

## Part 8. Related Organizations

### **American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)**

AACRAO ([www.aacrao.org](http://www.aacrao.org)) is a non-profit, voluntary higher education association of more than 9,000 admissions and registrar professionals representing approximately 2,300 institutions in more than 35 countries.

AACRAO's goal is to foster the professional development of its individual members by providing guidelines and voluntary standards for best practices in records management, admissions enrollment management, administrative information technology, and student services. It also provides a forum for discussion on policy initiation, development, interpretation, and implementation—at the institution level and within the global education community.

### **American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS)**

The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS, [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org)) is an organization of 24 approved medical specialty boards. The intent of the certification of physicians is to provide assurance to the public that those certified by an ABMS member board have successfully completed an approved training program and an evaluation process assessing their ability to provide quality patient care in the specialty. The ABMS serves to coordinate the activities of its member boards and to provide information to others concerning issues involving specialization and certification of medical specialists.

### **Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)**

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME, [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org)) is a private professional organization responsible for the accreditation of nearly 7,800 residency education programs. Residency education is the period of clinical education in a medical specialty that follows graduation from medical school; residency training prepares physicians for the independent practice of medicine. The ACGME's volume of accredited programs makes it one of the largest private accrediting agencies in the country, if not the world. The mission of the ACGME is to improve the quality of health care in the United States by ensuring and improving the quality of graduate medical education experiences for physicians in training. The ACGME establishes national standards for graduate medical education by which it approves and continually assesses educational programs

under its aegis. It uses the most effective methods available to evaluate the quality of graduate medical education programs. It strives to improve evaluation methods and processes that are valid, fair, open, and ethical.

### **Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)**

Through its program of certification, the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG, [www.ecfm.org](http://www.ecfm.org)) 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). ECFMG offers a variety of other programs and services to physicians educated abroad and other members of the international medical community.

### **Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB)**

From the beginning, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB, [www.fsmb.org](http://www.fsmb.org)) has encouraged unifying courses of study in medical schools, encouraged a standard medical curriculum, and urged minimum equipment for all medical college departments. It pointed out the need for improved “methods of determining fitness for licensure and the practice of medicine as distinguished from those required for graduation from an approved school or college of medicine.” The Federation has addressed that need throughout the years and continues to improve those methods. The Federation, in cooperation with the NBME, established the United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE), the single, uniform examination for medical licensure; the Post-Licensure Assessment System, a multidimensional assessment service for use in profiling physician clinical performance; and the Federation Physician Data Center, a nationally recognized system for collecting, recording, and distributing to state medical boards and other appropriate agencies data on disciplinary actions taken against licensees by the boards and other governmental authorities. Continual improvement in the quality, safety, and integrity of health care through the development and promotion of high standards for physician licensure and practice remains the mission of the FSMB.

### **Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME)**

The LCME ([www.lcme.org](http://www.lcme.org)) is the joint accrediting body of the Association of American Medical Colleges and the American Medical Association; it accredits medical schools in the United States and Canada. Student Affairs officers should be familiar with LCME accreditation standards and the various LCME publications, which can be found on the LCME Web site at: [www.lcme.org/pubs.htm](http://www.lcme.org/pubs.htm).

### **National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME)**

The NBME ([www.nbme.org](http://www.nbme.org)) is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides high quality licensure examinations for the profession of medicine. Protection of the health of the public through state-of-the-art assessment is part of the mission of the NBME, along with a major commitment to research and development in evaluation and measurement. The NBME was founded in 1915 because of the need for a voluntary, nationwide examination that medical licensing authorities could accept as the standard by which to judge candidates for medical licensure. Since that time, it has continued without interruption to provide high quality examinations for this purpose, and has become a model and a resource of international stature in testing methodologies and evaluation in medicine.

### **Organization of Program Director Associations (OPDA)**

The purpose of the Organization of Program Director Associations (OPDA, [www.cmss.org](http://www.cmss.org)) is to promote the role of the residency director and residency program director societies in achieving excellence in graduate medical education. Created in 2000, OPDA is a leadership consortium of residency program director (or chair) societies in each of the 27 medical and surgical specialties that correspond to the 27 ACGME Residency Review Committees (RRCs). Consisting of one liaison representative from each program director society, OPDA meets regularly to provide peer interaction, information sharing, and collaborative problem-solving. In addition, OPDA sponsors periodic symposia and meetings on timely GME issues, provides a forum for communication with leaders in graduate medical education, and monitors and promotes GME excellence in the activities of AAMC, ACGME, NRMP, NBME, ECFMG, and other organizations that regulate and impact graduate medical education. Recently, OPDA was invited to appoint representatives to two key organizations in medical education (i.e., NRMP and ACGME) to represent OPDA and program directors' interests in matters of relevance to graduate medical education.

### State Medical Licensing Boards

Each state's government is responsible for maintaining the public welfare and safety of its citizens. The state medical board is one means of carrying out this duty. Created by state statute, the primary purposes of the state medical board are to license medical practitioners and to regulate the practice of medicine, assuring that the practitioners are qualified and competent and that they practice in an ethical, responsible, and professional manner. Members of the state medical board, an executive agency of state government, are appointed by the governor for terms specified by state law. The state medical board licenses a physician to practice medicine in the jurisdiction following a review of the physician's qualifications. In addition, the state medical board is authorized to take disciplinary action against a licensed physician based on grounds specified in the state statute. The state medical board also educates physicians regarding the legalities of medical practice and makes recommendations for changes in the state law in relation to either qualifications for practice or grounds for disciplinary action.

Student Affairs officers should have some familiarity with the medical practice act in their state. They should participate in the process of ensuring that students are aware of the qualifications for licensure and practice in the state, as well as the grounds for disciplinary action. Most Student Affairs offices also complete licensure forms for state medical boards across the country, certifying satisfactory completion of the medical education program as part of the process for licensure. Finally, the Student Affairs officer, on occasion, may communicate directly with the state medical board or its staff in relation to the state's review of the qualifications for licensure of a specific student or graduate or in relation to proposed changes in the state law and/or the administrative regulations that are created to implement the law. It is important to maintain an on-going two-way relationship with personnel at the state medical board to facilitate these conversations.

### Student Health Services at Academic Medical Centers (SHSAMc)

SHSAMc is an organization of directors of student health services at academic medical centers who meet regularly to address a wide variety of issues related to health services for medical students and other health professions students, including issues related to immunization recommendations and requirements, assessment and treatment for students exposed to air-borne and blood-borne pathogens, and mental health services for students.