Reported to the Board of Trustees

November 17, 2022



# Graduate Medical Education Report to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees

**Academic Year 2021-2022**

Submitted October 13, 2022

# Introduction

The University of Illinois College of Medicine is pleased to present this annual report on graduate medical education to the University of Illinois Board of Trustees. Such reporting is in accordance with the accreditation standards of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). The present report reflects all graduate medical education activities sponsored by the College of Medicine during the July 2021 through June 2022 academic year.

Graduate Medical Education (GME) consists of the post-medical school training of physicians, under supervision, in preparation for independent practice. Medical school graduates first complete a residency program three years (e.g., internal medicine, pediatrics) to seven years (neurosurgery) in duration, leading to board eligibility in that specialty. Many then go on to subspecialty fellowship training of one to three additional years, gaining eligibility for additional board certification in a subspecialty (e.g., an internist who completes further training in cardiology).

The three College of Medicine campuses – at Chicago, Peoria, and Rockford – are separately accredited as ACGME Institutional Sponsoring Institutions for the residency and fellowship programs based at that campus. Each campus thus has a separate faculty leader serving as associate dean and ACGME Designated Institutional Official, reporting to the regional dean or, in the case of Chicago, to the College’s senior associate dean for educational affairs.

# Annual summary of the GME programs at each campus

**Chicago**

The Chicago campus sponsors 62 ACGME-accredited programs – 25 residencies and 37 fellowships, with a total of 775 trainees currently enrolled – and oversees a number of additional fellowship programs that are institutionally sponsored, meaning that there is no external body offering accreditation in these disciplines. The Office of Graduate Medical Education is housed within UI Health and led by Gia Mac, senior director, graduate medical education.

The programs sponsored by the Chicago campus provide clinical experiences within UI Health, the Jesse Brown Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and affiliated institutions across the metropolitan Chicago area - most notably Advocate Christ Medical Center, Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center, Advocate Lutheran General Hospital, Mount Sinai Hospital, OSF Little Company of Mary Hospital, and John H. Stroger Hospital. All our programs are based at UI Health, with rotations to these other hospitals

providing a variety of experiences to complement those at UI Health, with the exceptions of the Metro Group Hospitals’ (MGH) general surgery residency and a related surgical critical care fellowship, managed in collaboration with several of our affiliates and distinct from the general surgery program at UI Health, and an additional general surgery program based at Mount Sinai Medical Center. The MGH program is actively evolving, following the 2021 sale of Mercy Hospital and Medical Center which had been a major rotation site. The MGH program has ceased recruiting new residents, and over the next few years the program will sunset, with its component sites Advocate Illinois Masonic and Presence Saint Francis Hospital becoming training sites for the UIH general surgery program.

The most notable development in the Chicago campus’s clinical affiliations within the past academic year has been a new partnership between UI Health and Cook County Health, introduced in November 2021. The UIH-CCH Partnership for Pediatric Care was created to increase access for patients in our community to pediatric specialty services, improve physician satisfaction and retention, and improve health care quality. Through this partnership, the departments of pediatrics at both institutions have worked closely to develop shared service agreements for many of their physicians, particularly the pediatric subspecialists, many of whom are in short supply around the country. This new partnership will strengthen our educational relationship with Stroger, anticipating that our residents will rotate with our subspecialty faculty in their clinics and when they consult on inpatients at Stroger.

In anticipation of a significant increase in patients seeking abortion access from neighboring states, our affiliation with Planned Parenthood of Illinois was expanded to include an additional site. This high-volume outpatient setting will allow trainees in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology’s Complex Family Planning Fellowship to serve the community and engage in scholarly work.

All 62 residency and fellowship programs in Chicago that are subject to accreditation by the ACGME have maintained accreditation. All but two carry Continued Full Accreditation or Initial Accreditation status. The neurosurgery program is accredited with probationary status; a follow-up ACGME site visit for the program is scheduled for December 2022. The program leadership and the GME office are confident that the program can be removed from probation, as AY 2021-22 Resident Survey scores demonstrated marked improvement for the second year in a row. The neurology program received Continued Accreditation with Warning status in AY 2021-22. A special review of the program (an intramural process conducted through the GME Committee) was scheduled and completed in September 2022. The neurology program leadership and the GME office will continue to work closely together in implementing process improvement plans to address the areas of concern.

ACGME conducted four other accreditation site surveys in AY2021-22: (1) Regional Anesthesiology and Acute Pain Medicine – approved Continued Accreditation status; (2) Integrated Plastic Surgery – new application, approved Initial Accreditation status; (3) Complex Family Planning – new application, approved Initial Accreditation status; and (4) Addiction Medicine (Multidisciplinary) – Initial Accreditation status.

To address the annual resident and faculty surveys, programs with citations, and as part of the action plan of the Annual Institutional Review, the GME office conducted six special reviews of programs, participated in the Medical Staff Executive Committee meetings, and met with ambulatory and department leadership to address areas for improvement of the trainees’ experience. Additionally, the Graduate Medical Education Committee revised the Special Review policy to lower the threshold that triggers a Special Review.

Other initiatives aimed at continuous improvement of patient care and of the graduate medical education learning environment include a continuing series of seminars on professional development topics for faculty, program coordinators, and trainees, an April 2022 retreat of program directors and coordinators focusing on wellness and professionalism, and the development of a Resident Risk and Patient Safety Committee in collaboration with UI Health risk management

As noted in last year’s report, in April 2021 the University was notified that the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and its subsidiary Committee on Interns and Residents (CIR) had filed a petition with the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board, on behalf of and seeking to organize the Chicago campus residents and fellows employed by the Board of Trustees. The DIO, assistant dean, and senior director of GME are part of the bargaining team, led by the university’s labor and employee relations team. Since February, we have negotiated in good faith with the CIR and SEIU representatives to establish an initial contract. To date, there have been 16 productive bargaining sessions and tentative agreement has been reached on 21 articles. We are eager to engage in further negotiations to reach agreements on wages and increases. This process has given the institution new, in-depth insight into the working and learning environment of our trainees.

In AY 2021-22, UI Health and the Chicago campus of the College of Medicine entered the second year of the Blue Cross Blue Shield’s Health Equity Hospital Quality Incentive Pilot Program. This three-year program has two main aims, one focusing on reducing inequities in the provision of health care across the State of Illinois and the other aiming to increase the recruitment, support, and retention within Illinois of physicians from racial and ethnic groups under-represented in medicine. The GME office is heavily involved in this effort, creating a new resident-faculty Diversity Council under the leadership of Assistant Dean Keia Hobbs, MD, and providing workshops on holistic residency selection practices for program directors and members of residency selection committees.

Other diversity initiatives include the ACGME Equity MattersTM program, which supplies a framework for continuous learning and process improvement in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and anti-racism practices. In AY 2020-21 and AY 2021-22 the GME office performed an in-depth analysis of recruitment data, as well as surveys of all under-represented in medicine residency applicants who interviewed for residency during the 2020-21 and 2021-22 match cycles. The GME leadership team continued to provide educational sessions on holistic review to the leadership of each training program. These efforts have begun to significantly narrow the diversity gap between the composition of our GME trainee cohort and population data for our Primary Service Area as reflected in our 2019 Community Assessment of Needs Report.

In the fall of 2021, UI Health launched the Co-Worker Observational Reporting System (CORS) program, an initiative of the Vanderbilt Center for Patient and Professional Advocacy. The system uses local and national data and benchmarks to identify and address medical professionals whose behavior is inconsistent with their health system's core values and professional expectations, and provides a tool to report faculty for unprofessional behavior, which is then systematically addressed. The process focuses on reflection and self-regulation with feedback delivered by trained peers.

Dr. Abigail Litwiller, associate dean for GME and ACGME Designated Institutional Official, left the university in August 2021. Dr. Raymond Curry, senior associate dean for educational affairs, served as interim DIO while a search for the new DIO was conducted, and in April 2022 Dr. Claudia Lora was appointed associate dean for graduate medical education and DIO. Dr. Lora, who had been serving as one of the two GME assistant deans, is a tenured associate professor of internal medicine (nephrology) and an alumna of the college, the UIH internal medicine residency program, and the UIH nephrology fellowship. She previously served as program director for the fellowship. Following her appointment as associate dean and DIO, a second search was opened to fill her assistant dean position, and the position will be filled as of late October 2022.

**Peoria:**

The University of Illinois College of Medicine campus at Peoria now sponsors 21 ACGME accredited programs – 13 residencies and 8 fellowships, with a total of 324 trainees currently enrolled. All programs, except for those with initial accreditation status, are fully accredited. In addition, the campus oversees 4 additional fellowships not eligible for ACGME accreditation; these include fellowships in family medicine obstetrics, emergency medicine ultrasound, breast imaging, and simulation. The ACGME conducts site visits of each Institutional Sponsor on a ten-year cycle; the Peoria campus is now preparing for its site visit which is due to take place in 2024.

The College’s collaboration with its two major clinical affiliates - Unity Point Methodist Medical Center (psychiatry and family medicine) and OSF St Francis Medical Center (all other disciplines) – is overseen by the Joint Oversight Committee for Academic Programs (JOCAP). Both clinical affiliates are co-located with the College of Medicine buildings in central Peoria, and strongly committed to the educational mission of the College.

Plans are underway to apply for three new programs: A residency program in anesthesiology and a fellowship in gynecologic oncology, both in partnership with OSF St Francis Medical Center, as well as a second family medicine residency, in partnership with OSF St. Joseph Medical Center in Bloomington.

**Rockford**

The campus sponsors three family medicine residency programs and one fellowship in hospice and palliative care medicine. All are now fully accredited, following the advancement of the newest residency, which includes a rural training track in Monroe, Wisconsin, to full accreditation status in 2021 following its required period of initial accreditation. Altogether, the three residency programs train 12 new family physicians each year, for a total of 36 enrolled trainees.

All three residency programs conduct the first year of training at UW Swedish American Hospital in Rockford. One program then continues for the final two years of training in Dixon, IL. In the other, as noted above, residents continue their training in Monroe, WI. The largest program, based throughout at UW Swedish American Hospital, also allows selected trainees a focus in rural training, assisted by a $2 million HRSA grant now in its second year of funding. The program, “STRETCH-OB” (Structured Training for Rural Enhancement of Community Health in Obstetrics), supports two residents in each class with a special interest in rural practice in gaining additional training above and beyond the standard curriculum in operative obstetrical techniques and comprehensive medical management for the obstetrical patient.

# The impact of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic

Each of our campus communities experienced continued challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic during this academic year. As a result of the omicron surge and the resulting staffing issues that arise from the need for isolation or quarantine, the Chicago campus was under ACGME “Stage 3” emergency categorization between 12/28/21 and 02/25/22, which paralleled the hospital's "Internal Disaster" status. The “Stage 3” pandemic response status is an ACGME designation that allows sponsoring institutions to redeploy residents and fellows into areas of greatest clinical need, suspending for the duration the otherwise strict schedule of required rotations in various specialty areas.

Efforts were made to minimize the need to enact these redeployments. For example, at UI Health the hospital maintained its normal service configuration, i.e., COVID-positive patients were not placed into a cohort but were distributed among services as appropriate based on their clinical needs. Additionally, the ambulatory clinics continued normal operations, and all procedures continued, except for elective, non-urgent ones. The Institution closely monitored the status of training programs by developing an online tracking system in which program directors categorized their programs as green, yellow, or red based on their staffing and backup needs. Trainees who were not on telemedicine or research assignment during the emergency categorization/internal disaster status received COVID-differential stipends for their involvement in direct patient care.

In no instance was the progress of our residents or fellows toward completion of their requirements for training and board eligibility delayed by the pandemic conditions.

There remain, however, significant stressors in the workplace and changes to previous clinical care practices, much as are being experienced by physicians and other clinical care staff around the world. Residents and fellows across the university have full access to appropriate mental health services and employee assistance programs, and individual programs are taking additional steps to support the wellness of their trainees.

The pandemic also continues to alter several traditional aspects of the residency application and selection process, including strict limitations on the ability of final year medical students to experience visiting clinical rotations at other institutions or to visit in-person at the time of their residency interviews. The latter change, with most residency and fellowship programs conducting interviews virtually, continues into the present application cycle for positions starting in summer 2023.

# Recruitment outcomes for the 2021-2022 residency and fellowship application cycle

The National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) is the principal source for recruitment of our trainees. During the 2021-2022 recruitment cycle (i.e., those trainees who began our programs in late June 2022), all positions offered through the match were filled. Several preliminary surgery one-year positions in Chicago and in Peoria were not offered in the Match and filled independently.

# Summary

The graduate medical education programs sponsored by the College of Medicine across our three campuses are all thriving. These programs are essential to the educational, clinical, and service missions of the College of Medicine, UI Health, our clinical partners in Peoria and Rockford, and the University of Illinois. Together, we have built the foundation for high quality health care throughout the state.

We are grateful to UI Health, the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center, and all our clinical affiliates across the state for their commitments to our programs and trainees. We are committed to the work of continuous quality improvement in our GME programs to continue serve as destination sites for future learners.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond H. Curry, MD Mark I. Rosenblatt, MD, PhD, MBA

Senior Associate Dean for Educational Affairs Executive Dean

With the assistance of:

Meenakshy Aiyer, MD Regional Dean, Peoria Campus

Keia Hobbs, MD Assistant Dean, Chicago Campus

Kathleen Kelley, MD Assistant Dean and DIO, Rockford Campus

Claudia Lora, MD Associate Dean and DIO, Chicago Campus

Gia Mac CPHRM, CPMSM Senior GME Director, Chicago Campus

Francis McBee-Orzulak, MD Associate Dean and DIO, Peoria Campus

Alex Stagnaro-Green, MD, MHPE, MHA Regional Dean, Rockford Campus