



ALLIANCE  
for ACADEMIC INTERNAL MEDICINE

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Dear Dr. Kirk and Dr. Weiss:

On behalf of the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM), I write today to ask ACGME to implement a formal assessment of the Designated Institutional Official (DIO). AAIM is in receipt of your reply on March 25, 2021, to our original March 1, 2021, request.

As you know, AAIM empowers academic internal medicine professionals and enhances health care through professional development, research, and advocacy. Through AIM, APDIM, APM, ASP, and CDIM, the Alliance includes more than 11,000 faculty and staff in departments of internal medicine at medical schools and teaching hospitals, representing the entire continuum of medical education from medical student to practicing physician. As such, AAIM has a significant stake in enhancing and fortifying the medical education continuum.

The COVID pandemic has been challenging for all, including program directors who struggled to protect and support their residents and fellows while maintaining an effective educational learning environment. The 2020 APDIM Fall Annual Program Directors Survey asked internal medicine program directors in community- and university-based settings how supported they felt by their graduate medical education (GME) and hospital leadership. Only one-half (51.7%, 134/257) felt “highly supported” by their hospital leadership and only two-thirds (67.6%, 175/257) felt “highly supported” by their GME leadership. Conversely, 9.7% and 8.1% of program directors felt not at all supported by their hospital and GME leadership, respectively.

The DIO should support successful accreditation of GME programs at the institution as well as their medical educational mission. At all times, a supportive DIO is essential to a program’s success and to the teaching mission of the institution. Ineffective leadership can be detrimental to programs, program directors, and trainees. The pandemic has revealed areas where the lack of support from hospital/health system and GME leadership was truly detrimental to the educational mission.

The ACGME Institutional Requirements that will go into effect July 1, 2022, do not include additional specifications of required DIO responsibilities. While disappointing, the Alliance again asks that ACGME strongly consider developing and implementing an assessment tool to objectively assess the performance of the DIO. To be beneficial to the program, institution, and ACGME, this tool should be anonymous, administered on a 360-degree basis (including all key stakeholders), and include feedback from all program directors within the institution.



Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have questions about this letter or the Alliance, please contact AAIM Senior Director of Education and Research Margaret A. Breida, MS, at (703) 341-4540 or [mbreida@im.org](mailto:mbreida@im.org) at your convenience.

Sincerely,

D. Craig Brater, MD  
President and CEO