Every fall, each ACGME-accredited program is required to review, update, and submit its program information as part of the annual update. One of the biggest challenges programs face as part of that update is to keep track of their resident and faculty scholarly activity and enter it into the Accreditation Data System, also known as ADS. The number and nature of a program scholarly activity are among the most important types of data the Review Committee-International, or RCI, needs in order to assess how a program is performing when it comes time for the annual program review. Failure to provide accurate and complete information is one of the most common and preventable citations programs receive as a result of their annual review. One of the reasons is, no doubt, that it is challenging to capture all of a program's resident and especially faculty scholarly activities. And it's nearly always the documentation of that scholarly activity that results in a citation.

While tracking and entering that data seems like a chore, it doesn't have to be that way. Today, we're going to cover the essential steps for documenting your core faculty's and resident's scholarly activity data and share some pointers for maximizing success when you finally hit that submit button. Ultimately, the information and best practices shared in this video are designed to help you create an effective, high-quality submission of your program's scholarly activity data to the RCI as part of the annual update.

As you can see, the purpose of the faculty requirements for scholarly activity are to ensure that faculty establish an environment of scholarly activity for each program. This means engaging in and producing enough diverse and in-depth scholarship to create an environment suitable for supporting residents and fellows in the development of critical thinking, literature review, and research skills, as well as the principles of evidence-based medicine.

But how exactly are faculty expected to do this? Several activities and procedures need to be in place in order to achieve this goal. First, faculty members must regularly participate in clinical discussions, rounds, journal clubs, and conferences. It's good practice. Indeed, it's required by some specialty RCs to keep a record of which faculty and residents attend the program's didactic sessions. In addition, individual faculty members also need to show evidence of scholarship by engaging in a variety of different types of activity. At the very least, some members of the faculty should have peer-reviewed funding, publications of original research, or review articles in peer-reviewed journals or chapters in textbooks. Some faculty should also demonstrate scholarly activity in the form of publishing or presenting case reports or presenting in a clinical series at local, regional, or national professional society meetings. So for example, if you have a faculty that gives a case presentation at a local professional conference in their specialty, that counts as scholarly activity.

It's important to note that these criteria are part of the foundational rather than the advanced specialty program requirements, requirements to which all programs are expected to adhere. The advanced specialty requirements may have additional requirements for scholarly activity with which you need to become familiar. Be sure to contact the ACGME-I executive director or accreditation administrator to clarify any additional requirements regarding the type or amount of scholarly activity your specialty may require.

Whether through giving feedback to residents at case conferences or serving as a mentor to trainees as they work on their own research projects, faculty play a critical role in creating a supportive environment of inquiry within a residency or fellowship. It's their role to help residents learn new about good research design so that they recognize and practice good medicine and to help them navigate the processes and protocols of the investigative process. Even if a resident or fellow doesn't go on to become a researcher, they do go on to practice the critical thinking skills they need to deliver effective patient care, a behavior learned in their training program that, as David Asch's research shows, persists long after graduation.

The foundational requirements also detail the minimum expectations the review committees have for residents and fellows. At minimum, a program must include a research component to their curriculum, one that helps residents and fellows understand the basic principles of research, how to analyze and evaluate research findings and apply it to patient care. These skills are vital to sustaining lifelong learning in a physician's development. In fact, it's so critical that the ACGME-I institutional requirements require that the sponsoring institution as well as the program allocate sufficient resources to support residency and fellowship scholarly activity. Once again, you should check your advanced specialty program requirements to see what additional specifications the Review Committee-International may require of your trainees. As always, the executive director and RCI support team are available to answer any questions you have about how to interpret the requirements.

Once you know what the RC International expects of your faculty and residents, the next step is to prepare your material for entry into the ADS scholarly activity template. Perhaps the most difficult part of the process is collecting new information from busy faculty on the scholarly activities in which they've been engaged over the last year. Developing a standardized approach to collecting that information from your faculty, as well as setting clear expectations about the data you are requesting, is essential to your success and populating the scholarly activity template in ADS. Provide faculty with a deadline well ahead of the deadline for the annual update. That way you can make sure you have ample time to accurately enter the data into ADS once you receive it. When setting expectations, be sure to ask the faculty to give you not just publications but the specific titles, dates, and venues of any presentations they've given, including visiting professorships, and to include any education-related committee membership or grant activity that they've been involved with over the past training year.

To help you collect the pertinent information, download the Excel version of the faculty scholarly activity template. You can send this to your faculty so they have the definitions of what counts as scholarly activity and what details they need to provide in order to accurately complete the online version in ADS. Once a faculty member has returned the form, separate the publications with PubMed IDs from the other publications. It's also helpful to separate the peer-reviewed publications from those articles that are not peer-reviewed, as most review committees will want to see this information in the faculty's CVs. While a program's faculty members should note and document the peer-reviewed publications they produce and distinguish them from the non-peer-reviewed articles in their CV,. They don't always provide that information. You can tell the difference between them by checking a journal title online. Journals that use peer review will state that in the about section on their websites, as well as whether their articles are indexed in the PubMed database.

Once you have organized your program's scholarly activity data, you're ready to enter the information in ADS. There are two places in ADS where scholarly activity is entered. The first is in the scholarly activity template, which we will delve into in a moment. The second location in ADS that scholarly activity is entered when requested by the RC is in the faculty CV sections. Programs have to complete this section only when a program is preparing an application, is on initial accreditation, or is preparing for a site visit. So let's focus for now on the online faculty scholarly activity template your program will complete every year in ADS.

Once you've logged into the system and located your program's faculty scholarly activity entry page, click on the add button next to the specific faculty member whose activities you want to enter. Begin with those publications that have a PubMed ID. To complete this section, simply place the publication's PubMed ID in the field and the rest of the information for the article will be pulled into the template. Note that a PubMed publication may be documented as scholarly activity for one year only. It cannot be used by an author over multiple years. If a PubMed article has multiple coauthors from the same program, however, it can be listed in each of the individual faculty's CVs. Each faculty can list up to four publications with PubMed IDs in a given annual update. Always double check your data entry has fact called up the correct article before leaving this section, as it's easy to make an error when entering the ID numbers.

A lot more than just publications can count toward faculty scholarly activity. The next section in the scholarly activity template requires the total number of abstracts, posters, and presentations given at regional, national, or international meetings during the previous year. You are not required to enter titles, only their numerical total.

Next, enter the number of other presentations given by the faculty. Other presentations may include those given at grand rounds and invited professorships, while materials developed can include things like curriculum assessments or content for computer-based educational modules. Non-peer-reviewed publications may service scholarly activity. However, some RCs do not give credit for opinion pieces. Be sure to ask your RC team whether these will be counted in your program's scholarly activity.

Next, enter the total number of chapters or textbooks published in the previous year, then the total number of grants for which program faculty members had leadership roles. Unlike some types of scholarly activity, grants can be spread out over multiple years and include many faculty and even trainees if they've participated in the grant writing and award process.

Finally, you need to answer two simple yes or no questions. First, did this faculty have an active leadership role in the past year, such as serving on a committee or governing board of a national medical organization? Or perhaps they sat on an editorial board for a peer review journal. If so, enter yes on the form. The final question is important, as it serves as a catchall category for activities that don't fit into the previous categories. Any faculty responsibility for developing a seminar, or conference series, or even coordinating a course may be included. This includes any didactic training within the sponsoring institution or its programs, though it does not include single presentations such as individual lectures or conferences.

The interface for resident and fellow scholarly activity is similar to that of the faculty in ADS. You will note, however, that the standards for residents and fellows are more appropriate for their level of experience when it comes to participation in research. Similarly, the column in the resident fellow template that pertains to lectures and presentations is not as extensive as the faculty template. For instance, individual case presentations and grand rounds can be counted as resident scholarly activity. A well-planned quality improvement project may also be included. Once you've saved your data, be sure to print out a copy for your records.

Data entry into the faculty's CVs is altogether different. Here, you are asked to enter no more than the most recent five years of a faculty's scholarly activity. Because this material is entered in narrative rather than numeric form, it is much easier to make an error in this section.

The most common mistakes made in completing the faculty CVs are including publications older than five years, including publications in press, forgetting to input a date on presentations or publications, forgetting page numbers, counting a non-peer-reviewed publication as a peer-reviewed publication. And finally, it's always best to organize the scholarly activity data listed in your faculty and resident CVs in chronological order.

In summary, remember the following tips to help you make your documentation of scholarly activity more effective. Know the common and specialty requirements regarding the scholarly activity. Be sure to prepare your faculty by telling them what is expected of them. Start your planning and data-gathering early, and provide faculty with the due date for submitting their annual scholarly activity to you well ahead of the annual update deadline. Make sure data for each scholarly activity entry is complete and that each scholarly activity entry is entered into the correct category. Finally, organize the scholarly activity so it will be easy for a reviewer to read.

Don't forget, whenever you have any questions, contact the ACGME-I accreditation administrator or executive director. They're always happy to provide additional guidance on how to enter your program scholarly activity into ADS. Thank you for joining us and for your commitment and contribution to graduate medical education.