



Developing Subject-Specific Benchmarks as Tool for Internal and External Quality Assurance

“Medical Education in the Caribbean: Accreditation and Quality Issues”

Presentation to the European Alliance for Subject-Specific and Professional Accreditation & Quality Assurance (EASPA)

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Outline of Presentation

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The Caribbean



Globalisation and Medical Education

- Caribbean education sector transformed by globalisation-
 - Demand for tertiary education has increased.
 - To satisfy demand, governments encourage private providers, hence the proliferation of foreign universities.
 - However, uncertainties about programme quality have come to the fore.

Globalisation and Medical Education (cont'd)

- Consequently, countries have sought to establish quality assurance systems but not without challenges such as:
 - Dearth of requisite competence;
 - Difficulty in providing independent external reviewers;
 - Differences in the types of systems used;
 - Variation in the disclosure of accreditation results; also, disparity of control measures between national and foreign providers;
 - Graduates are trained locally for practise elsewhere; also, the inadequacy of the initial granting of a charter as the sole requirement for operation.

Background to the Development of Medical Education and Medical Education Accreditation in the Caribbean

Medical education and accreditation: where it began

- In 1948, with 33 students at the UCWI, Mona Campus, Jamaica, now **The University of the West Indies (UWI)**, a regional university
- Accreditation was the purview of the GMC until 2001

Quality Assurance System

- The UWI has a formal, internal system.
- It also undergoes external reviews.

Background ... Caribbean (cont'd)

Other medical schools later established

- 1963- the **University of Guyana** and its School of Medicine in 1985
 - no accreditation prior to CAAM-HP's survey visit in 2006
- 1969- the medical school at the **University of Suriname**

Background ... Caribbean (cont'd)

Influx of offshore, for profit schools (main target population- the US)

- 1977- **St. George's University**, Grenada
 - evaluated by US state agencies and CAAM-HP
- 1978- **Ross University**, Dominica
 - evaluated by the Dominica Medical Board and CAAM-HP
- Steady increase since the 1980s
- IMED** reported:
 - over 30 medical schools in the region;
 - medical schools per capita for the Caribbean- the highest in the world.

Source:

- Van Zanten, Marta; Parkins, L. M.; Karle, H; Hallock, J. A. 2009. "Accreditation of Undergraduate Medical Education in the Caribbean: Report on the Caribbean Accreditation Authority for Education In Medicine and Other Health Professions." *Academic Medicine* 84 (6): 771-775.

COUNTRY	No. of Offshore Schools
Antigua	2
Anguilla	1
Aruba	1
Belize	2
Bonaire	1
Curacao	2
Dominica	2
Grand Cayman	1
Guyana	3
Jamaica	1
Saba	1
St Kitts & Nevis	6
St Eustatius	1
St Marteen	1
St Lucia	4
St Vincent & the Grenadines	1

Background ... Caribbean (cont'd)

Categories of schools/universities in the Caribbean

- **Regional** – The UWI
- **National** – University of Suriname; University of Guyana
- **Offshore, for profit**

Background ... Caribbean (cont'd)

Factors influencing increasing number of US citizens attending schools outside the US

- MCAT score requirement for US schools not met;
- Proximity to the US;
- The language of instruction- English;
- Flexibility of the academic calendar;
- Lower tuition fees;
- Desire to become a medical doctor.

Background ... Caribbean (cont'd)

- Concerns raised in the U.S. about medical schools in the Caribbean given, among other things, the absence of a uniform system of quality assurance.
- With this comes the tendency to lump Caribbean medical schools without distinction.

Establishment of the CAAM-HP

- The foregoing developments gave credence to the need for a regional accreditation body

The Response: CAAM-HP

- the **CARICOM Single Market & Economy (CSME)** – the need to ensure quality education and training of professionals – also gave rise to CAAM-HP
- **CAAM-HP** established under the auspices of the **Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**
 - **CSME**: the creation of a large economic space without restrictions on the movement of skilled personnel and resources and without discriminatory access to resources
 - **CARICOM**: economic and political affiliation of 15 countries

Establishment of the CAAM-HP

- **CAAM-HP's remit:** the accreditation of degree level programs of education in the health professions

CAAM-HP's Legal Authority

- **Agreement** establishing CAAM-HP – signed by **11** CARICOM members
 - There is difficulty in getting other member states to sign. Yet, CAAM-HP accommodates schools in those states.
- **Act of Parliament**, Jamaica: The Caribbean Accreditation Authority (Medicine and other Health Professions) Act, 2006

Membership of the CAAM-HP

- CAAM-HP's Membership is multidisciplinary. Representatives include:
 - Schools/universities
 - Students
 - Civil Society
 - Professional associations
 - External professionals

Objectives of the CAAM-HP

- (a) To achieve and maintain standards of excellence in programmes of education in medicine and other health professions;
- (b) To establish an efficient system of regulation in relation to the standards and quality of such programmes of education;
- (c) To secure international recognition of the programmes of education in medicine and other health professions;
- (d) To maintain the confidence of the peoples of the region in the quality of medical and other health professions training offered in the region.

Accreditation System

- Similar to the LCME's;
- Functions with a clear authoritative mandate;
- Operates independently of governments and institutions;
- Uses predefined profession-specific standards and transparent procedures.

Accreditation System (cont'd)

Aims of the process:

- To certify the quality of a programme;
- To promote institutional self-evaluation and improvement;
- To assure society and the medical professions of the qualifications of graduates of accredited schools.

Accreditation System (cont'd)

The **Standards** deal with:

- The Institutional Setting
- The Students
- Educational Programme
- The Faculty
- Educational Resources
- Internship
- Continuing Professional Education

Accreditation System (cont'd)

The Standards:

- Compilation took into account regional circumstances and international standards;
- Written to give assurance of the quality of training
 - However, graduates must meet standards for independent practice, as reflected in CAAM-HP's standards for Internship and as determined by the **Caribbean Association of Medical Councils (CAMC)**.

Accreditation System (cont'd)

The **Accreditation Process** involves:

- Preparation of an institutional self-study (ISS)
- Site visit by survey team
- Report development and review for accreditation determination

Accreditation System (cont'd)

Site survey team

- The Secretariat appoints survey teams.
- A database of experienced professionals is maintained.
- Each team comprises a CAAM-HP member and a representative cross section of basic science and clinical educators.
- Team prepares a report of the visit for consideration and accreditation determination by CAAM-HP.

Accreditation System (cont'd)

- Accreditation decision communicated to:
 - the school,
 - the Secretary-General of CARICOM,
 - the public.
- A school may:
 - disclose the report;
 - appeal the decision.

Accreditation System (cont'd)

- Full accreditation is awarded or renewed when a programme is deemed to have met standards.
- By judging the compliance of programmes, CAAM-HP serves the interests of the public and students.
- Transparency of the system is maintained by availability of the standards and details of the accreditation process on the website at www.caam-hp.org.

Activities to Date

Accreditation exercises conducted/pending

- The University of the West Indies (UWI)- medicine, 2006 and 2012; veterinary medicine, 2009 and 2015; dental education programme, St Augustine Campus, 2010 and 2014
- University of Guyana School of Medicine, 2006 and 2013
- St George's University School of Medicine, Grenada, 2007, 2011 and 2015
- Ross University School of Medicine, Dominica, 2008 and 2014
- American University of Antigua (AUA) College of Medicine, 2011 and 2014
- University of Science, Arts & Technology (USAT), Montserrat, 2007 and 2011

Activities (cont'd)

Accreditation exercises... (cont'd)

- Avalon University School of Medicine, Curacao, 2013
- Spartan Health Sciences University, St Lucia, 2013 and 2015
- Xavier University School of Medicine, Aruba, 2013 and 2015
- Windsor University School of Medicine, St Kitts, 2014
- International American University, St Lucia, 2014
- Trinity School of Medicine, St Vincent & the Grenadines, 2015
- St James School of Medicine (SJSM), Anguilla, 2015

Activities (cont'd)

- Schools in the Dominican Republic and Mexico have expressed interest.

Other activities

- Monitoring of proposed and developing programmes
 - All American Institute of Medical Sciences (AAIMS), Jamaica
 - Vanguard School of Medicine, Montserrat
 - Global University Schools of Medicine and Public Health (GU-MED), Turks & Caicos
 - The UWI School of Dentistry, Mona Campus, Jamaica

Activities (cont'd)

Other activities (cont'd)

- Conducting workshops
 - To orient new members
 - To train potential surveyors
 - To guide schools preparing for site visits

Activities (cont'd)

Standards for other health professions

- CAAM-HP developed its own standards for **dentistry**, **veterinary medicine** and **nursing**.

International Recognition

Recognition

- The CAAM-HP has the responsibility to establish affiliations and secure int'l recognition.
- Increasing international interest has led to several initiatives.

Activities (cont'd)

Recognition (cont'd)

- A relationship has been forged with the **World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)**.
 - WFME advisor has participated in CAAM-HP site visit.
 - With assistance from the **Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)**, CAAM-HP and WFME successfully hosted an Invitational Conference on Accreditation of Medical Education Programmes in the Caribbean in 2007.

Activities (cont'd)

Recognition (cont'd)

- Through membership of
 - International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE)
 - Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education (CANQATE)
 - Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
 - CHEA International Quality Group (CIQG)
- and participations in meetings of:

Activities (cont'd)

Recognition (cont'd)

- Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB),
 - Administrators in Medicine (AIM),
 - ECFMG,
 - UNESCO and
 - International Association of Medical Regulatory Authorities (IAMRA)
- CAAM-HP has gained international exposure.

Activities (cont'd)

Recognition (cont'd)

- In January 2008, the **UK government** gave formal recognition to CAAM-HP as the authority responsible for the accreditation of new and developing medical schools for the **British Overseas Territories** located in the Caribbean.
- CAAM-HP has been granted **international recognition** through WFME/FAIMER collaboration.

Activities (cont'd)

Recognition

- **NCFMEA Comparability Determination Successful**, for Antigua and Jamaica
 - The importance of this is to facilitate loans for international students who want to attend medical school outside the US.

Tenth Anniversary

10th Anniversary Conference

July 28-30, 2014, Montego Bay, Jamaica – *Coming of Age: Lessons from the Past, Strategies for the Future*

- The purpose was to celebrate successes and determine the way forward in light of important developments in accreditation practices.
- It was well supported by the schools – from the Caribbean Community, Aruba and the Dominican Republic
- Presenters came from the Caribbean, the US and UK

Concluding Comments

- Schools-
 - acknowledge the usefulness of the process;
 - recognise the importance of regular accreditation.

Concluding Comments (cont'd)

Challenges

- Resistance from the nursing profession
- Schools' failure to notify CAAM-HP of changes
- Conflicts of interest with school's leadership

Positives

- The development of CAAM-HP is a positive step towards promoting quality medical education in the region.

END OF PRESENTATION
THANK YOU!