

Bridging Borders in Medical Education Accreditation: The Role of Research

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Overview

- Accreditation
 - Is growing
 - Lacks an evidence base
- Accreditation research
 - Difficult
 - Different
- Basis for bridging borders
 - Regional collaboration is one way forward

Accreditation is Growing

- Accreditation is experiencing a rapid increase fueled by
 - Globalization
 - Physician mobility
 - Increasing numbers of medical schools
 - WFME Recognition program
 - ECFMG policy shift

Accreditation Research is Lacking

- Despite the growth of accreditation around the world, research is scant (Tackett et al., 2019)
 - Only 30 research studies focused on the scholarship of discovery
 - Many papers were descriptions or commentaries
- Recent work adds a little, but not nearly enough

Accreditation Research is Lacking

- Lack of research may have negative consequences
 - Undermines credibility
 - Threatens the misallocation of resources
 - Creates inefficiencies
 - Missed opportunities for improvement

Accreditation Research is Difficult

- Many challenges to doing good research on accreditation
 - Defining success is difficult and it may take years to develop
 - Data access
 - Confidentiality, comprehensiveness, comparability
 - Resource limitations including funding

Accreditation Research is Different

- Research on accreditation will be unlike research in the basic sciences
 - Causal inferences are not possible
 - Difficult to decide what to measure and how to measure it
 - Local context is central
- It is important to generate evidence that guides practice
 - Epidemiology provides a better research model than the basic sciences

Research

- Research should be an essential part of the work of all accrediting bodies
 - Critical to reassure stakeholders that accreditation is effective and efficient
 - Protects the confidential nature of the data
 - Ensures that the findings can be implemented rapidly
 - Work should focus on outcomes, processes, and standards
 - Should it be part of the WFME Recognition criteria?
 - Should it apply to WFME Recognition?

Research

- Research is one way to bridge borders while respecting local context
- Regional research collaboration among accrediting bodies
 - Regional partners have more in common than international partners
 - Offers a powerful model

Research

- Regional collaboration
 - Development of a research agenda tailored to local needs
 - Different agencies can take on different questions
 - Offers the possibility of sharing resources
 - When appropriate, de-identified data can be shared

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