MEETING MINUTES
Postgraduate Medical Education Advisory Committee (PGMEAC)

Thursday, October 23, 2025 | 9:30 – 11:30am
In-Person; PGME Boardroom A

Present: Meredith Giuliani, Ahmed Al-Awamer, Caroline Abrahams, Adelle Atkinson, Yvonne Chan, Arno Kumagai, Mostafa Saquib (PARO), Eric You-Ten, Heather McDonald-Blumer, Janine Hubbard, Julie Johnstone, Linda Probyn, Shaheen Darani, Stu Murdoch, Susan Done, Jenna Spring, Carolina Mitchell, Tessa Catchpole (Recorder)

Guests: Lisa St. Amant, Natasha Shaikhlislamova

Regrets: Barry Pakes, Patricia Houston, Mojgan Hodaie, Melissa Hynes, Sheri Johnston, Vaibhav Kamble, Julia Kfouri, Laura Simone, May Tsao, Allan Slomovic, Adrienne Tan, Andrea McCart, Nora Letechipia Mendoza

1. AGENDA/MINUTES

a) M. Giuliani welcomed newly constituted members and roundtable introductions ensued. The agenda was approved as written.

b) Minutes of the Friday, September 19, 2025 meeting were accepted as circulated.

2. NEW BUSINESS

a. PARO Update

M. Saquib provided an update on PARO activities:

PARO Membership:
- New PARO team is in place for the new year, details including contact emails are available on the [PARO website](#).

Religious Holidays & Accommodations:
- PARO agreement does not cover religious holidays and accommodations, but this is covered by the Ontario Human Rights Code, which states that employers have a duty to try to accommodate religious leave requests up to the point of undue hardship.
- Solutions should not require residents to use vacation or professional leave time to have the requested religious leave granted.
  - A working group, co-chaired by S. Darani, and S. Khan, Office of Inclusion and Diversity (OID), is developing a guidance document to support program directors and program administrators in accommodating learners' religious observance requests. Updates will be shared with PGMEAC once the document is completed.

"Home by Noon" Clause:
- Following the October 1st deadline for removal of the home by noon clause for surgical programs, PARO plans to monitor the rollout and seek resident feedback on the change process.

b. CaRMS Update

M. Giuliani provided brief background of the recent CaRMS eligibility changes re: IMGs:
- Ministry directive of September 16, 2025 changed IMG eligibility for first iteration to include only those who completed two years at an accredited Ontario high school, verified via transcript.
- Verification Process: COFM developed an attestation form; CARMS added a section for transcript and attestation submission.
- Impact: Anticipated increase in programs entering second iteration – unusual for Toronto, especially affecting family medicine.
- Second Iteration Challenges: Compressed timeline (~2 weeks post-March break); difficult to adjust due to national scheduling.
- Québec Situation: Job action affecting final-year students' access to rotations and electives; communications sent regarding adjusted reference letter requirements.
- Next Steps:
    - Continued provincial data collection
    - J. Hubbard and D. Chan will support programs unfamiliar with second iteration process as needed.

c. **COI Guideline Review**

J. Johnstone presented the *Guidelines on Conflict of Interest for Competence Committees* for review and approval. The guideline was informed by a literature review, a survey of PDs and CC chairs, and input from multiple committees including Legal. It offers best practices tailored to programs of varying sizes and is now being shared for review and approval before broader dissemination.

The committee discussed the conflict of interest re: Program Directors acting as Competence Committees (CC) Chair. While it is permissible, best practice recommends PDs serve as non-voting members to avoid conflicts of interest. This guidance acknowledges the challenges faced by smaller or multi-site programs, where staffing and funding limitations may make it difficult to separate roles. The updated guideline aims to provide flexibility while encouraging separation of oversight roles when possible.

Attestation Form:
- An attestation form has been included for CCs, allowing PDs and CC Chairs to formally acknowledge their commitment to best practices, including anti-racism and anti-discrimination training.
- The form is optional, adaptable and designed to minimize duplication across committees.
- J. Johnstone is available to support any programs needing help with implementation or process guidance.

M. Giuliani tabled the motion to approve the *Guidelines on Conflict of Interest for Competence Committees*, as presented. A. Kumagai seconded.

Vote: All members voted unanimously in approval of the Guidelines on Conflict of Interest for Competence Committees as presented.

Action: Approved guidelines to be disseminated to CC Chairs and PDs, as well as presented at a future All PDs meeting.

d. **Confidentiality and Access to Data**

C. Abrahams presented minor language change to *Confidentiality and Access to Data* document for review and approval. This document is used in POWER and MedSIS platforms and outlines how evaluation data is managed and disclosed. The proposed update will clarify that learner identity may be

disclosed in exceptional cases, such as concerns about safety or harm. This aligns with MD program standards and anticipates future system changes, including the sunset of POWER.

Discussion:
- Process for disclosing a learner's or teacher's identity in serious situations (e.g., safety concerns or unprofessional behavior): it was suggested that a process to determine when a learner's identity needs to be disclosed to a teacher could be added to the document – noting this may need an individual discussion rather than a standard workflow, as such decisions involve multiple stakeholders and are context-dependent, making it difficult to outline a fixed process.
- Role of PD in managing faculty performance: concerns were raised about the document stating that teacher evaluation data goes to PDs, as many – especially newer ones – aren't responsible for faculty performance. It was suggested that the document be revised to reflect that oversight may fall to Vice Chairs or Division Directors instead. LEU is the first line for concerns re: faculty teaching or learner mistreatment. The current system allows broad access to evaluations, but a future system is expected to address these governance and access issues.

M. Giuliani tabled the motion to approve the highlighted language changes (to be aligned with MD Program) and table a discussion for the other systems issues discussed. J. Johnstone seconded.

Vote: *All members voted unanimously in approval of the language changes in the Confidentiality and Access to Data document as presented.*

e. **Voice of the Resident (VotR) Entrant Survey** *(see attachment)*
    N. Shaikhlislamova presented a new VotR Entrant survey which will be deployed next week.
    - The survey is being introduced to collect sociodemographic data from incoming residents.
    - The survey aims to streamline the main Voice of the Resident survey by reducing repetition and shortening its length.
    - It will be conducted annually before the academic year and aligns with existing practices for MD students.
    - Developed in collaboration with the OID, following EDI data governance guidelines.
    - First iteration was planned for October, with REB approval already in place; refinements expected before the second iteration in May/June 2026.
    - Residents will be asked for consent to link data across surveys; ~67% have consented in previous surveys.
    - The survey is brief (~5 minutes) and includes **static questions** that won't need repeating in future surveys.

f. **PGMEAC Membership** *(see attachment)*
    L. Probyn provided an update on the 8-year accreditation cycle, noting the next on-site survey is scheduled for **Fall 2028**. Preparation includes an **internal institutional review** on **January 19–20, 2026**. Participation from PGMEAC members is essential; format TBD (likely hybrid).

    L. Probyn reminded PGMEAC members of revised PGMEAC Committee Structure & Membership:
    - PGMEAC was restructured to improve decision-making and representation.
    - Previous format was too large and ineffective; changes address recurring accreditation concerns.
    - Current structure ensures representation from: Residents, Program Directors, Learning Sites, Postgraduate admin personnel
    - Voting members include most committee attendees; ex-officio members are non-voting (except for the Chair who may vote to break a tie if needed).

- Vice Chairs of Education (or delegates) represent multiple programs and are responsible for communicating updates back to their respective groups and bring forward concerns from program directors.

Action: A reference list of program directors and their PGMEAC representatives will be attached to future meeting materials, and a MedEd governance org chart will be shared in a future meeting to clarify relationships across PGME, MD, OLA, and CIP.

- All-PDs meetings are now held virtually (except Spring) to maximize participation and share informational content.
- Decision-making occurs within the PGMEAC; All-PDs meetings focus on information dissemination.

Faculty Development Workshop for Program Directors:
L. Probyn announced that a new workshop titled "Navigating Feedback and Information: Sensitive Strategies for Residency Success" has been developed.
- Based on insights from internal reviews and feedback from learners about how sensitive information is handled.
- Goal: Equip PDs with strategies to manage feedback appropriately and avoid issues like perceived retribution.
- Workshop Details:
  - First session: **December 12, 12 – 1 PM** (virtual, before the All-PDs meeting).
  - Accredited for CME credit (1 hour).
  - Includes real case-based scenarios drawn from actual experiences.
  - Open to all program directors and VCEs; registration will be sent out soon.
  - Future sessions may vary in format (virtual/in-person) to increase accessibility.

Full details can be found in the attached slides.

g. **PGMEAC Meeting Format**
PGMEAC members discussed preferences for meeting format – virtual versus in-person. In-person meetings were favored for discussion and decision-making, though virtual is more convenient.

Consider having September and April PGMEAC meetings be in-person and others virtual or hybrid. The upcoming November meeting will be hybrid (those attending in-person to bring laptop) as a trial, with a decision on future formats to follow.

Note for 2026-27 schedule:
- Meeting frequency remains at five per year, with a schedule adjustment that PGMEAC will meet in September, and All-PDs will shift to October to better align with approval timelines.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30am.

Next Meeting: Thursday, November 27; 9:30 – 11:30 am | Hybrid; PGME Boardroom A & Zoom