

Procedures to pursue Postgraduation of Medicine in the US for Overseas Medical Graduates

Earning a Postgraduate Medical Qualification in the United States demands a prescribed period of clinical training, namely Residency. In the process every Indian Doctor has to get the Indian Medical Degree certified in the U.S by the admission body called the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). This Certification is designed to assure that the applicants from foreign medical schools have qualifications comparable to U.S medical school graduates. After the Certification, the candidates have to qualify in the U.S Medical License Examination (USMLE) and then apply for a Residency Programme, which entails practicing medicine. Details of USMLE can be had from www.usmle.org. Most states in the U.S require ECFMG Certification of foreign medical graduates as a prerequisite to obtaining a licence to conduct supervised medical practice in that State. However, if a doctor wants to go to the US for research that does not involve patient care then he/she can follow the generic procedures to get admission.

Information on residency program can be availed on line from the American Medical Association's (AMA) Fellowship and Residency Electronic Interactive Database (FREIDA) at <http://www.amaassn.org/pub/category/2997>. On the residency programs, one has to be sure to obtain information regarding salary, length of appointment, elements of the program, hours of duty and responsibilities, and provision of health and professional liability insurance.

In addition to the application made to individual program, applicants must generally participate in the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) or one of several other computerized application programs. A number of medical specialties require use of the Electronic Residency Application System (ERAS) administered by ECFMG. The ERAS application form can be availed at (ECFMG ERAS Program, P O Box 13467, Philadelphia, PA 1901-346) USA. Email: erashelp@ecfm.org; Telephone: 215-386-5900. Fax: 215-222-5641. Also, see ECFMG Bulletin or contact NRMP-2501 M Street, N.W., Suite One, Washington DC 20037 USA.

Students applying for the residency program need to take J-1 Visa which expects the holder to return home immediately after their residency, if the hospitals which accepted them for residency do not sponsor their H-1 Visa (the work permit). In some cases the Hospital which accepts them for residency sponsor their H-1 Visas. Information on Medical Schools in the U.S and on the American Medical College Application Service (AMCAS) can be obtained from the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) at www.aamc.org or the <http://www.ama.assn.org>. U.S Educational Advisory Service in the area can also be contacted for detailed information.