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The Division of Graduate Medical Education

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Division of Graduate Medical Education

Graduate medical education in the United States has undergone significant changes and experienced tremendous pressures in the past several years. Declining reimbursements, exploding educational requirements, increasing demands on teaching faculty to produce clinical revenues, decreases in ancillary hospital personnel, and profound changes in the nature of many medical specialties have presented unique and sometimes daunting challenges to those who educate our future physicians.

In October 1999, the American College of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) made a scheduled site visit to Thomas Jefferson University Hospital in order to assess the state of residency and fellowship training. In response to several issues articulated at the time of the site visit, and with the express goal of achieving and maintaining excellence in all graduate medical education programs at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, the Division of Graduate Medical Education was formed within the Dean's Office of Jefferson Medical College. Initially conceptualized by Dean Thomas Nasca, the division is charged with the oversight and enhancement of all aspects of residency and fellowship education within the hospital. The location of the division within the Office of the Dean offers a unique opportunity for the college and hospital to work together toward the mutual goal of ensuring excellence in graduate medical education.

The division is headed by Cynthia G. Silber, MD, and David L. Paskin, MD, Associate Deans for Graduate Medical Education. They will be supported in their endeavors by Timothy Brigham, PhD, Associate Dean for Organizational Development, and by the Office of House Staff Affairs, under the supervision of Debra Cifelli, Director of the Office of House Staff Affairs.

Each member of the Division brings extensive experience in medical education to the Dean's Office. Dr. Silber is the former Residency Program Director for the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. Dr. Paskin is the former Chair of Surgery at the Pennsylvania Hospital. Dr. Brigham, a member of the Dean's staff for many years, brings expertise in education and in program development. Ms. Cifelli has been the Director of the Office of House Staff Affairs at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital since 1993.

The initial efforts of the division have been focused on the performance of ACGME-mandated site visits to each of the 56 residency and fellowship programs at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. The goals of site visits are:

- (1) to gather data for presentation to the institutional GME committee in order to ensure that the programs are meeting the general and special requirements set forth by the ACGME in their respective specialties; and
- (2) to provide consultative support to those programs having difficulty in meeting particular requirements.

After completing multiple visits, the division has noted with interest the recurrence of certain programmatic issues across specialty lines. The division looks forward to working together with the hospital and the residency and fellowship programs to

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develop solutions to common problems encountered by many Jefferson Medical College graduate medical education programs.

Issues identified for discussion and resolution include the underachieving resident; helping program directors and departments manage the conflicts produced by the need for both clinical productivity and residency administration and teaching; faculty development; the implementation and assessment of the six general competencies which will be required by the ACGME of all residency programs; curriculum development in those areas common to all graduate medical education program; and promoting awareness of Jefferson's commitment to excellence in graduate medical education in the medical community at large.

Faculty and residents are encouraged to contact the division with any and all issues pertaining to residency or fellowship. Our goal is to be a resource to the entire graduate medical education community at Jefferson, towards the achievement of excellence in graduate medical education in all specialties at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital.

To reach the Division, please contact either Dr. Silber at (215) 955-0242, or Dr. Paskin at (215) 955-5017.

About the Author

Cynthia Silber, MD, is Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Education at Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University.