POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION
SCHULICH SCHOOL OF MEDICINE & DENTISTRY

RESIDENCY AND AREA OF FOCUSED COMPETENCE (AFC) PROGRAM DIRECTOR APPOINTMENT POLICY

Approved by PGME Committee: June 11, 2025
Approved by Clinical Chairs Committee: May 13, 2026
Approved by JSC: November 6, 2026
Date of Next Scheduled Review: 2029

Preamble

The *General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs,* the *General Standards of Accreditation for Residency Programs,* and the *General Standards of Accreditation for Areas of Focused Competence Programs* require that each accredited postgraduate program has a Program Director who is responsible for the overall conduct of the program. The Program Director reports to both the Chair of the Department/Division as well as the Associate Dean, Postgraduate Medical Education (PGME).

The Department/Division Chair and Associate Dean, PGME are jointly responsible for ensuring that the Program Director has sufficient qualifications, time, and support to administer the residency program.

Policy Reference

- General Standards of Accreditation for Institutions with Residency Programs
- General Standards of Accreditation for Residency Programs
- General Standards of Accreditation for Areas of Focused Competence Programs
- Royal College Policy on Appointing a Program Director of a Royal College-accredited Program

Indicator 1.2.4.2: There is a collaborative process between the academic lead of the discipline and the postgraduate dean for the appointment of each program director.

Indicator 1.2.4.3: Each program director meets the required credentials as set by the college(s).

Procedure

The following procedures apply with respect to the selection and appointment of the Program Director:

1. The Department/Division Chair (or delegate) will notify the Associate Dean, PGME when a change in Program Director is being considered and will indicate the rationale for the change.
2. The appointment of a Program Director will be the conjoint responsibility of the Department/Division and the Associate Dean, PGME.
3. The process for selection of a Program Director will ensure the following are considered:
    3.1 An open call for applications should be made to all eligible faculty members. The call for applications should include a Program Director job description, so that interested applicants are aware of the requirements of the position.
    3.2 Interested applicants should submit a letter of intent and curriculum vitae.

3.3 Selection is made by a Selection Committee.

3.3.1 Committee Membership should include representation from each of the following: resident(s)/AFC trainee(s) selected by their peers, faculty, administrative staff, site representatives (if distributed) and Residency/AFC Program Committee member(s).

3.3.2 The Department/Division Chair and Associate Dean, PGME will co-chair the Selection Committee.

3.3.3 The Selection Committee will review applications and invite candidates under consideration for an interview. Interviews should be kept confidential to the committee. A list of interview questions should be created in advance to ensure consistency across interviews.

3.3.4 Attributes to be addressed include specialty expertise, educational and administrative expertise, discipline certifications, current hospital / academic appointment status, and other relevant attributes as determined by the Selection Committee.

3.3.5 The process will be free from discrimination, coercion, and favouritism, and adhere to Western Equity and Human Rights policies.

4. The appointment will be approved by both the Department/Division Chair and the Associate Dean, PGME. Results of the selection process should be communicated as soon as possible to all candidates.
5. The PGME office will notify the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) or the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) of the names of newly appointed Program Directors within two weeks of the appointment.
6. For RCPSC residency and AFC programs, official confirmation of the appointment will be communicated by the RCPSC in alignment with the Policy on Appointing a Program Director of a Royal College-accredited Program.
7. All first time RCPSC Program Directors will be required to complete the RCPSC Workshop for New Program Directors, delivered annually as a pre-conference event at the Royal College's International Conference on Residency Education (ICRE).
8. New residency Program Directors will require mentorship from a current or past Program Director. If required, the mentorship process, including mentor selection, will be organized through the PGME Office and will begin within the first three months of appointment, and last for the first 12 months of appointment. The mentor may be from the same academic program as the new residency Program Director.
    8.1 Mentorship is optional for AFC Program Directors.
    8.2 This does not apply to new Program Directors who have previous residency Program Director experience (i.e., within another discipline), or to Interim Program Directors with appointments 12 months or less.
    8.3 Those who have previously acted as Associate/Assistant Program Directors may be able to forgo mentorship at the discretion of the PGME Office.
    8.4 The mentorship process is specific to the Program Director appointment and is separate from faculty mentorship established through the Department/Division.
9. All new Program Directors (residency or AFC) will be required to meet one-on-one with the Associate Dean, PGME, within the first 12 weeks of appointment. This will be facilitated by the PGME Office.
10. The usual term of a Residency Program Director is 3-5 years (renewable once, or in exceptional circumstances, more than once).

11. Whenever possible, programs should consider succession planning carefully and select a new Program Director early enough to allow some overlap and mentoring with the outgoing Program Director. Once their term is done, the outgoing Program Director should provide adequate handover to the incoming Program Director.
12. At the time of appointment, Division/Department Chairs and Program Directors are responsible for reviewing the program directors Academic Role Category components and making revisions commensurate with position. The Division/Department Chair and Associate Dean, PGME will also review the guidelines for support of residency programs, SSMD PGME, in open dialogue with the incoming Program Directors.
13. Alterations to the process as outlined above may be considered in collaboration between the Associate Dean, PGME and Division/Department Chair.
14. Failure to involve the Associate Dean, PGME in the selection process may result in significant delays in the appointment process.