The 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit: Overview, Preparation, Early Experience and Responses to Frequently Asked Questions

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Ingrid Philibert, PhD, MBA, Senior VP, Field Activities, Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)

Joseph Gilhooly, MD, Accreditation Field Representative. ACGME, and Professor Emeritus, Oregon Health & Science University

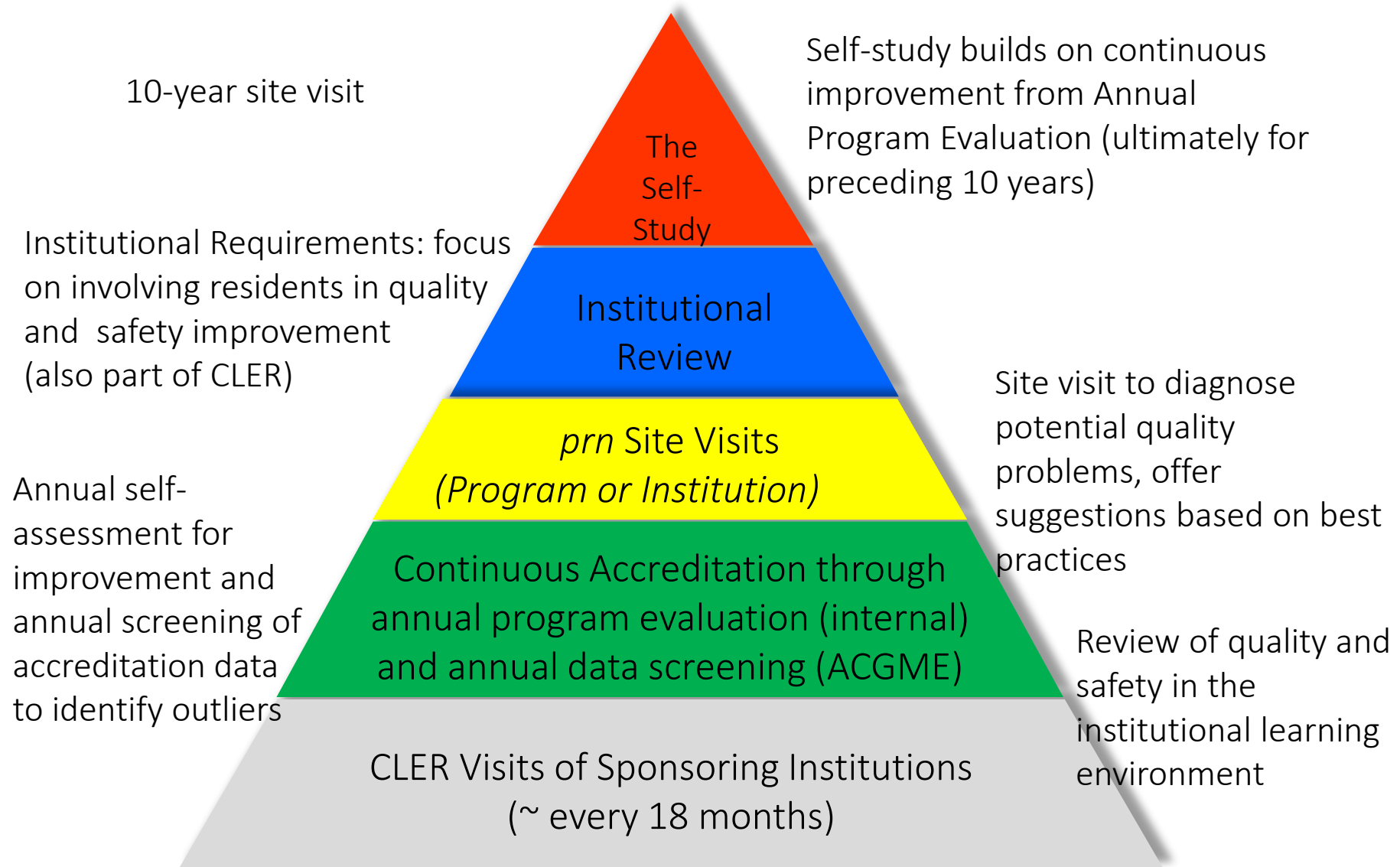*William W. Robertson, MD, MBA, Accreditation Field Representative. ACGME*

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DISCLOSURES

- Speakers are employed by ACGME
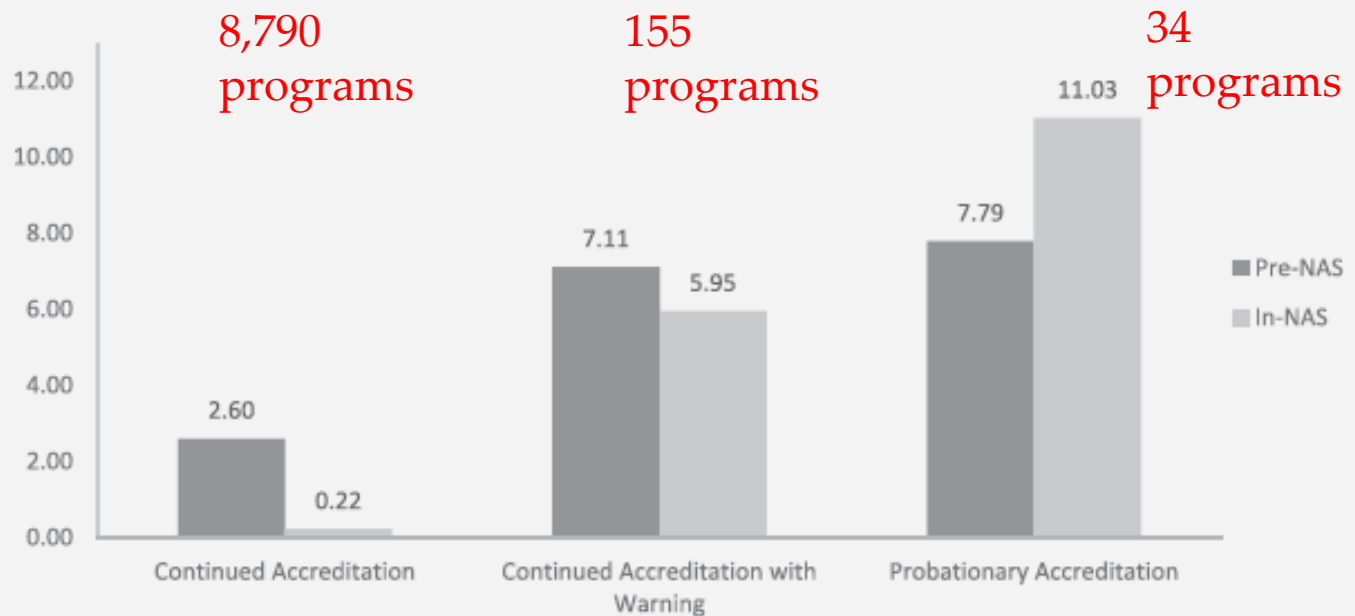- No other activities requiring disclosure

OBJECTIVES

- Describe the improvement goals underlying the 10-year accreditation site visit

- Discuss program improvement and components of the summary of achievements prior program submit for their 10-year site visit

- Describe the experience from early 10-year site visits

- List resources for programs in ongoing improvement efforts, and in preparing for the 10-year site visit

- Respond to frequently asked questions and questions from the audience

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT AND THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF THE NEW ACCREDITATION SYSTEM

10-year site visit

Self-study builds on continuous improvement from Annual Program Evaluation (ultimately for preceding 10 years)

The Self-Study

Institutional Requirements: focus on involving residents in quality and safety improvement (also part of CLER)

Institutional Review

prn Site Visits
(Program or Institution)

Site visit to diagnose potential quality problems, offer suggestions based on best practices

Annual self-assessment for improvement and annual screening of accreditation data to identify outliers

Continuous Accreditation through annual program evaluation (internal) and annual data screening (ACGME)

Review of quality and safety in the institutional learning environment

CLER Visits of Sponsoring Institutions
(~ every 18 months)

LIMITS OF A CITATION BASED APPROACH TO IMPROVEMENT: PROGRAMS ON FULL ACCREDITATION BY # OF CITATIONS
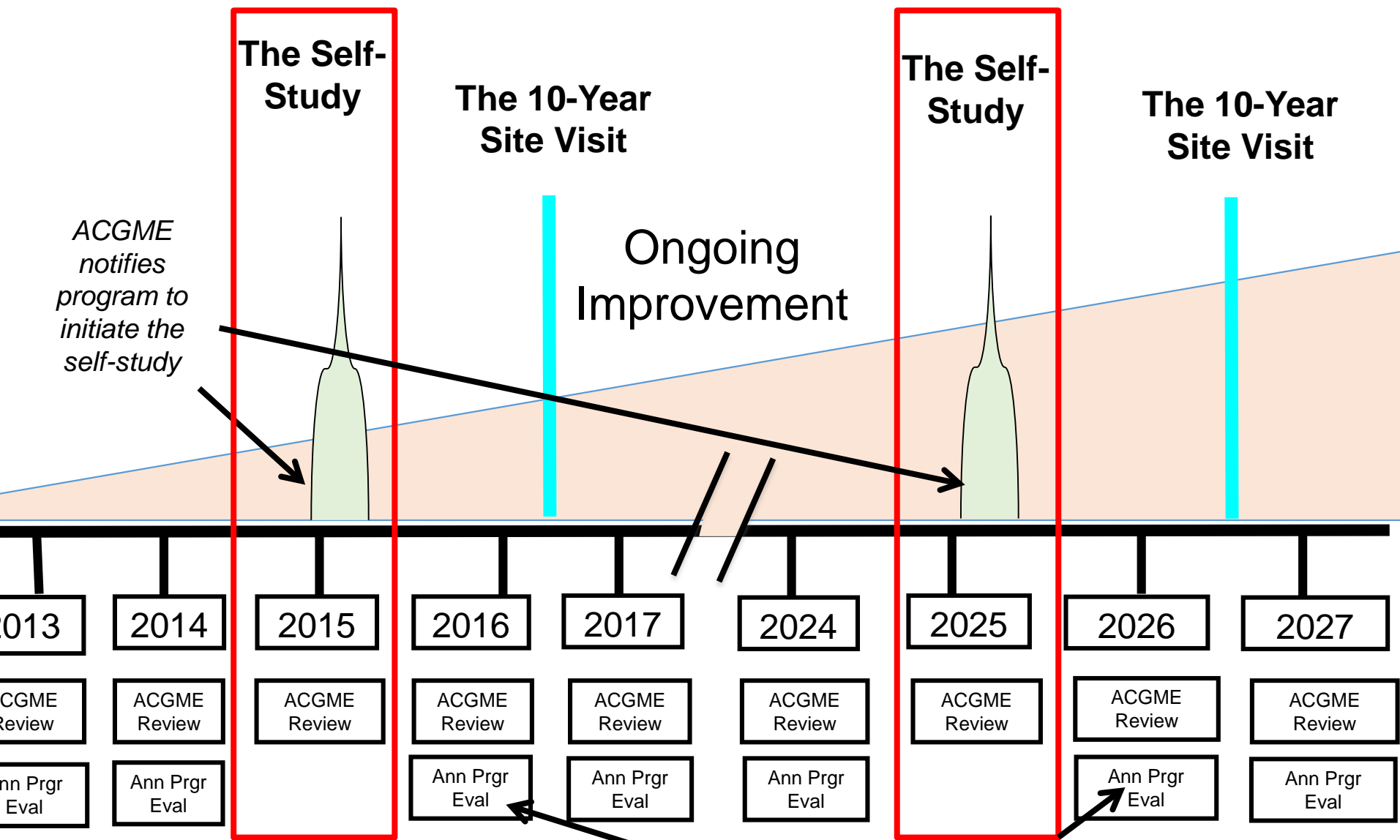

FIGURE

Average Number of Citations Issued by Accreditation Status (Pre-NAS and In-NAS)

Abbreviation: NAS, Next Accreditation System.

THE SELF-STUDY AND THE 10-YEAR ACCREDITATION SITE IN CONTEXT

The Self-Study

The 10-Year Site Visit

The Self-Study

The 10-Year Site Visit

ACGME notifies program to initiate the self-study

Ongoing Improvement

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2024	2025	2026	2027
CGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review	ACGME Review
nn Prgr Eval	Ann Prgr Eval		Ann Prgr Eval	Ann Prgr Eval	Ann Prgr Eval		Ann Prgr Eval	Ann Prgr Eval

Program "harvests" improvements

ELEMENTS OF THE SELF-STUDY

- Program Description and Program Aims
- Program Context: A SWOT/SVOT/SLOT Analysis: Program strengths, areas for improvement/vulnerabilities/limitations, opportunities, and threats
  - *ACGME does NOT request information on areas for improvement*
- A five-year "look back" on program changes and improvements
- A five-year "look forward" – plans/considerations for the future
  - With input from all relevant stakeholders (program, department, institutional leaders, others affected)
- Consideration of/answer to the question "What will take this program to the next level"

THE 10-YEAR SITE VISIT: OVERVIEW

- The 10-year site visit is scheduled 12 to 18 months after the program has completed its self-study

- It is a full site visit and accreditation review of the program against all applicable requirements

  - Core requirements and outcome requirements

  - Compliance with detail requirements does not need to be demonstrated; programs may share innovative approaches for dissemination

- It includes a review of program aims, strengths, and improvements made in areas the program identified in its self-study

- The 10-year site visits for subspecialty programs will be coordinated with the visit of their core program

- 8 Steps to Prepare for the 10-Year Site Visit *(next)*

1. **Reassemble the Annual Program Evaluation/Self-Study Group to "Harvest" the Data in Areas for Improvement Identified During the Self-Study**

- **Timing:** Approximately 9 to 10 months after the Self Study

- **Team Composition:** The Program Evaluation Committee (PEC) or self-study group

- **Activity:** Conduct an annual program evaluation that includes review the data collected in areas of improvement that were identified during the self-study

- **Assign Responsibility:** An individual or the team responsible for each improvement area will need to assess progress, as well as identify if improvement has been achieved or if the data constitute early indications of future improvement.

2. **Identify Improvements Made as a Result of the Self-Study and Discuss with Stakeholders**

- **Timing:** Approximately 9 to 10 months after Self-Study

- **Activities:** As part of Annual Program Evaluation, improvements made in areas identified during the self-study should be discussed with stakeholders. This may actually constitute another valuable assessment of the changes made, as faculty members and trainees are in an excellent position to inform program leaders on whether a change has had the desired impact, or if further work is required.

- Assess, with input from stakeholders, the fit between the interventions and improvement initiatives and the program's aims.

3. **Reassess Program Aims and Other Elements of the Program's Strategic Assessment (Strengths, Opportunities, and Threats)**

- **Timing:** Approximately 9 to 10 months after Self-Study

- **Activity:** Aims may change over time, and it is beneficial to reassess them as part of each Annual Program Evaluation. In addition, the program's context—opportunities and threats—should be reassessed for changes in the environment.

- Programs directors who submitted their Self-Study Summary before February 2017 should also conduct a brief five-year look-back, and a five-year look-forward, and answer the question, "What will take this program to the next level?"

- These programs will provide updated information on these areas in a Self-Study Summary Update.

THE SELF-STUDY SUMMARY

- After the self-study, the program uploads the Self-Study Summary through ADS

- ACGME Template: 2550 – 2800 word maximum (~5 pages) for core program, less for small subspecialty programs

- Sections: Key Self-Study dimensions

  - Program Strengths

  - Aims, Opportunities and Threats

  - Five-year look-back and look-forward

  - "What will take this program to the next level"

  - Self-study process

    - Who was involved, how were date collected and interpreted

- Omitted by design: areas for improvement/limitations/ vulnerabilities

4. **Discuss Program Aims, Improvements Achieved, and Other Elements of the Program's Strategic Assessment with Program Stakeholders**

- **Timing:** Approximately 9 to 10 months after Self-Study

- **Activity:** The information on aims and the environmental assessment should be shared and discussed with program leadership and stakeholders prior to the 10-year accreditation site visit.

- This is another opportunity for faculty members, trainees, the program coordinator, and any other appropriate individuals to have an improvement-focused conversation about the program. It will also prepare the group for conversations about the self-study process and outcomes, which will constitute the first part of the 10-year accreditation site visit.

5. **After Receiving the Site Visit Notification, Complete and Submit the Summary of Achievements**

- **Timing:** The ACGME Department of Field Activities will provide 90 days advance notice for the 10-year accreditation site visit.

- **Activity:** Once the self-study data have been discussed and finalized, program leaders should prepare the Summary of Achievements.

- For some areas, programs may provide early data for improvements that have not yet been fully realized.

THE SUMMARY OF ACHIEVEMENTS

- ACGME template uploaded through ADS

- ~ 1500 words, describing (1) program strengths, (2) key improvements accomplished from the self-study
  - Areas identified during the self-study where the program has realized improvements

- ACGME does not collect information on areas not improved

- The program may provide an update to its self-study summary
  - Changes in aims or context
  - Changes in future plans

6. **Set and Confirm Logistics for the 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit**

- **Timing:** About 40 to 50 days before the site visit date
- **Activities:** Your assigned lead site visitor will contact you regarding the details of the site visit day, including individuals to be interviewed, time to allocate for these meetings, and organization of rooms and other logistics.
- The 10-year accreditation site visit for a core program will take a half to a full day, while the visit for a subspecialty program will a ½ day or less
- The ACGME is still refining the site visit protocols for how to address shared components between core and subspecialty programs. This is the subject of further study, and guidance will be forthcoming

7. **Update Data in the Accreditation Data System (ADS) Ahead of the 10-Year Accreditation Site Visit**

- **Timing:** A minimum of 12 days before the site visit date

- **Activities:** Upload the Summary of Achievements, and if needed, the Self-Study Summary Update a minimum of 12 days before the date of their 10-year site visit

- Updatable section in ADS prior include: (1) responses to active citations; (2) the open text section describing major changes in the program; and (3) a current block diagram that accurately reflects the program

- Responses to citations should be current, succinct, and describe efforts to address prior problem areas

- The section entitled "Changes and Other Updates" can be used to provide information on discuss recent changes and improvements to the site visitor and Review Committee

8. The Summary of Achievements, and for any updates, the Self-Study Summary Update, must be submitted via ADS a minimum of 12 days before the 10-year site visit.

- **Timing:** A minimum of 12 days before the site visit date

- Any updates or changes made after that date will not be reflected in the documents available to the site visitor or the Review Committee reviewers.

DOCUMENTATION USED IN THE 10-YEAR SITE VISIT

Submitted to ACGME via ADS

- The Self-Study Summary

- The Summary of Achievements

- If needed, a Self-Study Summary Update

Updated in ADS

- Responses to Citations

- Changes and Other Updates

- Block Diagram

Available from ADS

Program Summary for Review (data from the annual update)

Program Annual Report (Resident and Faculty Survey, Scholarly Activities, etc.)

Available On-Site

- Documents on ACGME document list for the 10-year visit

REVIEW COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE 10-YEAR VISIT

- Two-section review
1. Review against accreditation standards:
    - Review Committee (RC) provides Letter of Notification from the 10-year (Full Accreditation) Site Visit
    - Citations and Areas for Improvement
2. Feedback on the self-study taking into consideration
    - Program aims and context; improvements reported and verified during the 10-year visit
    - Effectiveness of self-study, based on process and the outcomes the program has reported
- Formative feedback (no accreditation impact) for the initial RC assessment of self-study effectiveness
    - Formative only feedback envisioned for several years, as the GME community and RCs learn more about program improvement in areas already compliant with the accreditation standards
    - **Focus on the "improvement process," not on the improvement priorities the program has selected**
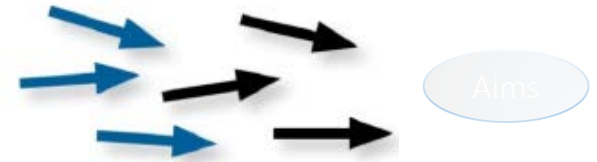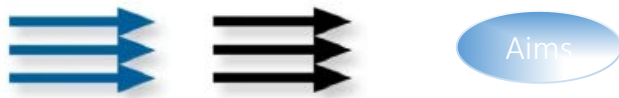
PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT AS A DEVELOPMENTAL PROCESS

Level 1
*"Random Acts of Improvement"
Reactive, execution incomplete, few
if any outcomes*
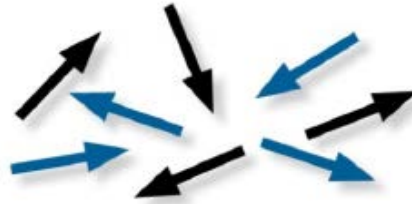
Level 2
*Improvement with some
beneficial outcomes, reactive, no
link to aims*

Level 3
*Beginning of a directed approach
awareness of aims and context,
beginning relationship among
improvement projects*

Aims

Level 4
*Repeatable, repeated improvement, linked
to aims, and with consideration of context,
alignment among projects, and in carrying
out activities*

Aims

Level 5
*Repeatable, repeated improvement with multiple periods
of data, and ongoing refinement and innovation, tight link
to aims and relevant to context, integration among
projects, and among program/department and
institutional units carrying out activities*

Aims

Adapted from Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award, "Steps toward Mature Processes, 2015

- Consistent with the educational milestones and the CLER Pathway document

- A more consistent way of categorizing program improvement, with the ability to offer feedback tailored to the program, to get to "The Next Level"

  - Eg, one would NOT provide feedback to get to Level 5 to a program currently at Level 1

- Use as a self-assessment tool

- Providing a shared mental model about improvement to programs, accreditation field staff, and Review Committees

- Validation is currently ongoing, release expected in the spring of 2017

- Part of a growing set of resources ACGME is developing for the self-study and the 10-year site visit

1. **Link to Aim and Context**

    - Are activities to improve the program relevant to program aims (particularly important for programs that already comply with all ACGME standards, which is the majority of programs on continued accreditation

2. **Completing the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDCA) Cycle**

    - Early or inadequate efforts often characterized by improvement cycles arrested at the Plan phase
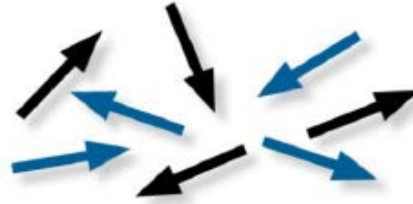
3. **Managing Improvement Action Plans and Data**

    - ACGME has provided sample forms for data recording and tracking

4. **Stakeholder involvement and engagement**

    - "Stakeholders" are defined by the program, and often go beyond trainees and faculty (eg other departments, nursing, ambulatory clinic staff)

WHAT DOES FEEDBACK LOOK LIKE?

Level 2: Improvement with some beneficial outcomes, reactive, no link to aims

- For performance at Level 2, but individual initiatives could compete or be at cross-purpose with each other.

- *Feedback: Consider a matrix to help you align/integrate activities with the aims*

- *What are key priorities? What key data items for tracking progress?*

- *How can you enhance stakeholder input and engagement in this process?*

DESIGNING THE SELF-STUDY AND 10-YEAR SITE VISIT

- Use of an Agile design process with ample input from stakeholders
- Ample dialogue with and input from program directors and institutional leaders and members of the field staff
- These refinements were made to the process
  - A shortened form for subspecialty programs, especially 1-year clinically focused subs
  - A different self-study pilot visit model for small subs
  - A different approach for the 10-year visit for new programs that have recently transitioned to full accreditation
  - More guidance in selected areas relating to data aggregation and use in program improvement
  - Considering making available de-identified, annotated "sample" self-study documents to facilitate learning

- Development of resources for programs
  - Snippet slide set for setting Aims
  - Forms for aggregating data from an individual annual program evaluation, and across several years of program evaluation and improvement
- New Forms for Programs
  - Updated Self-Study Summary with information on the 5-Year look back and look forward
  - Summary of Achievements
  - Self-Study Summary Update for changes and to collect information on the new dimensions for program that completed their self-study prior to February 2017
- New site visit report format for the 10-Year Site Visit
  - Succinct section for self-study reporting (will not repeat content in the Self-Study Summary or Summary of Achievements)
  - Working on a combined "pattern" report for internal medicine and pediatrics, and are currently testing a prototype form

SITE VISITOR EXPERIENCE WITH VERY EARLY 10-YEAR SITE VISIT

Q AND A

both frequently asked and from the audience