



**ALLIANCE**  
for ACADEMIC INTERNAL MEDICINE

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September 22, 2023

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Dear Dr. Kirk:

On behalf of the Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine (AAIM), I write today to express the Alliance's recommendation to change the program coordinator title in the ACGME Common Program Requirements for individuals who oversee and manage administrative functions of graduate medical education training programs. Specifically, AAIM proposes changing the job title in the Common Program Requirements from "program coordinator" to "program administrator."

AAIM represents more than 12,000 educators and administrators from both undergraduate and graduate medical education, typifying the entire continuum of medical education: department chairs, residency and subspecialty fellowship program directors, clerkship and subinternship directors, program coordinators, key faculty, and department administrators. The Alliance is dedicated to enhancing health care through professional development, research, and advocacy.

AAIM conducts an annual survey of members in the program administrator/program coordinator role; a task force of program administrators analyzed key factors and data points in support of this title change which will more accurately reflect the level of responsibility and education required for this role. The 2023 data shows that 30% of individuals currently serving in this role hold a bachelor's degree, with 31% of individuals either pursuing or having completed a master's degree or higher. Moreover, survey results over the last eight years show that the percentage of individuals in this role who hold a bachelor's degree or higher has consistently increased. This level of education, dedication, and expertise is not fully reflected in the current job title of "program coordinator."

The expectations of this role continue to evolve due to the increasing complexity and burden of international, federal, and state regulations, institutional systems, and ACGME Program Requirements. Individuals in this critical role are secondarily responsible for the accreditation and success of the program. The Common Program Requirements II.C.2 (Background and Intent) states:

*"Each program requires a lead administrative person, frequently referred to as a program coordinator, administrator, or as otherwise titled by the institution. This person will frequently manage the day-to-day operations of the program and serve as an important liaison and facilitator between the learners, faculty and other staff*



*members, and the ACGME. The program coordinator is a key member of the leadership team and is critical to the success of the program. As such, the program coordinator must possess skills in leadership and personnel management appropriate to the complexity of the program. Program coordinators are expected to develop in-depth knowledge of the ACGME and Program Requirements, including policies and procedures. Program coordinators assist the program director in meeting accreditation requirements, educational programming, and support of fellows.”*

The title should convey the magnitude of this responsibility and most importantly, denote that it is a leadership position.

The title of "program administrator" is consistent with industry standards and is commonly used in various industries and fields, including education and health care, to describe individuals who oversee and manage programs, projects, or initiatives. Aligning the title would enhance clarity of the role and could attract more qualified candidates with the necessary education and experience to serve as program administrators in the field of graduate medical education. Therefore, it would ultimately increase the integrity of the role overall by demonstrating a commitment to professionalism and strong program management. While AAIM acknowledges that this proposal may present challenges for many programs and institutions, including the associated financial implications, the benefits outweigh the potential costs.

AAIM strongly recommends that ACGME consider making this title change to better reflect the evolving role and responsibilities of program administrators in graduate medical education.

Again, thank you for your support of the academic internal medicine community. If you have any questions about this letter or would like to schedule a meeting, 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).

Sincerely,

Polly E. Parsons, MD, MACP, ATSF, FCCP  
President and CEO

cc: Jerry Vasilias, PhD