director and PEC, and can give the program commendations for innovative educational practices or work to resolve citations.

Question 5. *What is a Self-Study visit, and how is the date of that visit determined?*

Answer: All previously scheduled site visit dates in Singapore have been cancelled, and all programs have received notification of the due date for the Self-Study. Approximately 18 months following submission of a program's Self-Study, the program will have a full site visit.

The Self-Study is an objective, comprehensive evaluation of the program with the goal of program improvement. The Self-Study process requires that programs first develop a set of program Aims. Aims are the program's and institutional leaders' views of key expectations for the program and how it differentiates itself from other programs. The Self-Study uses information from the PEC's annual reviews of the program over the past seven years, an analysis of the program's opportunities and threats, and input from key stakeholders, such as residents, fellows, faculty members, or graduates.

The program submits a brief, approximately five-page summary of its Self-Study process, and approximately 18 months later a team of ACGME-I Field Representatives visit the program to

review how the planned improvements are occurring. Fellowships conduct their Self-Study at the same time and in partnership with their core residency program. Site visits for all fellowships are scheduled to occur at the same time as the visit to the core residency program.

Question 6. *How can programs get more information about this transition and the NAS-I?*

Answer: ACGME-I staff members will conduct half-day, in-person workshops for program directors, faculty members, and program and institutional coordinators on 13-14 September 2017. Additionally, a web page dedicated to the NAS-I will soon be available on the ACGME-I website that will include articles on NAS implementation in the United States, webinars specific to the NAS-I, and other resources.

The following articles describing NAS implementation in the United States may also be useful and are included on the ACGME-I NAS-I web page:

Bryne LM, Miller RS, Philibert I, Ling LJ, Potts JR, Leih-Lai MW, Nasca TJ. Program Performance in the Next Accreditation System (NAS): Results of the 2015-2016 Annual Data Review. *JGME*. 2017;9(3): 406-410.

Bryne LM, Miller RS, Nasca TJ. Implementing the Next Accreditation System: Results of the 2014-2015 Annual Data Review. *JGME*. 2016;8(1): 118-123.

Philibert I, Lieh-Lai M. A Practical Guide to the ACGME Self-Study. *JGME*. 2014;6(3): 612-614.

Questions or concerns from program directors, program coordinators, faculty members, and others are welcome, and should be sent by e-mail to ACGME-I Executive Director for Accreditation Services Lorraine Lewis, EdD: llewis@acgme-i.org.