

Title: Self-evaluation on WFME Basic Standards in Medical Education

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Background:

The World Federation of Medical Education (WFME), in 2003, defined the standards for basic (undergraduate) medical education. The standards were intended for self-evaluation and for accreditation by national and international organisations. They have since been piloted in 11 medical schools around the world (Bahrain, Columbia, Iran, Italy, Kazakhstan, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Venezuela). The standards were found realistic and that schools could work with them. World Health Organisation and the World Medical Association have ratified the standards. The objective of this study was to evaluate the School of Medicine of the University of Zambia using the WFME Basic Standards in Medical Education. The areas evaluated were: mission and objectives, educational programme, assessment of students, students, academic staff/faculty, educational resources, programme evaluation, governance and administration, continuous renewal.

Methods:

Eleven faculty and two administrative staff were appointed by the Dean to undertake the self-evaluation. Faculty were from the Dean's office, departments of medical education, surgery, physiological sciences, anatomy, paediatrics, medicine, community medicine, and the medical librarian. The committee had three initial meetings at which the WFME Standards and the UNZA-WFME Tool, based on the WFME Standards, were studied. The data were collected by analysis of existing documents, individual and group interviews with students and academic staff, focus group discussions with the Dean's Advisory Committee and students (years 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7), questionnaires, physical inspection of the learning areas.

Results:

The School was assessed against each of the standards and given a score on the following scale: meets all requirements, meets most requirements, meets some requirements, does not meet most of the requirements. The results by category area were compiled and used by the committee to formulate recommendations for further action by the School to ensure that all standards were met. The University of Zambia Council approval has not been granted to disseminate the specific results.

Conclusions:

The self-study with the WFME standards had positive impact and a constructive influence on the University of Zambia School of Medicine. The School has now commissioned a five-year project, the International Basic Medical Education Standards (IBMES) Project to instigate the School to achieve all the standards stipulated.

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