



ACGME Recognition for Sponsoring Institutions with Non- Standard Training Programs for J-1 Visa Sponsorship

Definitions:

1. Non-Standard Training (NST) Program: Clinical training for foreign national physicians in advanced subspecialty programs for which there is no Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accreditation or American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Member Board certification.
2. NST Trainee: A physician in an NST program who holds a J-1 visa sponsored by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG).
3. Institutional Recognition: An ACGME process for approval of ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institutions to conduct NST programs. Institutional Recognition is distinct and separate from ACGME accreditation processes.

Purpose:

Recognition of Sponsoring Institutions with NST programs by the ACGME provides a framework for approval and oversight of training opportunities in the United States for physicians whose J-1 visas are sponsored by the ECFMG through the Exchange Visitor Program of the United States Department of State. The ACGME recognizes ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institutions that offer NST Programs and that demonstrate substantial compliance with the following Recognition Requirements. The recognized Sponsoring Institution bears the responsibility for each NST program and NST trainee under its auspices, for assessment of the impact of NST programs on related ACGME-accredited program(s), and for compliance with regulatory requirements for J-1 participants.

Revision Information

ACGME-approved New Requirements: February 7, 2022; effective February 7, 2022

Reformatted Recognition Requirements, effective July 1, 2025

Definitions

For more information, see the [ACGME Glossary of Terms](#).

Core Requirements: Statements that define structure, resource, or process elements essential to every graduate medical educational program.

Detail Requirements: Statements that describe a specific structure, resource, or process, for achieving compliance with a Core Requirement. Programs and sponsoring institutions in substantial compliance with the Outcome Requirements may utilize alternative or innovative approaches to meet Core Requirements.

Outcome Requirements: Statements that specify expected measurable or observable attributes (knowledge, abilities, skills, or attitudes) of residents or fellows at key stages of their graduate medical education.

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Section 1: Sponsoring Institution that Offers Nonstandard Training (NST) Programs

- 1.1. Sponsoring Institution
Each NST program must function under the ultimate authority and oversight of one ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institution with an institutional accreditation status of Initial Accreditation, Initial Accreditation with Warning, Continued Accreditation, or Continued Accreditation with Warning. ^(Core)
- 1.1.a. The Sponsoring Institution must ensure the availability of adequate personnel, clinical activities, and other resources for conducting NST programs without adverse impact on the education of residents/fellows in the Sponsoring Institution's ACGME-accredited programs. ^(Core)
- 1.1.b. The Sponsoring Institution must sponsor an ACGME-accredited residency/fellowship program in the most closely related specialty/subspecialty for each NST program. ^(Core)
 - 1.1.b.1. The most closely related ACGME-accredited residency/fellowship program must maintain a status of Continued Accreditation or Continued Accreditation with Warning. ^(Core)
- 1.1.c. The Sponsoring Institution must ensure compliance with regulations that govern the participation of sponsors in the Exchange Visitor Program of the United States Department of State. ^(Core)
- 1.2. Designated Institutional Official (DIO)
The DIO of the ACGME-accredited Sponsoring Institution, in collaboration with the Sponsoring Institution's Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC), must have authority and responsibility for the oversight and administration of each of the Sponsoring Institution's NST programs, as well as for ensuring compliance with the Recognition Requirements for Sponsoring Institutions with NST Programs. ^(Core)
- 1.2.a. The DIO must oversee the preparation and submission of all information about the Sponsoring Institution's NST program(s) required and requested by the ACGME. ^(Core)
- 1.3. NST Program Director
There must be a single NST program director, from among the physician faculty members of the most closely related ACGME-accredited residency/fellowship program, who is responsible for the operation of each NST program. ^(Core)

- 1.3.a. The NST program director must oversee NST trainee supervision, education, and assessment at all participating sites. (Core)
- 1.4. GMEC
 - 1.4.a. The program description must specify any qualifications for appointment of the NST program director. (Core)
 - 1.4.b. The GMEC must review and approve the appointment of each of its NST program directors. (Core)
 - 1.4.c. At least annually, the GMEC must complete and document an assessment of supervision and assessment of NST trainees. (Core)
 - 1.4.d. At least annually, the GMEC must complete and document the impact of NST programs on the Sponsoring Institution's ACGME-accredited programs. (Core)
- 1.5. Participating Sites in ACGME Accreditation Data System (ADS)
NST trainees' assignments/rotations must be limited to the participating sites of the most closely related ACGME-accredited program, as identified by the Sponsoring Institution and listed in ADS. (Core)

Section 2: NST Programs

- 2.1. Appointment
 - Each NST program must define the prerequisite education and/or training for entry into the NST program. (Core)
 - 2.1.a. Each NST program must ensure that NST trainees appointed to the NST program meet prerequisites for entry into the NST program. (Core)
 - 2.1.b. The Sponsoring Institution must ensure that NST trainees are provided with a written agreement outlining the terms and conditions of their appointments. The agreement must directly contain or provide a reference to the following items: (Core)
 - 2.1.b.1. NST trainee responsibilities, including any requirements for successful completion of the NST program; (Core)
 - 2.1.b.2. duration of training; (Core)
 - 2.1.b.3. financial arrangements related to the NST trainee; (Core)
 - 2.1.b.4. grievance and due process; (Core)

- 2.1.b.5. professional liability coverage, including a summary of pertinent information regarding coverage; (Core)
- 2.1.b.6. the availability of health insurance benefits for NST trainees and their eligible dependents; and, (Core)
- 2.1.b.7. vacation, and leave(s) of absence for NST trainee(s), including medical, parental, and caregiver leave(s) of absence, and compliant with applicable laws. (Core)
- 2.1.c. The Sponsoring Institution must monitor each of its NST programs with regard to implementation of terms and conditions of the agreement. (Core)
- 2.2. Curriculum
The NST program must make available to NST trainees and faculty members a curriculum that includes: (Core)
 - 2.2.a. overall educational goals for the NST programs; (Core)
 - 2.2.b. delineation of NST trainee responsibilities for patient care, responsibility for patient management, and supervision during the NST program; and, (Core)
 - 2.2.c. a description of required educational experiences, didactic sessions, assessment methods, and procedural experience requirements. (Core)
- 2.3. Initial and Formative Assessment
No later than three months from the NST trainee's starting date in the NST program, each NST program director must complete an initial competence assessment of each NST trainee in the NST program, including an ACGME Milestones assessment from the most closely related ACGME-accredited specialty or subspecialty. (Core)
 - 2.3.a. A supervising faculty member must be physically present to supervise the NST trainee with all patients until the NST program director has documented the NST trainee's ACGME Milestones achievement as a sufficient basis for delegating progressive authority and responsibility and conditional independence, as assigned by the NST program director and faculty members. (Core)
 - 2.3.b. For each NST trainee appointed to an NST program for one year or longer, the NST program director or the NST program director's designee must meet with the NST trainee to review a semi-annual evaluation of the NST trainee's performance. (Core)
- 2.4. Summative Assessment
Each NST program director must provide a summative evaluation for each NST trainee upon the NST trainee's completion of, or separation from, the NST program. (Core)
- 2.5. Opportunity to Raise Concerns and Provide Feedback
The Sponsoring Institution and each of its NST programs must provide a learning and working environment in which NST trainees have the opportunity to raise concerns and

provide feedback without fear of intimidation or retaliation and in a confidential manner as appropriate. (Core)

2.6. Clinical and Educational Hours of NST Trainees

Clinical and educational hours of NST trainees must be limited to no more than 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house clinical and educational activities, and clinical responsibilities completed at home. (Core)

2.7. Mandatory Time Free of Clinical and Educational Activities

NST trainees must be scheduled for a minimum of one day in seven free of required clinical and educational responsibilities (when averaged over four weeks). At-home clinical responsibilities cannot be assigned on these free days. (Core)