

# CAAM-HP's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary: An Admirer Celebrates Your Past, Looks With You to the Future

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- History made!

# 2003: An Exemplary Launch

- CAAM-HP created **collaboratively** within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
- Prompted by a commitment to **quality**
- Framed to provide an **inclusive** commitment to the health professions
- Organized to ensure **effective** leadership and oversight

# Compelling Objectives

- ***Sustaining excellence*** in medical and health professions education
- ***Creating efficiency*** in regulating “standards and quality” of these programmes of education
- Obtaining ***international recognition***
- ***Building regional confidence***

# DISCUSSION

What additional objectives for CAAM-HP have emerged since 2003?

Are other objectives emerging at the present time?

Or likely to emerge in the future?

# History Made!

2011: CAAM-HP reviewed by World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) + Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER)

2012: CAAM-HP earns recognition (first accreditor to earn recognition)



# For the best of reasons

- CAAM-HP recognized
  - For the **transparency** of its policies and procedures
  - For its **consistency** with international norms
  - For the **information** it provides on accreditation
  - For the **comprehensiveness** of its guidelines and instructions
  - For the **high quality** of its site visit teams

# Why your success matters

- Beyond the Caribbean
- Beyond the health sciences

# Health Sciences Accreditation: *A Fundamental Influence*

- No other form of accreditation receives (and deserves) such broad public and political support
- No other form of accreditation is more readily valued by the public
- In the US the tradition of peer review *began* with the accreditation of medical and health professions education

# For all these reasons

- It is vital for accreditors to understand current debate concerning changing environments, peer review, and accreditor authority
- It is important to consider what pressures are being brought to bear—in the US and elsewhere

# A Fundamental Question:

Can accreditation keep pace with the accelerating rate of change in the higher education environment?

# Of course!

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## No way!

*Accreditation “is costly, parasitic, self-perpetuating, and prone to abuse ... doomed to fail.”*

*–Richard A. DeMillo, (US) Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Universities, December 2013*

# A decade of concern in the US (I)

- **2002** American Council of Trustees and Alumni: *Can College Accreditation Live Up to Its Promise?*
- **2006** Spellings Report (US Department of Education) seeks “transformation of accreditation”
- **2007** ACTA: *Why Accreditation Doesn't Work and What Policymakers Can Do About It*
- **2008** (US) Council on Higher Education Accreditation: *U.S. Accreditation and the Future of Quality Assurance*
- **2009** US Department of Education Inspector General recommends “limiting, suspending, or terminating” the status of the Higher Learning Commission (the largest regional accreditor in the US)



# A decade of concern (2)

- **2010** (US) Center for College Affordability and Productivity: *The Inmates Running the Asylum?*
- **2012** “Alternative recommendations” from National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity describe “a broken system”
- **2012** American Council on Education: *Assuring Academic Quality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Self-regulation in a New Age*
- **2013** President Obama suggests consideration of “an alternative to accreditation”

What are the issues?



# The environment has changed— and not just in the US!

- Increasing demand
- Increased costs—and accountability
- Evolving vectors
  - Different kinds of institutions
  - Concerns regarding qualified, full-time faculty
  - New technologies
  - New approaches to academic credit
  - New budgeting methods

# As accreditation's mandate has expanded in the US and elsewhere ...

Defining “a college” →

Assuring transfer of credits →

Qualifying institutions for federal student  
assistance →

Promoting institutional and programmatic  
strengthening →

Requiring greater accountability

## ... so have concerns about accreditation

- “It’s a ‘You scratch my back . . . .’ system.”
- “Specialized accreditation is coercive: ‘Increase this program’s funding or else!’”
- “The costs of accreditation outweigh its benefits.”
- “A protective insistency on confidentiality trumps the public’s right to know.”
- “Some parts of accreditation’s mandate are in competition with other parts.”
- “Trivial differences among accreditors in process and vocabulary confuse the public unnecessarily.”

# DISCUSSION

Are there concerns regarding accreditation that you have heard?

Or that you share?

# Accreditation has responded

- Emphasizing quality documented by “accountability loops”
- Reforming process to offer greater efficiency, flexibility (note CAAM-HP’s objectives)
- Creating platforms for encouraging and sharing innovation
- Increasing visibility
- Expanding governance and participation

Nothing more  
needs to be done?



# There are indications to the contrary—at least in the US

- Opinion leaders and the public remain poorly informed and often confused about the accreditation process
- Information needed to compare institutions remains insufficient and opaque
- Many institutions regard accreditation as burdensome rather than helpful
- Affordability has emerged as an urgent issue

Areas now receiving  
further attention

# Consensus and alignment

- Which differences among standards, protocols, actions, and vocabularies are meaningful?
- Which should be eliminated in favor of greater public understanding?
- Which should be preserved and explained?

# Credibility

What practical reforms could enhance credibility

- Within the accreditor community?
- Between accreditors and the accredited?
- Between accreditors and the government?
- Between accreditors and opinion leaders?
- Between accreditation and the public?

# Efficiency

What strategies not now in use might preserve (or enhance) quality oversight while reducing its intrusiveness, frequency, and cost?

# Agility and creativity

What more might accreditation do to respond to innovation and creativity?

What more might accreditation do to ***anticipate and encourage*** innovation and creativity?

# Decisiveness and transparency

- How can accreditation expedite its processes while avoiding any compromise of due process?
- How can accreditation increase the visibility of its processes and results while protecting the objectivity of peer review and honoring necessary assumptions of confidentiality?

# A shared vision

Can accreditation assume a lead role in articulating a vision of higher education that is coherent, principled, and forward looking—a vision above all of what 21<sup>st</sup> century students need?



# Looking to the future

- Will CAAM-HP maintain its leadership in ensuring the consistency of its accrediting standards, procedures, actions, and terminology with international norms?
- Can CAAM-HP achieve even greater transparency with regard to its policies, procedures, actions?
- Can CAAM-HP continue to increase its efficiency so as to promote cost-savings for institutions and programs?

# Looking to the future

- Are there ways in which CAAM-HP might increase its flexibility over time so as to recognize quality differentials among institutions and programs?
- Are there ways in which CAAM-HP might exercise leadership in discussions of affordability and productivity?
- How might CAAM-HP more vigorously encourage and evaluate new approaches to creating and affirming learning in the health sciences?

# DISCUSSION

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- Leadership in discussions of affordability and productivity?

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- Even greater transparency with regard to policies, procedures, actions?
- Further increases in efficiency to promote cost-savings for institutions and programs?
- Increased flexibility to recognize quality differentials among institutions and programs?
- Leadership in discussions of affordability and productivity?
- Encouragement and evaluation of new approaches to creating and affirming learning in the health sciences?

**Which do you regard as most urgent?  
Most deserving attention?**



# Advantages remain advantageous

- Peer review offers an economical, collegial, relatively efficient, and knowledgeable approach to institutional and programmatic evaluation
- The structure of CAAM-HP accreditation mirrors that of the health professions community and responds to the priorities of its members and member states

The question that has been asked:

**Is Accreditation the Best  
Possible Form  
Of Quality Assurance**

In theory?

Perhaps not.

# In practice

- Accreditation has offered effective, respected, economical and efficient assurance and stimulus for more than a century—and has demonstrated the capacity to continue doing so effectively
- Accreditation has evolved in important ways
- Accreditation continues to evolve

# Apologies to Winston Churchill

Accreditation in its present form may be the worst possible form of quality assurance—  
*except of course for all the other forms that might replace it.*

But the question remains . . . .

Can Accreditation Keep Pace With  
***CHANGE?***



# There may be an answer in . . . .

- The launch of CAAM-HP
- The objectives of CAAM-HP
- The structure of CAAM-HP
- The priorities of CAAM-HP
- The history of CAAM-HP's first decade
- CAAM-HP's international recognition

Namely . . .

**YES!**

# DISCUSSION

What points should have been made—but haven't been?

What questions should have been asked—but haven't been?

What observations do you have that should have been heard—but haven't been?

Congratulations on your decade of  
accomplishment and recognition.

Best wishes for the next decade!

**See you in 2024!**

**Thank you!**