

The Role of the University in Clinical Fellowship Education

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Definition of a Clinical Fellow

A clinical fellow is an individual who has completed sufficient training for a specialty qualification either in this country or in a foreign country. The fellowship is intended to permit the fellow to obtain additional experience over and above the basic specialty requirement. This experience may involve the acquisition of specific or more specialized expertise that would not normally be acquired during residency training.

In accordance with the *Medicine Act, 1991* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/930865>) clinical fellows in Ontario require educational licensure (a certificate of registration authorizing postgraduate education) from the CPSO. Registration with the University of Toronto is a requirement for licensure as a clinical fellow in Toronto.

Historically, training undertaken during a clinical fellowship has not been recognized for credentialing purposes as training leading to certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC). Since 2009, the Royal College has implemented two new categories of recognition for clinical fellows; however, these new categories do not represent pathways to Royal College Fellowship (i.e. the ability to use the FRCSC or FRCPC designation):

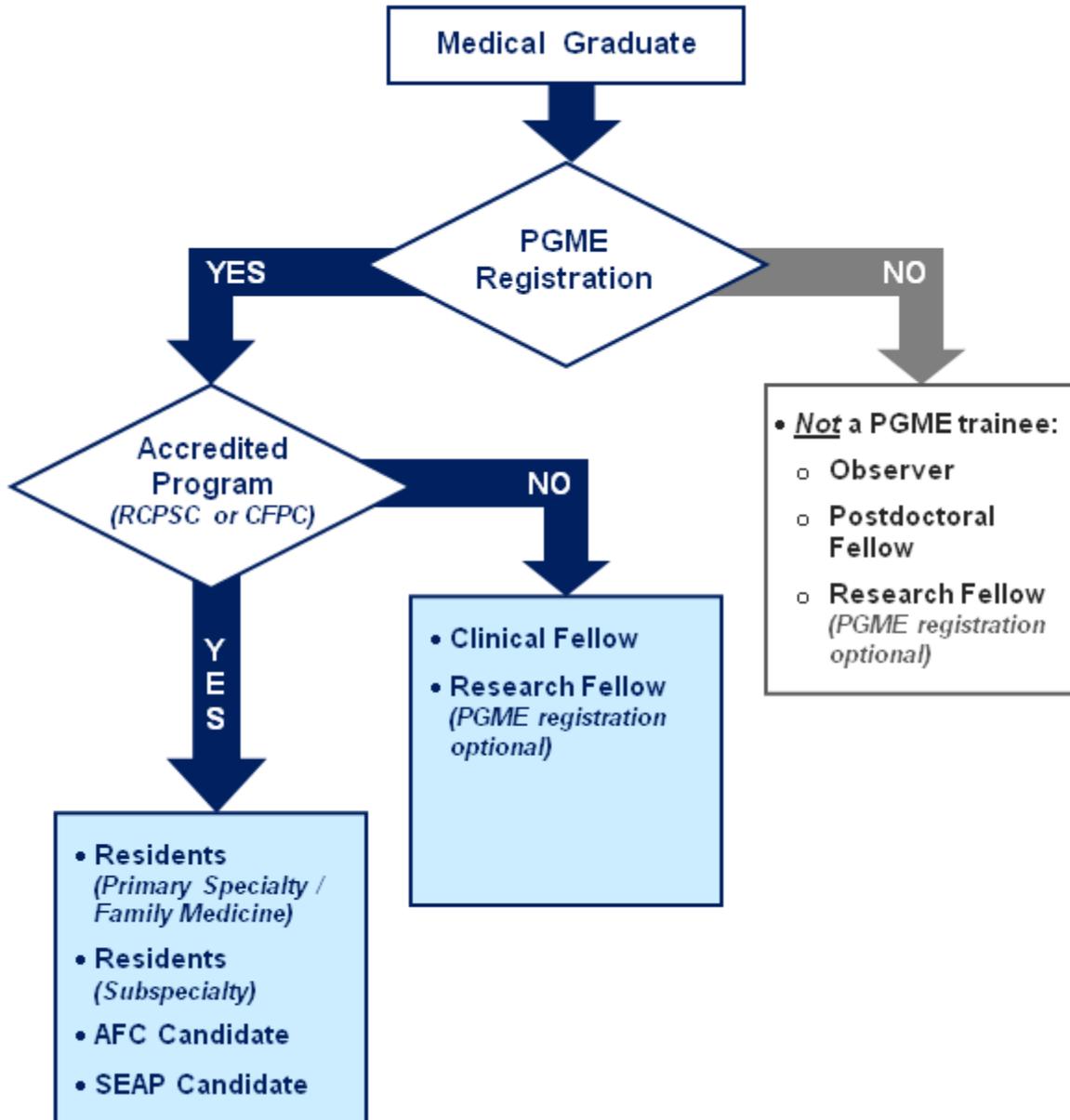
- 1.) Introduced by the Royal College in 2009, an **Area of Focused Competence (AFC)** is a highly specialized discipline of specialty medicine that addresses a legitimate societal need but does not meet the criteria of the Royal College for a specialty, foundation program or subspecialty. An AFC represents either supplemental competencies that enhance the practice of physicians in an existing discipline, or a highly specific and narrow scope of practice that does not meet the criteria of a subspecialty.

AFC candidates who hold Royal College certification as a specialist/subspecialist may become a *Diplomate* of the Royal College and use the DRCPC designation upon successful completion of the AFC program. AFC candidates who do not hold Royal College certification as a specialist/subspecialist may become a *Diplomate Affiliate* of the Royal College.

- 2.) The **Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP)** is a new exam program and affiliate category that the Royal College initiated in 2015 for non-certified subspecialists. SEAP provides an approved mechanism for non-certified, internationally-trained subspecialists practicing in Canada to take a Royal College subspecialty exam, even though they do not meet the requirement of Royal College certification in a primary specialty because their primary specialty training was completed outside Canada and the United States.

The SEAP allows successful examination candidates to become a Royal College *Subspecialist Affiliate*. This Royal College status provides a mechanism for maintaining engagement with the Royal College and participating in the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program, but it does not confer Royal College membership or fellowship status.

Pathways to University of Toronto Enrolment for Clinical Fellows



Admission to Clinical Fellowship at the University of Toronto

Application Requirements

In order to be considered for clinical fellowship training, applicants must be eligible for a certificate authorizing postgraduate education (an educational-type medical license) from the CPSO. One of the CPSO's requirements for the licensure of clinical fellows is that the applicant must be recognized as a medical specialist in the jurisdiction where the applicant was practicing medicine prior to the clinical fellowship. It is possible to review the requirements for educational licensure in detail by downloading the application for clinical fellows through the CPSO website (<http://www.cpso.on.ca/Registering-to-Practise-Medicine-in-Ontario/Registration-Applications-and-Forms>). Medical graduates apply for licensure by the CPSO only *after* they have been accepted for clinical fellowship training by the University.

The Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) website contains detailed information about applying for admission to clinical fellowship training (<http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/applicants/apply-for-fellowship-training/>), including a list of countries where a sponsoring agency has signed a postgraduate medical training agreement with the University of Toronto to support residency and fellowship training for qualified doctors. Applicants who are a citizen of one of these countries must submit their application via the appropriate sponsoring agency.

Sponsored Trainee Application Registry (STAR)

Internationally sponsored applicants apply for training through the Sponsored Trainee Application Registry (STAR), an online application system that PGME implemented in September 2013 to make the application process more efficient and transparent. STAR was designed to improve the management of a growing number of applications as new postgraduate training agreements are signed and new medical schools open in countries covered by existing postgraduate training agreements. All sponsoring agencies use the STAR system to submit clinical fellowship applications.

Once the sponsoring agency has created a file for the applicant on STAR, the applicant receives an email with their username and password, as well as a link to the STAR website. Applicants are able to review and revise as necessary application details entered by the sponsoring agency, and upload required documents to support the application. Once all documentation has been uploaded, the sponsoring agency will upload their official financial guarantee letter, and PGME to review the file for completeness and make it accessible to the appropriate University of Toronto fellowship program for consideration. Applicants can check the status of their application on STAR at any time and post messages for the sponsoring agency or PGME through a message text box feature of STAR.

Selection Process

The postgraduate medical training agreement between the University of Toronto and the international sponsoring agency does not guarantee acceptance of the sponsored applicant for residency training. There are no quotas. The application process for internationally sponsored doctors is competitive, with many more qualified sponsored international applicants annually than there are clinical fellowship opportunities for them. Admissions decisions are the responsibility of the individual fellowship programs and their respective Program Directors. PGME plays no role in direct candidate selection.

Clinical Fellowship Offer Letters

Because admissions decisions are exclusively the domain of the academic department, authorship of the clinical fellowship offer letter rests within the department hosting the clinical fellowship. The department issues the clinical fellowship offer letter directly to internationally sponsored candidates accepted for training in accordance with standard departmental practice.

To support departments in the authorship of fellowship offer letters, the Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC) administered an environmental scan of the educational content of clinical fellowship offer letters in 2013 and PGME issued the resulting compilation of best practices to Program Directors and Administrators. In 2015, PGME issued an updated edition of this document, expanded to include a list of statements that legal counsel had identified as essential content for clinical fellowship offer letters. *Clinical Fellowship Offer Letters: Guidelines and Exemplars* is accessible through the PGME website (direct link: <https://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Clinical-Fellowship-Offer-Letters-Guidelines-Exemplars-30-Nov-17.pdf>; website location: <https://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/access-pg-administrative-resources/find-registration-document-templates/>).

Because the relationship between the University of Toronto and the clinical fellow is an educational one only; this document deals only with the educational component of clinical fellowship offer letters. This collection of exemplars does *not* include the following considerations:

- Remuneration and benefits
- Vacations and leaves
- Hospital code of conduct
- Respect in the workplace
- Privacy and confidentiality of information
- Prevention of violence and harassment in the workplace
- Hospital credentialing
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB)

The collection of exemplars consists of extracts from actual offer letters, minus departmentally specific content. Extracts from the letters were grouped as exemplars according to four themes: (1) clinical fellowship pre-conditions, (2) clinical fellowship activity, (3) supervision and evaluation (including the Pre-Entry Assessment Program), and (4) acceptance of the clinical fellowship offer.

The Vice Dean Post MD Education issues a “post offer” letter to successful applicants whose fellowship training will be supported by an international sponsoring agency that has signed a postgraduate medical training agreement with the University of Toronto (see “Internationally Sponsored Clinical Fellows,” page 16, below). Once the successful applicant has signed and returned the “post offer” letter to PGME, a copy is forwarded to the international sponsoring agency and the clinical fellowship program. The “post offer” letter enables the sponsoring agency to finalize arrangements for the flow of sponsorship remuneration to the clinical fellow and payment of the annual academic fee to the University.

College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) Registration of Clinical Fellows

University of Toronto Letter of Appointment (LOA)

As stated above, clinical fellows in Ontario require educational licensure (a certificate of registration authorizing postgraduate education) from the CPSO. Registration with the University of Toronto is a requirement for licensure as a clinical fellow in Toronto. PGME issues a Letter of Appointment (LOA) according to the academic session to the clinical fellow for signature and return to PGME, after which it will be provided to the CPSO as evidence of a University of Toronto appointment for training. The Associate Dean PGME co-signs each LOA.

Template Educational Goals and Objectives of Clinical Fellowship

As a condition of the educational licensure of clinical fellows, the CPSO requires the submission of a statement of objectives that sets out the nature and purpose of the clinical fellowship. The University of Toronto's Fellowship Working Group (2008-09) recommended standardizing fellowship goals and objectives by developing templates for departmental use. In consultation with the CPSO and University of Toronto academic departments, the University's Fellowship Educational Advisory Committee (FEAC) developed a template document with a defined structure of CanMEDS roles for clinical fellowships in the medical specialties and CanMEDS-FM roles for clinical fellowships in Family Medicine. The CPSO's Registration Committee and the Faculty of Medicine's Faculty Council reviewed and approved the template statement of educational objectives in 2011.

Academic departments submit completed template statements of objectives to PGME for the Vice Dean Post MD Education to review and approve. PGME forwards the template document to the CPSO once the Vice Dean has signed off on it. Below the Vice Dean's signature are clarifying statements that the Vice Dean "signs these educational objectives on the understanding that the fellowship supervisor will provide a copy of the objectives to the clinical fellow prior to the start of the fellowship" and "successful completion of these educational objectives is a requirement for the issuance of a PGME certificate of completion of fellowship training."

The template *Statement of Objectives for Clinical Fellowship* is accessible through the PGME website (<http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/access-pg-administrative-resources/find-registration-document-templates/>) as a form-fillable Word document.

Duration of Clinical Fellowship Training

The CPSO ordinarily restricts clinical fellowship training to a maximum duration of three years for international medical graduates. The extension of a clinical fellowship beyond three year's duration requires the review and approval of the CPSO's Registration Committee. Referral to the Registration Committee of a request for extension entails the submission of supporting documentation to the CPSO, including a letter of support from the Vice Dean Post MD Education.

Work Permit for Foreign Nationals in Clinical Fellowship Training

All postgraduate medical trainees who are not Canadian citizens or who do not have permanent resident status in Canada require a work permit for the duration of their postgraduate medical training at the University of Toronto.

In the case of foreign nationals, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) issues a work permit to the clinical fellow which designates the University of Toronto as the employer, with full understanding that the clinical fellow will be registered with the PGME Office, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, and that the clinical fellow will not receive remuneration from the University for the duration of his/her temporary stay. While it does provide supporting documentation, the University's effective role is to host the foreign clinical fellow and serve as the common point of contact for the clinical fellow.

IRCC's International Mobility Program allows foreign nationals to work in Canada without a supporting Labour Market Impact Assessment (LMIA) from Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC). Through access to IRCC's online Employer Portal, PGME enters necessary information for each clinical fellowship offer. IRCC assigns an LMIA exempt confirmation of offer of employment number to each successfully submitted offer. PGME provides the prospective clinical fellow with this confirmation of offer of employment number together with a letter from the CPSO which verifies in preliminary terms that the foreign national will be eligible for licensure as a clinical fellow in Ontario.

Federal legislation – *Bill C-35: An Act to amend the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* – prohibits anyone other than members in good standing of a law society of a province, the Chambre de notaires du Québec, or the governing body for immigration consultants designated by the Minister (the Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council), to provide advice or representation for consideration in connection with an application or procedure under the Act. IRCC confirmed in 2011 that these legislative changes apply across the board to all persons subject to Canadian law, including educational institutions and international student advisors.

PGME can respond to direct requests from employees of IRCC and Canadian Border Services Agency (CBSA) for information or documentation, but it is not lawful for PGME to contact IRCC visa offices, processing centres, Canadian ports-of-entry, or IRCC medical assessment offices independently on behalf of individual work permit applicants. Within these constraints, PGME is able to ensure prospective clinical fellows are aware of the requirements of the work permit application process and to promote their timely registration for training.

Employer Compliance Fee

The Government of Canada confirmed new regulations, effective February 21, 2015, for work permit applications that included mandatory payment of a new Employer Compliance Fee (\$230) online for each application for a work permit.

During the academic session from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016, PGME paid a total of \$224,940 in Employer Compliance Fees to the Government of Canada, to support 978 work permit applications by 949 doctors. PGME is on pace to surpass \$1M in payment of Employer Compliance Fees by 2020.

University of Toronto Registration of Clinical Fellows

As a condition of medical educational licensure by the CPSO, clinical fellows must register with the University's Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME) Office. PGME's annual registration requirements ensure that clinical fellows are fully prepared to fulfil their clinical responsibilities at University affiliated teaching hospitals and clinical sites. Doctors must meet the following requirements in order to complete their University of Toronto registration:

- **CPSO Licensure**

Clinical fellowship training can begin only after the CPSO has issued a certificate of registration authorizing postgraduate education (an educational-type medical license) to the trainee. Individuals who have attained Royal College certification as a specialist (or certification as a family physician by the CFPC) may in some cases be able to take up a clinical fellowship with an independent practice certificate from the CPSO.

- **Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) Membership**

Professional liability protection is mandatory for all clinical fellows. Trainees must provide evidence of CMPA membership for the duration of the clinical fellowship.

- **Immunization Record**

New trainees must return a PGME immunization form that a clinic, health centre, or health care professional (other than the trainee) has completed and signed. Clinical fellows must meet the following immunization requirements:

- 1) 2-step Mantoux skin test (and chest x-ray, if positive Mantoux)
- 2) Lab evidence of immunity to Hepatitis B (anti-HBs, and HBsAg if non-immune or no prior immunization)
- 3) 2 dose vaccination for Measles, Mumps and Rubella (or evidence of immunity/titre results)
- 4) VZV titre results or 2 varicella vaccine dates
- 5) Diphtheria, Tetanus, Acellur Pertussis and Polio vaccination are strongly recommended (Diphtheria and Tetanus boosters must be repeated every 10 years)
- 6) A valid respirator mask-fit test (trainees have 90 days from their start date to complete the mask-fit testing and report to PGME)

Returning trainees must submit their annual TB test results.

- **Vulnerable Sector Screen (VSS)**

At the request of training sites, all new clinical fellows must complete a Vulnerable Sector Screen (VSS). The VSS performs a higher level check than the criminal record check that the CPSO requires. Provided certain conditions are met, the CPSO will accept a copy of the VSS report to meet its criminal check requirement. New international clinical fellows (those who do not hold Canadian citizenship or permanent resident status) do not have to complete the VSS requirement when they first register, but must complete an online "attestation" through the PGME registration website before commencing the clinical fellowship.

- **Hospital Health and Safety Policy (HHSP) e-Learning Modules**

University affiliated hospitals require all trainees to complete 7 mandatory HHSP e-Learning Modules prior to the start of training. PGME's POstgraduate Web Evaluation and Registration (POWER) system hosts the following 5 modules:

- 1) Hand Hygiene
- 2) Sharps Safety
- 3) Privacy and Personal Information
- 4) Workplace Violence and Harassment
- 5) Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)

PGME provides external web links (and monitors completion of) two additional HHSP modules:

- 1) Worker Health and Safety Awareness
- 2) Working Together: The Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

- **University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP)/Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP)**

All trainees must have insurance to pay for health care services and medical treatments. For clinical fellows who do not have, and must apply for, OHIP health care coverage, PGME provides UHIP health care coverage to the trainee and the trainee's accompanying family members until such time as they obtain OHIP coverage. UHIP provides basic coverage for most medically necessary services and supplies covered by OHIP.

- **Work Permit**

All clinical fellows who are not Canadian citizens or who do not have permanent resident status in Canada require a work permit valid for the duration of their training. New international trainees must present their original work permit and passport in person at PGME for review and approval as part of the PGME registration process.

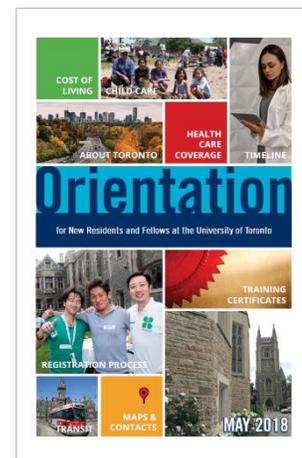
ONE Mail Direct

As part of the PGME registration process, the Faculty of Medicine and eHealth Ontario provide secure ONE Mail Direct email accounts to all clinical fellows, to enable secure communication with supervisors and other members of the trainee's health care team, no matter what the trainee's location. The Faculty of Medicine may share the trainee's ONE Mail Direct registration status and email address with authorized staff, faculty members and hospitals for purposes consistent with and necessary for the support of the trainee's educational and clinical activities.

University of Toronto Resources for Clinical Fellows

Orientation handbook

The FEAC developed a standard orientation handbook that provides information about registration, healthcare coverage, accommodation, cost of living, banking, transportation, child care and schooling, and Toronto culture. PGME updates the handbook annually, in response to changing circumstances and requirements, as well as input from trainees and other stakeholders. The handbook is publicly accessible through the PGME website at <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/current-trainees/before-starting-a-new-training-session/resources-for-new-trainees/>. PGME also makes 1,000 hard copies of the handbook available annually on demand.



PGME Fellowship Forum

In response to a need for orientation resources for clinical fellows, PGME created an online Facebook page for clinical fellows in 2011 to facilitate the exchange of information and networking across programs. The forum is an active online community with over 1,400 members. The Facebook forum encourages fellows to post questions or concerns and to share knowledge and experience about fellowship training or life in Toronto. The Facebook page is accessible only to clinical fellows. A clinical fellow member of the FEAC acts as moderator. PGME limits its role to ensuring that only those appointed for clinical fellowship training at the University of Toronto have access to the Facebook page. The forum can be found on Facebook by using the search engine under “University of Toronto PGME Fellowship Forum.”

PGME Wellness

The Office of Resident Wellness (<http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/current-trainees/while-youre-training/access-wellness-resources/>) was established in 2006 to help support the well-being of the University of Toronto’s PGME trainees and to offer assistance to those encountering difficulties during training.

Postgraduate medical training can present a variety of challenges to the personal and professional well-being of residents and fellows, including: emotional and physical exhaustion, heightened anxiety, feelings of inefficacy, and social disconnection. One of the roles of the Office of Resident Wellness is to help trainees develop the skills needed to maintain their own wellness as a trainee and as a practicing physician.

The Office of Resident Wellness is committed to supporting all postgraduate medical learners in need, whether residency trainees or clinical fellows.

Evaluation of Clinical Fellows

Pre-Entry Assessment Program (PEAP)

With few exceptions, the CPSO requires international medical graduates to complete the Pre-Entry Assessment Program (PEAP) at the outset of their clinical fellowship. The PEAP for fellows is an assessment of the international medical graduate to determine if the individual can function at the level of an Ontario resident who has completed their primary certification, and enter a fellowship program.

If the international medical graduate has completed one year or more of clinical fellowship in the same discipline in Canada or the U.S., then (with the support of the Program Director and the Vice Dean PGME) that individual may be exempted from the PEAP. If the doctor has passed the certification examinations (or all of the training requirements for certification) by the RCPSC, CFPC or ABMS, then the CPSO will also not require completion of the PEAP. Despite the option for exemption, the University may require the clinical fellow to enrol in the PEAP.

International medical graduates enrolled in the PEAP for fellows are able to count their activity during the PEAP towards the fulfilment of the educational goals and objectives of the clinical fellowship.

Because the PEAP includes an observed assessment of the candidate's communication skills, the CPSO does not require evidence of proficiency in English or French. Postgraduate medical departments may require separate evidence of language proficiency from international applicants prior to their acceptance for training, but that requirement is a matter of departmental policy.

The PEAP must be 4 to 12 weeks in duration and must conclude with the submission to the CPSO of a completed final assessment form or notice of the candidate's withdrawal from the PEAP. With the approval of the CPSO, the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM) introduced the PEAP final assessment form for clinical fellows in January 2003.

Detailed information about the PEAP, including a copy of the PEAP final assessment form for clinical fellows, is accessible through the PGME website at <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/about-pgme/policies-guidelines/pre-entry-assessment-program-peap/>.

PGME must track the completion of the PEAP by new clinical fellows and ensure that a completed PEAP final assessment form reaches the Vice Dean Post MD Education for review and signature prior to submission to the CPSO before the 12-week deadline for completion. The Vice Dean Post MD Education commonly signs off on more than 400 PEAP final assessment forms for clinical fellows annually (there were, for example, 461 PEAP clinical fellow registrants in 2015-16). In exceptional cases, the Vice Dean Post MD Education may provide a letter to the CPSO, supporting the extension of the PEAP to a maximum total duration of 16 weeks due to special circumstances.

PGME recommends that the PEAP candidate is assessed and a detailed PEAP assessment form is completed for internal departmental reference after the second week of the PEAP.

Postgraduate Web Evaluation and Registration (POWER) System

In-Training Evaluation Reports (ITERS) are evaluations of postgraduate medical trainee performance during clinical rotations and are generally conducted at the end of each rotation by their faculty supervisor. ITERS are completed for clinical fellows, based on the goals and objectives of the fellowship program.

PGME provides a web-based evaluation system (POWER) for the online completion of ITERS for clinical fellows. The ITER generally consists of a number of questions with rating scales and qualitative comments, as well as a global question that rates overall performance. Supervisors are also expected to review the ITER assessments in person with each resident/fellow and to provide direction that will help the trainee improve.

The seven CanMEDS roles – (1) medical expert, (2) communicator, (3) collaborator, (4) leader, (5) health advocate, (6) scholar, and (7) professional – are the framework developed by the Royal College which provides a standard and consistent context for assessing the performance of clinical fellows. Family Medicine clinical fellows are evaluated according to the seven CanMEDS-Family Medicine roles that the CFPC approved in 2009 as the official competency framework for postgraduate education in family medicine. The educational goals and objectives of clinical fellowship training acknowledge that not all CanMEDS roles are relevant to every clinical fellowship.

The online evaluation of clinical fellows provides a lasting, centrally-accessible record of trainee performance. PGME provides international sponsoring agencies with a POWER-based evaluation summary on a semi-annual basis for each sponsored clinical fellow. Where numbers are sufficient to ensure the confidentiality of data, PGME can provide the sponsoring agency with a comprehensive analysis of the performance of its trainees across academic sessions, by department, and measure this performance against all other clinical fellows registered at the University.

The entry of fellowship evaluation data via the POWER system also includes evaluation of the rotation and of the teacher by the clinical fellow. PGME provides analysis of this data in aggregate form to academic departments and University affiliated hospitals as Rotation Evaluation Scores (RES) and Teacher Evaluation Scores (TES).

Guidelines for Educational Responsibilities in Clinical Fellowship

A key recommendation of the University of Toronto's Fellowship Working Group in 2009 was the establishment of standards for evaluation and appeals for clinical fellows, including the establishment of a departmental process to notify clinical fellows of any deficiencies and provide a mechanism for appeal. This recommendation reflected the Working Group's perception that compared to residents and residency training programs, clinical fellows and clinical fellowship programs were operating in a regulatory vacuum.

Sustained effort by the Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC), including input from dedicated FEAC sub-groups and full committee discussions, with final review and approval by the University's legal counsel, resulted in the *Guidelines for Educational Responsibilities in Clinical Fellowships*. The guidelines do not represent policy, but are meant to help in dealing with the serious cases that may arise only rarely but require immediate, sensitive and informed response when they occur.

The guidelines are accessible through the PGME website (direct link: <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Guidelines-for-Educational-Responsibilities-in-Clinical-Fellowships-Nov-17.pdf>; website location: <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/about-pgme/policies-guidelines/>).

The relationship between the University of Toronto and a clinical fellow is an educational one only; the *Guidelines* therefore deal only with the educational component of clinical fellowships. The clinical aspects of the clinical fellows' learning are all subject to the policies, rules, and regulatory compliance of the hospital or other clinical setting.

The *Guidelines* include the statement that the University, through its PGME Office, academic departments, and supervising and collaborating clinical faculty members, shall endeavour to provide a reasonable opportunity for the clinical fellow to attain the written goals and objectives of the fellowship. This will include provision of feedback in various ways throughout the fellowship in compliance with the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario's policy regarding *Professional Responsibilities in Postgraduate Medical Education* (<http://www.cpso.on.ca/Policies-Publications/Policy/Professional-Responsibilities-in-Postgraduate-Medi>). Every supervising and collaborating clinical faculty member and every clinical fellow is expected to be familiar and compliant with the CPSO's Policy.

The FEAC reviews these guidelines annually, to assess their effectiveness as a resource to help educators, clinical fellows, and fellowship program administrators.

Completion of Training Certificate

With the approval of the clinical fellow's academic department, PGME issues a certificate to the clinical fellow, to confirm successful completion of the educational goals and objectives of the fellowship.

The certificate has been designed to reflect and reinforce the educational significance of clinical fellowship training at the University. The certificate conforms to the University of Toronto's visual identity framework and features high-end production finishes and advanced security measures such as a pre-embossed seal, holographic crest, unique numbering and proprietary font (PGME Cloister Black). A print management company with expertise in secure documentation provides PGME with numbered certificate blanks, which PGME completes by entering details through an InDesign template and printing the final product with a secure PGME laser printer for the exclusive purpose of printing certificates.

The certificate includes the signatures of the Department/Division Chair, Program Director/Supervisor and the Vice Dean Post MD Education.

PGME absorbs the cost of the certificate issuance. PGME does not issue copies of certificates (the certificate is a legal document, so the only certificate that PGME will issue to the trainee is the original item). If a certificate is lost or damaged, PGME will issue a replacement certificate for a fee.

PGME will reimburse departments for 50% of the cost (up to a maximum of \$7,500) for an end-of-year graduation event at which the department's clinical fellows will formally receive their certificate of completion of training, provided the department arranges the event in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine's Advancement Office.

PGME will verify on demand (and without charge) completion of fellowship training certificates for third parties such as the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties, provided the written consent of the clinical fellow accompanies the request.



Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC)

The Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC) was established in 2009 as a source of advice to the Vice Dean Post MD Education on the oversight of clinical fellowship training and the management of fellowship issues.

The FEAC gathers information across postgraduate medical departments and from clinical fellows to assist in developing recommendations to improve the experience of clinical fellows and the management of the fellowships.

At the request of the Vice Dean Post MD Education, the FEAC reviews applications for Royal College accreditation of University of Toronto clinical fellowship programs as Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) diploma programs.

The establishment of the committee was a key recommendation of the Fellowship Working Group in its report, *Raising the Bar* (September 2009). The first meeting of the FEAC took place on October 29, 2009.

The committee meets quarterly under the direction of the Chair, Dr. Rayfel Schneider. The terms of reference, as well as agendas and minutes of FEAC meetings, are publicly accessible through the PGME website at <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/about-pgme/boards-committees/>. The committee's membership includes representatives of clinical fellowship programs and of University affiliated hospitals/HUEC, as well as clinical fellows and PGME leadership.

The FEAC regularly surveys clinical fellows registered at the University of Toronto. These surveys have driven a number of initiatives for clinical fellows, including the following: remuneration guidelines, a template statement of educational objectives for clinical fellowship, a Facebook page for clinical fellows, the University of Toronto certificate of completion of training, and an annually-updated orientation handbook for new trainees.

A retrospective report of the activities and achievements of the FEAC from 2009 to 2016 is accessible through the PGME website (direct link: http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/FEAC_Report_v3_14-Nov-16_web.pdf; website location: <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/about-pgme/boards-committees/feac-meeting-materials/>).

Internationally Sponsored Clinical Fellows

Postgraduate Medical Training Agreement

Sponsoring agencies from foreign countries enter into an agreement with the Governing Council of the University of Toronto for the postgraduate medical training of citizens of their respective countries. A listing of these countries is accessible through the PGME website at <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/applicants/apply-for-fellowship-training/> and, again, at <http://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/applicants/apply-for-residency-training/>. The current list consists of the following countries: Bahrain, Dominica, Kuwait, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

These agreements are ordinarily of five years' duration, and have been extended a number of times in the case of well-established relationships, such as that with the Saudi Arabian Cultural Bureau, which has been administering the sponsored training of Saudi nationals at the University of Toronto since 1981. The Government of Kuwait has similarly sponsored the residency and fellowship training of Kuwaiti nationals at the University of Toronto since 1987. The University's relationship with the United Arab Emirates for postgraduate medical training extends back to 1997, and that with Oman dates from 2000.

The agreement is a template agreement which includes the requirement that the international sponsoring agency must pay an annual academic fee for each trainee in accordance with a Pan-Canadian standard, as determined collectively by Postgraduate Medical Education Deans across Canada. In 2014, the annual academic fee was set until 2020 at \$100,000 CAD per annum.

Applicants for residency training who are not Canadian citizens (or who do not have Canadian permanent resident status) must have appropriate sponsorship support. The PGME Office can process applications for residency training at the University of Toronto from international applicants only when they are submitted through a sponsoring agency that has entered into a postgraduate training agreement with the University of Toronto through the PGME Office. The training agreement includes the requirement that the sponsoring agency must remunerate the residency trainee in conformity with the agreement in place between the Professional Association of Residents of Ontario (PARO) and the Council of Academic Hospitals of Ontario (CAHO). The agreement is accessible online at <http://www.myparo.ca/your-contract/>.

The postgraduate medical training agreement between the University of Toronto and the international sponsoring agency is a comprehensive training agreement which covers residency training, clinical fellowships and research fellowships. Sponsoring agencies understand that registration of research fellows with the University of Toronto is entirely optional and may occur outside of the agreement.

The postgraduate medical training agreement does not guarantee acceptance of the sponsored applicant for training as a resident or as a fellow. The application process for internationally sponsored applicants is competitive, with many more qualified applicants annually than there are postgraduate medical training opportunities for them. Admissions decisions are the responsibility of the individual postgraduate medical programs and their respective Program Directors.

The Evolving Educational Landscape: Royal College Recognition for Clinical Fellows

In the past six years, the Royal College has created new categories of recognition for clinical fellows. The Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) Diploma Programs ordinarily represent either supplemental competencies that enhance the practice of physicians in an existing discipline, or a highly specific and narrow scope of practice that does not meet the criteria of a subspecialty. Successful AFC candidates become Diplomates (or, if they do not have Royal College specialty certification, Diplomate Affiliate members) of the Royal College.

Through the Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP), on the other hand, the Royal College recognizes that clinical fellowships may offer internationally-trained physicians who lack Royal College certification in the primary specialty an opportunity to complete a training program which duplicates the content of subspecialty residency training. Successful SEAP candidates may become Subspecialist Affiliate members of the Royal College.

The Royal College Directory identifies AFC Diplomates and SEAP Subspecialist Affiliate.

Areas of Focused Competence (AFC) Diploma Programs

The Areas of Focused Competence (Diploma) Programs initiative represents a new category of Royal College discipline recognition that Royal College Council approved on February 25, 2011. The Royal College defines the format for these programs in the following terms:

1. Typically one to two years of additional training, but competency-based
2. Built upon training in a broader discipline
3. Supported within the existing Specialty Committee of the primary discipline (unless one does not currently exist)
4. Assessed through summative portfolio
5. Training programs accredited by the Royal College ('C' Standards)
6. A separate annual dues fee and Maintenance of Certificate (MOC) requirements

Candidates who successfully complete all requirements of an approved AFC program would receive an added qualification known as a *Diploma of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada*, or DRCPSC.

Additional information is accessible through the Royal College website at the following web links:

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/accreditation-pgme-programs/afc-programs/search-programs-by-afc-e>

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/accreditation-pgme-programs/accreditation-areas-focussed-competence-afc-programs-e>

The Vice Dean Post MD Education participates in the national consultations that the Royal College conducts as part of the assessment of proposed new AFC disciplines. The Vice Dean invites University-wide input before he provides the Royal College with a collective University of Toronto

response. The Fellowship Education Advisory Committee (FEAC) tracks the progress of new AFC disciplines from application to Royal College recognition and implementation. The FEAC also tracks Royal College accreditation of clinical fellowships as AFC programs within the recognized disciplines.

There are currently five accredited AFC programs at the University of Toronto; namely, Adult Cardiac Electrophysiology, Adult Interventional Cardiology, Brachytherapy, Cytopathology, and Transfusion Medicine. Applications for accreditation are underway for clinical fellowships at the University of Toronto in additional recognized AFC disciplines. As part of the University's established approval process for these applications before their submission to the Royal College, the FEAC provides input to the Vice Dean Post MD Education. The PGME website includes resources for faculty and staff at <https://pg.postmd.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/areas-focused-competence-afc-diploma-programs/>.

Subspecialty Examination Affiliate Program (SEAP)

On February 21, 2014, Royal College Council approved a new examination program and Affiliate category of membership to provide:

- An approved mechanism for non-certified, internationally-trained subspecialists practising in Canada to challenge a Royal College subspecialty examination
- An approved mechanism for internationally-trained physicians who are registered with a postgraduate office in an accredited Royal College subspecialty training program, but are not eligible to meet the prerequisite for subspecialty certification (Royal College certification in a primary specialty), based on the jurisdiction of their primary specialty training (i.e. primary specialty training was completed outside Canada or the United States) to challenge a Royal College subspecialty examination
- An invitation for successful examination candidates to join the Royal College as a Subspecialist Affiliate.

After initially piloting six programs in 2014, the Royal College expanded the SEAP in 2016 to include a total of 29 subspecialties, all of them disciplines in which the certification examination consisted only of a written component. In 2017 the Royal College expanded the total number of SEAP subspecialties to 43, including subspecialties in which the certification examination includes an oral component as well as a written one.

Additional information is accessible through the Royal College website at the following web link:

<http://www.royalcollege.ca/rcsite/credentials-exams/exam-eligibility/assessment-imgs/subspecialty-examination-affiliate-program-seap-e>

To date, approximately 80 clinical fellows registered at the University of Toronto, representing 16 different subspecialties, have applied to challenge the Royal College's subspecialty certification examination. The Program Director and the Associate Dean PGME must sign the Confirmation of Completion of Training (CCT) and the Final In-Training Evaluation Report (FITER) for each SEAP candidate. PGME tracks the participation of clinical fellows in the SEAP.