

STRENGTHENING MEDICAL EDUCATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA



Accreditation Committee of FECASOG - ACOG (CAFA)

In 2003, the Federation of Central American Associations and Societies of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FECASOG) and ACOG partnered to strengthen medical education in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama through the development of an in-service examination and residency accreditation committee.



For 16 years, ACOG has collaborated with the CAFA committee, utilizing its renowned Council on Resident Education in Obstetrics and Gynecology (CREOG) as a model to co-develop a Central American-owned, evidence-based, sustainable method for ensuring high quality medical education for providers serving Latina women.

THE VALUE OF ACCREDITATION

Strengthening the health education of a country and its required infrastructures, sustainably strengthens a health system. Higher education accreditation is the backbone of this belief.



ACOG Fellows assist CAFA members on consultative site visits by first facilitating and then mentoring Central American hospital leaders to institutionalize regular quality assurance measures across the region. After each visit, residency programs receive a letter detailing specific areas of success, suggestions for improvement and whether or not they are deemed "accredited" and meet the national standard of medical education.

Data on how residency programs are performing in comparison with this standard is measured through the administration of an annual in-service examination.

Administration of an Exam

1

The **Psychometrician** leads an extensive training for CAFA members to learn how to write and validate test questions: a bank of 2,000+ questions are designed in different curriculum areas that align with CREOG standards

2

Test-takers from all 6 counties take the test on the same day: practicing ob-gyns and 4th year residents take a certification exam while 1st-3rd year residents take a practice residency exam

3

ACOG works in Collaboration with the psychometrician and CAFA members to enter demographic data for test-takers, grade exams, and notify those who successfully pass

4

CAFA members analyze the test results annually and pinpoint specific areas of their medical curriculum that need to be improved or strengthened within their respective countries or Central American region

CAFA EXAM RESULTS

In 2018, 320 doctors in Central America took the CAFA exams—

Costa Rica had a 76.7% pass rate in their Residents Exam (R1–R3)

Costa Rica had a 100% pass rate in their Certification Exams (R4 & Physicians in Practice)



Country	Residency	Certification
Costa Rica	30	6
Guatemala	54	35
Honduras	17	40
Panama	27	17
El Salvador	37	15
Nicaragua	33	9
TOTAL	198	122

AN EVIDENCE-BASED EXAMINEE

After the completion of the in-service examination, CAFA examinees receive a comprehensive score report which details their performance on each of the test curriculum areas, their score in comparison to other examinees in-country, and their score in relation to test-takers on the international scale.

CAFA members get an in-depth look at:

- how each country's examinees performed per curriculum area;
- how each country has performed on the test over time; &
- how each country's residency programs have performed over time

Consultants and Subject Matter Experts



Hany Soto de Alfaro, MD
Psychometrician

Dr. Soto leads extensive trainings for CAFA members to learn how to write and validate test questions



Lisa Flowers, MD, FACOG
Examination SME

Dr. Flowers provides expertise to the twelve delegates from Central America on the examination process.



Vacant
Accreditation SME

The Accreditation SME facilitates developing the infrastructure necessary to conduct visits to accredit residency programs.

CAFA INVESTIGATION

Final year residents of two CAFA countries took a preliminary exam in March 2019 to obtain a baseline data on their test scores.



HONDURAS



GUATEMALA

Over 3 months, Honduran residents will be given access to digital Prologs to supplement their studies, while Guatemala residents will receive no intervention.

In June, the two groups will be administered a follow up exam to assess the impact of Prologs on residency education. The results of the second exam will drive the next steps towards improving residency education and hopefully to provide all CAFA programs with access to Prologs.