

Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions

Scott Dalhouse

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) continues to expand programs, refine procedures, and develop measurement methods to evaluate the impact osteopathic postdoctoral training institutions (OPTIs) have on osteopathic graduate medical education.

Osteopathic Graduate Medical Education Programs and OPTI Affiliation

Recognizing the need for closer monitoring of OPTIs and participation of partners within OPTIs, the Council on Postdoctoral Training (COPT) developed policies and guidelines for affiliations between new hospitals and programs. The AOA Board of Trustees adopted these policies at its midyear meeting in February 2003. These policies require new programs to submit, as part of the application process, affiliation agreements describing the relationship between the program and its OPTI; the OPTI's method(s) of program oversight; and the OPTI's contribution to curriculum, faculty development, research, and quality improvement of the program.

In addition, the policy strongly encourages new programs to affiliate with a geographically proximate OPTI to facilitate increased interaction. If the affiliated OPTI is geographically distant, the program seeking affiliation needs to provide a description of how educational components would be satisfied.

COPT Subcommittee on OPTI Evaluation

OPTI Capital Development Campaign and Needs Survey

Led by James E. Zini, DO, past president, the AOA is developing a capital campaign to raise \$30 million as part of Dr Zini's Ten-Point Plan to Optimize OPTI.

A task force from the OPTI Subcommittee has discussed potential strategies and tactics for the capital development campaign. In an effort to meet the goals of the campaign and to continue its commitment to OPTI development, the AOA surveyed the OPTIs to identify their vision of the OPTI of the future and how the individual OPTI could benefit from this campaign. Three areas with the greatest need for project

funding were identified, with funding for faculty development activities requested most.

Another high priority among OPTI administrators is enhancing distance learning capabilities. Producing high-quality curricular materials and supporting the telecommunications infrastructure needed to share information across OPTI partners would significantly advance OPTI goals for building a seamless continuum of osteopathic medical education.

Finally, funding is needed to build and share relevant databases and systems with all OPTIs. A main component of the OPTI concept is to serve as a clearinghouse in areas of intern and resident recruitment, testing, faculty development, and other joint concerns among OPTIs.

Data provided by survey responses will be included in the AOA's new marketing brochure about OPTIs to be used with potential donors.

Committee Restructuring From the Task Force to Study the Department of Educational Affairs

The Task Force to Study the Department of Educational Affairs was established by Dr Zini to review the structure of the Department, with an emphasis on the Bureau of Professional Education (BPE) and its subordinate councils and committees.

In 1995, the AOA required that all approved osteopathic graduate medical education (OGME) occurring after July 1999 be incorporated within an accredited OPTI.

In 1999, the AOA Board of Trustees established the current OPTI Subcommittee to replace the Ad Hoc Committee on OPTI Implementation. The Subcommittee represents the major constituencies involved in the composition of OPTIs and measurement specialists.

The OPTI Subcommittee is responsible for developing a program to evaluate the effectiveness of OPTIs and will function as an evaluative body in global review of OPTI as a program structure and as an accreditation mechanism. Finally, the Subcommittee will recommend OPTI-related policy and procedural changes to the COPT.

The OPTI Subcommittee has eight voting members and is headed by the chair of the COPT; all other members are selected from outside the membership of the COPT. Meeting three times per year (January, May, and November), the Subcommittee is charged with reviewing the OPTI program and presenting recommendations in accreditation documents. In addition, the OPTI Subcommittee conducts training work-

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MEDICAL EDUCATION

shops for on-site OPTI evaluators and administrators. The structure of the COPT Subcommittee on OPTI Evaluation is as follows: one nominee each from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), the Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators (AODME), the Association of Osteopathic State Executive Directors (AOSED), and a nominee representative of osteopathic hospitals; one osteopathic medical student; one member from the COPT; and two members at large.

Newly Structured Committee on Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions

The eight-member COPT Subcommittee on OPTI Evaluation would become the new Committee on Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions (COPTI), with the addition of one nonvoting liaison member from osteopathic resident physicians. The structure of the current nine-member OPTI Subcommittee is recommended for seven voting members as follows: one nominee each from AACOM and the AODME and one nominee representative of the osteopathic hospitals; one osteopathic medical student; one member of the COPT (who shall assume the chair of the COPTI); two members at large; and two nonvoting liaison members—one AOSED nominee and one osteopathic resident physician.

The new committee would retain the roles of the current OPTI Subcommittee. This would include reviewing the functionality of OPTI as an OGME mechanism and developing recommendations for OPTI accreditation standards, policies and procedures, as well as administrative guidelines.

In addition, the new COPTI would receive from the current Executive Committee of the Council on Postdoctoral Training (ECCOPT) the initial review function for the OPTI accreditation program, modeled after the initial review function that the Council on Predoctoral Education performs in the

college accreditation program. The new Bureau of Osteopathic Education (BOE) would take final action on OPTI accreditation matters, just as the current BPE now makes such decisions, and the appeal of decisions of the BOE on OPTI accreditation would be heard by the AOA Board of Trustees, as is the current policy with the BPE.

Annual OPTI Workshop

The OPTI Subcommittee developed the program for the Annual OPTI Workshop that was held May 2003 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The theme was “Empowering OPTI for Achieving Quality and Accountability.” Guest speakers included the late Marvin Dunn, MD, and Cynthia Taradjena from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education; Michael Adelman, DO, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine; and D. Keith Watson, DO, Associate Dean of the Centers for Osteopathic Research and Education System at Ohio University, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Athens.

Sessions focused on establishing an internal review program as a method for the OPTI to maintain quality postdoctoral training programs. During the breakout sessions, attendees developed models for OPTIs and specialty colleges to conduct midcycle internal reviews.

OPTI Consolidation

The AOA has received notification of and has acknowledged the acceptance of all partner institutions from the Still Consortium for Osteopathic Postgraduate Education in Des Moines, Iowa, to MEDCON, a Medical Education Consortium in Kansas City, Missouri. This consolidation brings four new hospital members to MEDCON plus the addition of Des Moines University Osteopathic Medical Center.