Frequently Asked Questions: Laboratory Genetics and Genomics

Review Committee for Medical Genetics and Genomics
ACGME

Question	Answer
Introduction	
Does the Review Committee allow laboratory genetics and genomics programs to be longer than 24 months in length? *[Program Requirement: Int.C.]*	The Review Committee understands that historically the American Board of Medical Genetics and Genomics (ABMGG) allowed programs in both the 24-month and 36-month formats. The Committee determined that the accredited length of the educational program will be 24 months, but programs are free to offer additional training to post-doctoral fellows if they wish. Programs seeking to offer training outside of the 24-month accredited educational program should contact the ABMGG to determine a fellow's eligibility for certification.
Oversight	
Will the Review Committee accept laboratory genetics and genomics programs at institutions that do not sponsor an ACGME-accredited program in medical genetics and genomics? *[Program Requirement: I.B.1.a)]*	Yes. While it is ideal for laboratory genetics and genomics programs to be sponsored by institutions that have ACGME-accredited medical genetics and genomics programs, the Review Committee understands there may be circumstances where this is not feasible. The Review Committee will accredit laboratory genetics and genomics programs at institutions that do not sponsor ACGME-accredited medical genetics and genomics programs, as long as the fellowship program is able to demonstrate substantial compliance with the Program Requirements.
What are the Review Committee's expectations for the availability of private sleep/rest facilities since post-doctoral fellows do not have overnight responsibilities or shifts of extended time periods? *[Program Requirement: I.D.2.b)]*	The Review Committee expects that sleep/rest facilities be present within the Sponsoring Institution and be available if the post-doctoral fellow should become fatigued, but these facilities do not have to be located specifically within or adjacent to the laboratory facilities.
Does the program director have to submit additions or deletions of participating sites providing required education experiences less than one month FTE in duration?	No, the program director is only required to submit additions or deletions of participating sites providing required educational experiences if those experiences are one month FTE or greater. Program directors can choose to submit sites with less than one month FTE, but it is not a requirement.

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[Program Requirement: I.B.4.]	
Does the Review Committee accept only Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) certification? *[Program Requirement: I.D.1.a)]*	All laboratories affiliated with the program must be CLIA-certified. Programs may also hold College of American Pathologists (CAP) Laboratory Accreditation, which includes CLIA certification. The Review Committee considers CAP Laboratory Accreditation to be an aspiration goal for programs.
Personnel	
Does the Review Committee allow co-program directors? *[Program Requirements: II.A.1. and II.A.3.b).(1)]*	The Review Committee does not allow co-program directors. There must be one faculty member appointed as program director with authority and accountability for the overall program. The Review Committee does, however, allow for associate program directors. The Review Committee requires an associate program director if the program director is certified by the ABMGG in only clinical molecular genetics and genomics or only clinical cytogenetics and genomics. This associate program director must be certified in the complementary specialty area, or certified in laboratory genetics and genomics, and should assist with education in the complementary specialty area.
What other qualifications would the Review Committee judge as acceptable for program faculty members? *[Program Requirement: II.B.3).(a).(1)]*	The Review Committee recognizes that some qualified individuals may have certification in molecular genetic pathology, and would evaluate those qualifications on an individual basis. Appropriately qualified genetic counselors or laboratory technicians who serve in teaching roles are also acceptable.
Does the program director count as one of the three required core faculty members? *[Program Requirement: II.B.4.c)]*	Yes, the program director counts as a core faculty member and can count toward the requirement for three core faculty members.
Can the program director also be the program coordinator? *[Program Requirement: II.C.1.]*	No. The program director and the program coordinator are two distinct roles, and cannot both be fulfilled by the same person. The program coordinator is intended to provide administrative support for the program director to allow the program director to target his/her educational efforts.
Post-Doctoral Fellow Appointments	
If a program accepts a fellow holding a PhD in a field related to genetics and the fellow intends to seek board certification through	Programs must be aware that completing an ACGME-accredited post-doctoral fellowship program by itself may not be sufficient to meet the ABMGG eligibility

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the ABMGG, are there any considerations that should be taken under advisement? *[Program Requirements: III.A.1.a).(1) and III.A.1.a).(1).(a)]*	requirements for certification. Programs must contact the ABMGG directly to determine an applicant or fellow's eligibility for certification. Programs may, in rare situations, accept a fellow with a PhD in a field not related to genetics who has post-doctoral experience in genetics and genomics. Acceptance of such a fellow is at the program director's discretion, but again, the program must contact the ABMGG directly to determine the individual's eligibility for certification.
Educational Program	
What are the Review Committee's expectations regarding post-doctoral fellows demonstrating competence in respect and responsiveness to diverse patient populations, as post-doctoral fellows do not frequently interact with patients? *[Program Requirement: IV.B.1.a).(1).(e)]*	The Review Committee understands that post-doctoral fellows will have limited opportunity to demonstrate competence in respect for diverse patient populations, as they interact with patients so infrequently. The Committee recommends that faculty members and others evaluating post-doctoral fellows during interactions with patients focus on this area so that competence can be evaluated.
What are the Review Committee's expectations regarding post-doctoral fellows communicating with patients and families, as post-doctoral fellows do not frequently interact with patients? *[Program Requirements: IV.B.1.e), IV.B.1.e).(1), IV.B.1.e).(1).(a)-(b), and IV.B.1.e).(2)]*	The Review Committee understands that post-doctoral fellows will have limited opportunity to communicate with patients and their families, as they interact with patients so infrequently. The Committee recommends that faculty members and others evaluating post-doctoral fellows during interactions with patients focus on this area so that competence can be evaluated, even during limited interactions.
Must the required eight months of constitutional/germline testing and the eight months of experience in cancers be completely separate? *[Program Requirements: IV.C.2.a).(3) and IV.C.2.a).(4)]*	No, the eight months of constitutional/germline testing and the eight months of experience in cancers can overlap as appropriate.

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Do post-doctoral fellows have to spend time in a specific clinical area of concentration? *[Program Requirement: IV.C.2.b)]*	No, post-doctoral fellows do not have to spend time in a specific clinical area of concentration. However, if they choose to do so, this time must not exceed six months.
What does "integrated" mean in the context of having cytogenetics and molecular genetics education integrated throughout the program? *[Program Requirement: IV.C.2.c)]*	Education in and exposure to cytogenetics and molecular genetics must be distributed equally or close to equally throughout the 24 months of the educational program, as opposed to doing education in one experience after education in the other. 12 months of cytogenetics education and experiences followed by 12 months of molecular genetics education and experiences would not fulfill this requirement.
What are the Review Committee's expectations for post-doctoral fellows' participation in patient case conferences? *[Program Requirement: IV.C.4.a)]*	The Review Committee expects that this requirement be fulfilled through post-doctoral fellow participation in patient case conferences such as tumor boards or post-clinic conferences, and not in review of laboratory cases.
Will the Review Committee accept presentations made at the local level to fulfill the requirement for post-doctoral fellow scholarly activity? *[Program Requirement: IV.D.3.a).(1)]*	Yes, the Review Committee accepts presentations made at the international, national, regional, or local level to fulfill the scholarly activity requirement.
Evaluation	
Does the program director have to appoint a separate Clinical Competency Committee (CCC) and Program Evaluation Committee (PEC) for the laboratory genetics and genomics program? *[Program Requirements: V.A.1. and V.C.1.]*	Each accredited program must have its own dedicated CCC and PEC, separate from the CCC and PEC for the medical genetics and genomics and/or clinical biochemical genetics program(s), although it may be appropriate for the membership to overlap or be identical to that of another program. Faculty members can serve on more than one committee across programs.
How can small programs ensure that post-doctoral fellows' annual written evaluations of faculty members remain confidential?	Small programs can combine evaluations with larger programs (such as the medical genetics and genomics program, if available) or other learners rotating through the program and report aggregate results. The designated institutional official should collect

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[Program Requirements: V.B.1. and V.B.1.b)]	all evaluations and report the results with the evaluator *de-identified* to the program director.
The Learning and Working Environment	
What are the Review Committee's expectations regarding post-doctoral fellow education and participation in patient safety events and adverse events? *[Program Requirements: VI.A.1.a).(3)-VI.A.1.a).(4).(b)]*	The Review Committee understands that post-doctoral fellows do not participate in patient safety in the same way that many other graduate medical education programs' residents/fellows do. The Committee expects programs to focus education on patient safety around proper handling of biological samples and patient information, especially when working in interprofessional teams.
What are the Review Committee's expectations regarding post-doctoral fellow education and participating in quality improvement activities? *[Program Requirements: VI.A.1.b)-VI.A.1.b).(3).(a).(i)]*	The Review Committee understands that post-doctoral fellows have infrequent interactions with patients, so the opportunities for quality improvement may be different from other graduate medical education programs' residents/fellows. Examples of quality improvement opportunities for post-doctoral fellows include improvement of lab processes and/or proper handling of biological samples.
How should programs handle transitions of care, since post-doctoral fellows do not frequently interact with patients? *[Program Requirements: VI.E.3.-VI.E.3.e)]*	The Review Committee understands that post-doctoral fellows have infrequent interactions with patients, however, fellows should still be given education in how to maximize effective communication and minimize errors during hand-offs of biological samples and patient information
Other	
How will the Review Committee interpret requirements that mention clinical care and patient care, since post-doctoral fellows do not participate in direct patient or clinical care?	In the context of post-doctoral laboratory training, the terms "clinical care" and "patient care" will be interpreted to represent clinical laboratory training.