

AbstractID: 1176 Title: Developing the Teaching, Education and Accreditation Program of the Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine

The Australasian College of Physical Scientists and Engineers in Medicine (ACPSEM) is the professional organisation for medical physicists in Australia and New Zealand. For a number of years it has offered accreditation for medical physicists in Commissioning and Quality Assurance of Radiotherapy Equipment, Ionizing Radiation Safety, Diagnostic Radiology Physics, and Nuclear Medicine Physics. Accreditation is obtained through passing written, oral and practical examinations and is the criteria for being considered qualified in the specialty.

Government-sponsored reports in both countries identified that there are significant difficulties in the recruitment, training and retention of medical physicists in Australasia. In response, both countries independently agreed to fund the development of well-structured programs for training and accrediting medical physicists.

The ACPSEM is developing a 5-year Teaching, Education and Accreditation Program (TEAP) which will train physicists in one of three specialty areas: Radiotherapy Physics, Radiology Physics and Nuclear Medicine Physics. The programmes will typically consist of a university-taught academic course in medical physics, one year of research and three years of clinical in-service training. The trainee physicists ('registrars') proceed through a structured program of study and exercises provided by the ACPSEM during their clinical in-service training.

The first registrars have commenced the program and are expected to gain their accreditations in mid-2008.

This paper will describe TEAP and review the processes and difficulties (both expected and unexpected) in instituting the programme. The possibility of the ACPSEM and other medical physics organisations mutually recognising their accreditations in medical physics will be promoted.