

Impact of the WFME Global Standards Programme

The World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) presented its programme on international standards in medical education in a position paper by the Executive Council in 1998¹. Shortly thereafter, an international task force was established charged with defining Standards in Basic Medical Education. The report of the first meeting of this task force was published in 2000². In 2000³, Educación Médica translated the report into Spanish and published it in its journal.

Following international consultations and discussions in numerous settings around the world, the task force decided to refine the document. This new revised version was adopted by the WFME Executive Council in 2001. Subsequently, the Federation initiated similar processes regarding Standards in Postgraduate Medical Education and in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of Medical Doctors. The material for the three phases was published in 2003^{4,6} as the Trilogy of WFME Global Standards for Quality Improvement. This Trilogy was the essential background material for the WFME 2003 World Conference in Medical Education: Global Standards in Medical Education for Better Health Care.

The WFME Standards Programme and the Trilogy received a clear endorsement^{7,8} by the Conference, which accelerated the phase of implementing the programme. The implementation includes further dissemination of information about the Standards Programme as well as validation of the Standards in Postgraduate Medical Education and CPD in pilot studies. Such validation has already been performed for the Standards in Basic Medical Education. Furthermore, the World Federation has now set up an international task force regarding the establishment of a WFME Advisor function.

In the meantime, the Federation has experienced that the Standards already have tremendous impact, measured by the number of medical schools around the world, which are using the Standards in their own reform plans, as well

as the number of countries using the WFME Standards as a template for national standards and incorporating these Standards in their procedures for recognition and accreditation of educational institutions and programmes.

In the Spanish-speaking part of the world, several medical schools took part in the first pilot study validating the Standards in Basic Medical Education, and WFME acknowledges the support of these medical schools and colleagues. The Granada Declaration on Medical Education, which was adopted in October 2001 by the medical schools of Spain, the Association for Medical Education in Spain (SEDEM), the Spanish Government and medical schools in Latin America represented by the Panamerican Federation of Associations of Medical Schools (PAFAMS), is a good example of the implementation process. The Declaration, which was published in Educación Médica in 2002⁹, implies a commitment to the development of medical education based on the WFME Standards.

The implementation process, including the question of the role of WFME in recognition and accreditation of medical schools' programmes, as well as the development of a World Register of accredited medical schools, is conducted in close cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO). Recently, a WHO/WFME Partnership¹⁰ has been established to pursue a long-term work plan intended to have a decisive impact on medical education in particular and ultimately on health professions education in general.

Translation of the Trilogy to other languages is of paramount significance for the implementation process. WFME would like to take this opportunity to thank Educación Médica for publishing the Trilogy as well as translating it into Spanish, one of the widely spoken languages being used in medical education.

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The World Federation for Medical Education

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