



## GME Non-Standard Training (NST) Programs Policy

### Definitions:

1. **Non-Standard Training (NST) Program:** An advanced clinical subspecialty discipline for which there is no ACGME accreditation, and/or no ABMS subspecialty board certification available; and which operates in direct association with, and under the direct oversight of, one of WVU School of Medicine's ACGME-accredited residency or fellowship programs, which must have an accreditation status of "Continued Accreditation," and which will fulfill the required role of parent program to the NST program. CAST accredited training programs are included in this category.
2. **Non-Standard Training (ACGME) Recognition:** The ACGME offers Recognition of Sponsoring Institutions that have NST programs that provide clinical training for foreign national physicians who receive J-1 visa sponsorship by the ECFMG. NST programs that do not accept or do not have J-1 visa holders enrolled are not considered to have NST ACGME recognition. **NST programs that have/plan to have a J-1 visa holder MUST obtain NST ACGME recognition.**

### Rationale & Purpose:

1. To provide WVU School of Medicine and its Graduate Medical Education Committee (GMEC) with a policy governing oversight of all NST Programs.
2. To ensure the quality of the educational experience, and the protection of the institution, the patients, and the trainee(s) involved with our NST Programs.
3. To provide Program Directors of NST Programs with a clear guide to the institutional requirements for all NST Programs under WVU School of Medicine.
4. To provide the opportunity for International Medical Graduates (IMGs), with J-1 Visa sponsorship by the ECFMG, to participate in our institution's NST Programs.

## **Application Process for New NST Programs:**

1. The NST Subspecialty Discipline must be listed in the “Examples of NST Programs with Most Closely Related ACGME-Accredited Programs” document, found here: [https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/programrequirements/nst\\_approved-focus-areas\\_january-2025.pdf](https://www.acgme.org/globalassets/pfassets/programrequirements/nst_approved-focus-areas_january-2025.pdf)
2. Proposed NST Program Director, in conjunction with related departmental leadership, and the Program Director of the proposed parent program, will submit a formal application and proforma to the Graduate Medical Education Evaluation and Operations Committee (GMEEOC) for financial assessment and approval.
3. Once declared financially viable by the GMEEOC, the full NST program proposal including proposed program structure, mission, length of training, policies, requested trainee complement, faculty complement, curriculum, rotation block schedule, didactic schedule, list of required procedures and/or experiences, and estimated impact on the institution’s existing training programs must be submitted to the DIO for assessment.
4. The DIO, or his designee, can: decide that the program proposal is ready for formal review by a Special Program Review (SPR) team, or can return the proposal to the NST Proposed Program Director with notes for further development.
5. If judged ready for formal review, a date will then be set for a SPR, an SPR Team will be formed, and the full NST Program proposal will be assessed following the SPR protocol as set forth in the GME Bylaws.
6. Following the SPR, a full report of the SPR team’s findings and recommendations, along with the full NST program proposal, will go, first, before the GMEC Taskforce, for recommendations and approval/disapproval, and second, if approved by Taskforce, before the full GMEC, which will vote to either approve the NST program, approve the NST program with changes, or to not approve the NST program. At the same Taskforce, and full GMEC meetings, in a separate vote, the proposed NST Program Director will either be approved, or not approved, as the NST Program Director.
7. If the proposed NST program fails to achieve approval by Taskforce, and/or the full GMEC, the Taskforce, and/or full GMEC will return the NST program proposal to the proposed NST Program Director, who will have the opportunity to make changes and resubmit.

## **Rules of Governance:**

1. NST programs, program directors, and fellows will be subject to all WVU GME Bylaws and policies, regulations, and procedures governing ACGME accredited programs. NST Program Directors will familiarize themselves with the ACGME’s Common Program Requirements for Fellowship and use them as a guide. Link to the Common Program Requirements for Fellowship: [Common Program Requirements](#)

2. The NST Program Director should attend the bi-monthly GMEC meetings as a non-voting ex-officio member.
3. All NST Programs will complete the Annual Program Evaluation and meet with the DIO or designee for the Annual Program Review on a yearly basis.
4. A face-to-face semi-annual evaluation of the fellow must be completed by the NST Program Director, or their designee. Both the fellow and the NST Program Director must sign and date the semi-annual evaluation, and a copy must be kept under the fellow's name in E-Value's Personal Records.
5. Upon successful completion of the NST Program, the NST Program Director will complete a final summative evaluation, (a form is available on SOLE, if desired), for each fellow detailing the competencies obtained during the program, and stating that the fellow, by consensus of the faculty, has demonstrated the knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to enter autonomous practice upon the day specified. A copy of this final summative evaluation will be kept under the fellow's name in E-Value's Personal Records.
6. Non-standard program fellows may be appointed in two categories:
  - a. With a contract equivalent to those issued to residents in accredited ACGME programs and following the institutional pay scale for residents. These fellows will act strictly in the capacity of a physician in training and will not be permitted to bill independently for services rendered. All NST fellows training under J-1 visa sponsorship will fall under this category. See moonlighting policy for details regarding moonlighting qualifications.
  - b. Following standard WVU search procedures, and in conjunction with WVU Medicine Medical Staff Affairs Office, the individual could be appointed as a WVU faculty member in the sponsoring department at the rank of Instructor. These fellows will have contracts with the West Virginia Medical Corporation (dba University Health Associates) and will be permitted to bill independently for services rendered that are not part of the training or subspecialty area of the non-standard program.
7. Upon successful completion of the NST program, as verified by the NST Program Director, the fellow(s) will be issued a certificate of completion by the GME office.
8. CAST programs are subject to all CAST accreditation requirements AND WVU GME NST requirements as above.

**Prerequisite Training Required:**

1. Applicants should have completed an ACGME accredited residency program.
2. Fellows must obtain a WV license or training permit prior to beginning the NST Program.
3. The fellow should be ABMS Board Eligible or Board Certified in the specialty most closely related to the NST program subspecialty.
4. If the fellow is an IMG, ECFMG certification is required. In addition, they must either have a current clinical J-1 Visa, be eligible for and willing to obtain a clinical J-1 visa or have

permanent resident status.

**Requirements for NST ACGME Recognition (i.e., programs with J-1 visa holders)**

1. Prior to fellow starting, all information must be added to ADS and the program must be activated as an NST Training Recognition program.
2. ***Within the first three months of a fellow's start*** in the NST program, the NST Program Director must complete an initial competency evaluation, for each fellow, *using the ACGME- accredited parent program's ACGME milestone evaluation*. A copy of this evaluation will be saved under the fellow in E-Value's Personal Records. Prior to achieving a successful initial competency evaluation, the fellow shall be under direct supervision by program faculty. Once the fellow has achieved competency in the initial (within the first three months) milestone evaluation they may qualify for indirect supervision. Note: Milestone evaluation may be done at anytime within the first 3 months.

**Exclusion criteria for NST ACGME Recognition (i.e., programs with J-1 visa holders)**

1. A program may not seek NST ACGME Recognition in an area of clinical focus for which ACGME specialty or subspecialty accreditation or ABMS member board certification is available. In this case, the program may choose to either not take J-1 visa holders or pursue full ACGME accreditation.

**Link to ACGME Recognition for Sponsoring Institutions with Non-Standard Training Programs:**  
<https://www.acgme.org/programs-and-institutions/institutions/non-standard-training-nst-recognition/>

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