

ASSESSMENT VERIFICATION PERIOD (AVP) GUIDELINES

Background

Prior to 2004, the only route to residency in Ontario for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) was through the Ontario International Medical Graduate Program in which candidates completed a 9-month clerkship and then applied directly to residency.

In November 2003, in response to the government's request to increase IMG entry at both the PGY1 and PGY2+ levels, IMG Ontario proposed the implementation of the Assessment Verification Period (AVP). The medical schools and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario (CPSO) developed the structure of the AVP, basing it on the existing Pre-Entry Assessment Program (PEAP). As of July 2004, a new stream of candidates were recruited through Direct Entry at the PGY1 level and were required to pass an AVP before entering residency. The CPSO used the existing PEAP regulations to include the AVP so the terms and conditions of the AVP is issued in the form of a PEAP certificate (see Appendix 2). The length of the AVP was initially variable at 8-12 weeks, but was standardized at 12 weeks in September 2006 at the request of the Ontario PG Deans and can be automatically extended up to an additional month without Registration Committee approval if required for non-remedial reasons.

Purpose

The AVP is a period of assessment to determine if the candidates can function at their appointed level of training prior to full acceptance in the program. The AVP provides an opportunity for the Program Director to:

- Assess the candidate's basic skills in internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry and general surgery, appropriate for practice in the chosen discipline.
- Ensure that the candidate is: mentally competent to practice medicine; has the ability to practice with decency, integrity and honesty and in accordance with the law; has sufficient knowledge, skills and judgment to engage in the kind of medical practice authorized by the certificate, can communicate effectively and displays an appropriately professional attitude.

Supervision:

The AVP assessment must take place within appropriate, supervised clinical activity in a multidisciplinary environment with patient input on an ongoing basis.

AVP candidates may sign their own orders; however, the clinical supervisor may choose to have orders co-signed initially, or for the duration of the assessment period. The certificate granted for the AVP states that the candidate may practice medicine *"under a level of supervision that is determined to be appropriate for the holder and the program of medical education and assessment, by a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario designated by the director of the program."* It is up to the

supervising physician to determine whether or not the candidate may write orders. In addition, there may be hospital policies which require AVP candidates to have their orders co-signed throughout the AVP.

Licensure

The candidate must hold a valid certificate of registration (Pre-Entry Assessment Program Certificate of Registration) from the CPSO to participate in the AVP. The AVP candidate:

- Is to function at the assigned training level during the assessment
- May be assigned to several rotations during the assessment period
- Is assessed for 12 weeks in duration

Once the AVP is finished, the AVP certificate is not valid, and the candidate cannot continue training until the CPSO has issued the Postgraduate Certificate. The AVP form must be submitted to the CPSO 2 – 3 days prior to the identified end date to avoid a break in the license and/or allow processing time for the changeover in license.

Application for extension of AVP can be made to CPSO in exceptional circumstances. Extension is for up to 4 weeks to allow for adequate assessment of the candidate, but not for remediation. The Postgraduate Dean must submit the request to CPSO. The CPSO Registration staff have the authority to extend the certificate up to 4 weeks without referral to the Registration Committee.

Assessment/Evaluation Format:

Program Directors must ensure that candidates are evaluated and given written feedback on a regular basis during the AVP. Evaluations and meetings should be well-documented, and should take place at the end of the 2nd week, a mid-rotation evaluation by the end of the 8th week, and a final evaluation at week 12. Attached is a sample of a more detailed evaluation form (sample attached Appendix 3).

If the candidate has been assigned to one or more rotations, the evaluation form completed by the supervisor should be forwarded to the Program Director for compilation in the final AVP evaluation form.

The final evaluation at the 12-week mark is to be completed by the Program Director on the AVP form and forwarded to the PG Dean's Office for authorization and further forwarding to the CPSO and CEHPEA.

Possible Outcomes:

1. Satisfactory

AVP candidate continues in the postgraduate training program.

2. Unsatisfactory

A candidate with an unsatisfactory assessment has his/her appointment with the University terminated. The PG Office informs the CPSO and CEHPEA by forwarding copy of completed AVP form.

3. Withdrawal

An AVP candidate may choose to withdraw from the AVP at any time. Withdrawal may have an impact on the terms of the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care's Return of Service Agreement. Candidates should consult the MOHLTC regarding their ROS obligations.

http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/providers/ministry/recruit/rep/rep/docs/ros_guidelines.pdf

4. Other

Candidates should refer to individual school and hospital policy regarding suspension or other potential outcomes.

Appeals

AVP candidates may choose to appeal the Unsatisfactory evaluation based on process issues only. The candidate would refer to the individual school's policy and procedures regarding appeals. If the appeal is upheld by the school, the candidate would repeat the AVP. The school would request that the CPSO extend the AVP certificate. For an extension of more than 4 weeks, approval of the CPSO Registration Committee would be required.

Reapplication of Failed/Withdrawn Candidates

- a) A candidate in the PGY2 Advanced stream may request the Program Director for consideration at the PGY1 level. Re-Entry at this level is at the discretion of the Program Director and will require CPSO approval.
- b) As a failed AVP is not creditable residency training, a candidate who failed an AVP (PGY1 or PGY2 level) may apply to the first iteration of CaRMS.
- c) Restriction on the re-application of failures are:
 - Cannot apply to the same specialty at the same level of entry. They may apply to a lower level of entry in the same specialty, if applicable (see (a) above).
 - May apply to a different specialty.

Vacation Requests during the AVP

The AVP is a high stakes assessment over a short timeframe. As such, candidates are discouraged from taking vacation during the AVP, as it may put their assessment in jeopardy.

Return of Service

Candidates must contact the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care regarding arrangements for Return of Service contracts.

Reference documents:

1. Flowchart: AVP Process
2. AVP Form