

In 1990, the AAPM published Essentials and Guidelines for Hospital Based Medical Physics Residency Training Programs (Report 36). Since then, many clinical residencies were initiated. Simultaneously, the Committee for Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs (CAMPEP) began a program of accreditation, charging the Residency Education Program Review Committee with this task. As of March 2005, there are 12 accredited programs with more applying. Today we will discuss; the forthcoming update to AAPM Report 36, the accreditation process and sources of funding, and most importantly we will hear from three resident graduates in regards to their training and how their careers have progressed post residency.

AAPM Report Number 36 gathers in one document the didactic knowledge and concepts that constitute the foundation of clinical medical physics. It lists equipment and procedures that embodies the breadth of medical physicist practice in radiation oncology, diagnostic imaging, and nuclear medicine. The new version acknowledges AAPM Report Number 79 "Academic Program Recommendations for Graduate Degrees in Medical Physics" as providing the standard for basic medical physics knowledge. However, didactic knowledge and concepts specific to specialized area of medical physics practice have been retained. Most of the equipment and procedures listed in the original report have been retained and many new ones have been added. Obvious examples include computed radiography, PET imaging, and IMRT.

CAMPEP offers accreditation of clinical residency programs in radiation oncology or medical imaging physics. The goal is to ensure a residency program provides rigorous and thorough clinical training (24 months) in a similar fashion to that provided by medical residency training programs. The graduating resident should be prepared to start the board certification process. The Process of CAMPEP accreditation requires a program submit a self-assessment report giving evidence of consistency clearly stated guidelines. After report review, a survey team conducts a program site visit to validate the assessment. If successful, accreditation is granted for 5 years with brief annual update submissions. To facilitate the application process, guidelines are available for download from campep.org. In addition, an application template is available from this link.

Funding is an important issue that has many solutions. CMS (formally HCFA) offers reimbursement to facilities with accredited programs. This falls under the paramedical education category, whereby portions of direct cost (salary & benefits) can be reimbursed. In addition, the AAPM (with co-support from Varian) and ASTRO supply grants ideal for established or startup programs, respectively.

This symposium should be attended by, directors of physics programs, physics educators, and students contemplating residency programs.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) To understand the history and necessity of residency programs
- 2) Receive and update on AAPM Report 36 on Essentials and Guidelines
- 3) Learn about the accreditation process
- 4) Sources of funding for residency programs
- 5) Obtain a clear picture of residency from resident graduates