

# The New Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Next Accreditation System Milestones Evaluation System: What Is Expected and How Are Plastic Surgery Residency Programs Preparing?

Nyama M. Sillah, M.D.  
 Ahmed M. S. Ibrahim,  
 M.D., Ph.D.  
 Frank H. Lau, M.D.  
 Jinesh Shah, B.S.  
 Caroline Medin, B.S.  
 Bernard T. Lee, M.D.,  
 M.B.A.  
 Samuel J. Lin, M.D.

Boston, Mass.; and New Orleans, La.



**Background:** The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education Next Accreditation System milestones were implemented for plastic surgery programs in July of 2014. Forward progress through the milestones is an indicator of trainee-appropriate development, whereas regression or stalling may indicate the need for concentrated, targeted training.

**Methods:** Online software at [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com) was used to create a survey about the program's approaches to milestones and was distributed to program directors and administrators of 96 Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education–approved plastic surgery programs.

**Results:** The authors had a 63.5 percent response rate (61 of 96 plastic surgery programs). Most programs report some level of readiness, only 22 percent feel completely prepared for the Next Accreditation System milestones, and only 23 percent are completely satisfied with their planned approach for compliance. Seventy-five percent of programs claim to be using some form of electronic tracking system. Programs plan to use multiple tools to capture and report milestone data. Most programs (44.4 percent) plan to administer evaluations at the end of each rotation. Over 70 percent of respondents believe that the milestones approach would improve the quality of resident training. However, programs were less than confident that their current compliance systems would live up to their full potential.

**Conclusions:** The Next Accreditation System has been implemented nationwide for plastic surgery training programs. Milestone-based resident training is a new paradigm for residency training evaluation; programs are in the process of making this transition to find ways to make milestone data meaningful for faculty and residents. (*Plast. Reconstr. Surg.* 136: 181, 2015.)

The Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education was established in 1981 and has sought to accentuate program structure, to strengthen the amount and quality of resident education by striking a balance between service and education, and to provide constructive feedback to trainees.<sup>1</sup> Over the past three decades,

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From the Division of Plastic Surgery, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School; and the Division of Plastic Surgery, Louisiana State University.

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