Credentialing for International medical Graduates: Recognizing When a Physician's ECFMG Record Contains a Permanent Annotation of Irregular Behavior

Session Code: TU11

Date: Tuesday, October 24

Time: 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Total CE Credits: 1.5

Presenter(s): Kara Corrado, JD
Credentialing for International medical Graduates: Recognizing When a Physician’s ECFMG Record Contains a Permanent Annotation of Irregular Behavior

Kara Corrado, J.D.
Assistant Vice President of Operations, Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates
October 22, 2017

Agenda

- ECFMG Overview;
- ECFMG Certification rationale and requirements;
- data on international medical graduates in the US;
- ECFMG’s irregular behavior process; and
- ECFMG Certification Confirmation Report.
Overview of ECFMG

What is an international medical graduate?

Physician who received his/her basic medical degree or qualification from a medical school located outside the United States and Canada. The location of the medical school, not the citizenship of the physician, determines whether the graduate is an IMG.

Overview of ECFMG

- Established in 1956 with organizational members:
  - Federation of State Medical Boards
  - American Medical Association
  - American Board of Medical Specialties
  - Association of American Medical Colleges
  - Association for Hospital Medical Education
  - National Medical Association

- Not-for-profit, non-governmental organization
- Based in Philadelphia, PA
- 350 full-time employees, ~700 total employees
- Originally focused on screening IMGs for entry into US Graduate Medical Education

Overview of ECFMG

- US-Based Programs
  - ECFMG Certification – 20,000 Applicants per year
  - J-1 Visa Sponsorship Program – 10,000 Sponsors per year
  - Domestic Credentials Services – 5,000 verifications per year
  - Clinical Skills Evaluation Collaboration (Step 2 CS Exam in partnership with NBME) – 36,000 examinees per year

- International Programs
  - EPIC & International Credentials Services – 30,000 verifications per year
  - Foundation for the Advancement of Medical Education & Research (FAIMER)
  - Global Education in Medicine Exchange
ECFMG Certification

- Rationale for Certification
  - Medical education worldwide varies with respect to content, quality and duration
  - No universal standard to determine equivalency
  - Assesses product of the medical education system

ECFMG Certification

- ECFMG Certification is required for:
  - US GME
  - USMLE Step 3
  - licensure in the US

ECFMG Certification:  
Part 1: Medical School Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Requirement</th>
<th>2023 Accreditation Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host country government confirms that:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) the medical school is recognized as a medical school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) that graduates are eligible to be licensed to practice medicine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in that country</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools must be Accredited by an organization “Recognized” by the World Federation of Medical Education as meeting “globally accepted criteria” for medical education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECFMG Certification:
Part 2: Individual Eligibility Criteria

Eligible to Apply for ECFMG Certification

- 4 Years Academic Credit
- Enrollment
- Transfer Credits

ECFMG Certification:
Part 3: Requirements to be ECFMG Certified

Primary Source Verification of Credentials + PASS EXAMS = ECFMG CERT

ECFMG Certification: Current Requirements to be ECFMG Certified

- Examination Requirements
  USMLE Step 1
  USMLE Step 2 Clinical Knowledge
  USMLE Step 2 Clinical Skills
- Medical Education Credentials
  Final Medical Diploma
  Final Medical School Transcript
ECFMG Certification: Primary-source Verification of Medical Education Credentials

Paper Process
- Prima Facie Review
  - Confirm format with sample
  - Confirm content with sample
- Electronic Process
  - Address certified to authorized official
  - Send on special ECFMG watermark paper
  - Sent in 10 languages
- Verification Received
  - Confirm signature from authorized official
  - Confirm seal
  - Confirm document is returned from primary source
- Credential Sent via Courier/Mail to Medical School
  - Address verified
  - Sent to Authorized Official
  - Sent on special ECFMG watermark paper
  - Sent in 10 languages

Data on International Medical Graduates in the US

ECFMG Certification 1958 – 2017
- 1,001,005 candidates for ECFMG Certification
- 387,866 Certificates issued (38%)

Source: ECFMG Database

Data on International Medical Graduates in the US

 Applicants for Certification ~20,000 per year
 EC FMG Certified ~10,000 per year
 Residency Program ~5,000 per year
 License to Practice ~500 per year

Source: ECFMG Database and NRMP Advanced Data Tables
POLL QUESTION
Multiple Choice; Just one response, Bar Chart, Audience Can see results, 30 second timer

What percentage of the physician workforce in the United States are international medical graduates?

a. ~50%
b. ~25%
c. ~10%
d. ~5%

Source: ECFMG Database and NRMP Advanced Data Tables

Data on International Medical Graduates in the US

Which is the top country of medical school for ECFMG Certificants for the last five years?

a. Grenada
b. United Kingdom
c. India
d. China

Source: ECFMG Database and NRMP Advanced Data Tables
Data on International Medical Graduates in the US

- Top Five Countries of Medical School, Certificates 1994-2015
- India, Pakistan, Philippines, Canada, Dominica

ECFMG’s Irregular Behavior Process
Triggers for an Applicant Investigation

1. Medical School Official
- 50,000 Credentials Received Annually
- Credential Sent to Issuing Institution
- Credential Returned with Verification
- Official states it is authentic
- Official states it is fraudulent
- <.03%

2. Self-Reporting and Third Party

ECFMG’s Irregular Behavior Investigation Process

- Communication with authorized officials
- Communication with applicant
- Communication with other individuals & organizations
- Research by staff
- Documentation analysis

Evidence from Issuing Institution
Original documents submitted by applicant
Applicant Case File
Explanations from Applicant
Other relevant research

99.97%
ECFMG’s Irregular Behavior Process

Sub-Committee of Board of Trustees:
- Physicians
- Healthcare executives
- Medical Educators
- Lawyers

Applicant can:
- Make a personal appearance
- Have legal counsel present
- Comprehensive review of evidence and Applicant Case File

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2000-2017 YTD</th>
<th>Decision</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient Evidence</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Case Open</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ECFMG Database

ECFMG’s Irregular Behavior Process

If there is a finding of irregular behavior...

**Sanctions**
1. Permanent Annotation on ECFMG Verification Reports sent to hospitals, MRAs, etc.
2. Bar/Revocation of ECFMG Certification
3. Bar from examination, if applicable

**Notifications**
- ECFMG partner organizations
- IAMRA Members
- Medical School, if appropriate
- US Governmental Agencies
- US Graduate Training Programs
- US Federation of State Medical Boards
- US House of Medicine Organizations
- USMLE Program
- Other interested parties

ECFMG’s Certification Verification Service

- Confirmation IMG’s ECFMG Certification Status
- Two Types of Reports
  - Status Reports
    - For state medical boards and residency programs
  - Confirmation Reports
    - For Hospitals, HMOs, and other IMG employers
ECFMG's Certification Verification Service

- Confirmation Report includes:
  - Whether an individual is ECFMG certified;
  - Date the certificate was issued and the date(s) through which the certificate remains valid for the purpose of entry into graduate medical education;
  - Date of most recently passed CSA; and
  - Name of medical school, medical school country, and degree year.
- Satisfies The Joint Commission’s requirement for primary-source verification of IMGs medical education.
- Fee = $40

EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION FOR FOREIGN MEDICAL GRADUATES

On-line Services

Certification Verification Service (CVS) ON-LINE

Welcome to the ECFMG Certification Verification Service (CVS) ON-LINE.

If you are an International Medical Graduate (IMG) and need to request a letter, please

Tips here.

If you are an authorized contact for a medical licensing authority, residency program or employer and want to request confirmation of the ECFMG certification status of International medical graduates, please

Tips here.

If you forget your password, click here.

Tips here.

Login to request confirmation of certification status from ECFMG.

If you already have a CV-S ON-LINE account, you may enter your User ID and Password below.

Passwords are case sensitive. Make sure that you validate the password correctly.

Tips here.

Password:

Tips here.

If you forget your password, click here.

Tips here.

Cheln tips if you are a first-time user of CV-S ON-LINE
and you have received your Web authentication ID from ECFMG.

Tips here.
Questions?

- Kara Corrado, AVP Operations, ECFMG
  - kcorrado@ecfmg.org
  - 215.823.2273