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# On quality control and importance of European postgraduate medical specialty assessments

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## **Content of the letter**

A careful literature review on postgraduate medical assessment methods has revealed that little seems to be published ([Mathysen D.G.P. et al., 2013](#); [Calcagni M., 2013](#)). Nevertheless, European postgraduate medical assessments are currently gaining popularity.

The *Council for European Medical Specialty Assessments* (UEMS-CESMA) was created by the *European Union of Medical Specialists* (UEMS) in 2007 as a discussion platform between the various European Boards and Sections organising such European postgraduate medical assessments (currently UEMS-CESMA counts 50 affiliations, of which the majority of assessments allow recognised specialists and/or residents-in-training).

These European postgraduate medical assessments are considered as excellence labels demonstrating that the candidate meets the European discipline-related standards (details in

the UEMS-curriculum and training requirements). Given their high quality, many assessments are adopted by various European countries as being (partially) equivalent to or part of national final assessments in several specialties (still ongoing process). Harmonisation of assessment standards, which implies creation of quality assurance and control mechanisms, has become extremely important and essential.

As a majority of these assessments include eligibility for candidates of non-UEMS (European) countries, it is clear that not only the entire European medical community is concerned, but also international medical doctors.

Therefore, as a measure of quality assurance, UEMS-CESMA is publishing guidelines, which will allow an opportunity for harmonisation, but will also presuppose a guarantee of a minimum quality level for candidates across different medical specialties participating in these assessments.

Finally, UEMS-CESMA has effectively implemented an appraisal procedure for assessments (first procedures have been undertaken). It is expected that in the near future results can be revealed that will certainly contribute to further development of UEMS-CESMA guidelines on practical organisational aspects and quality improvement of European postgraduate medical assessments.

## **References**

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