

Obtaining a License to Practice in Alberta

The College of Physicians & Surgeons of Alberta regulates the practice of medicine in Alberta. Family physicians and specialists who want to practice independently in Alberta must obtain a medical license from the College to be able to diagnose and treat patients, order investigations or write prescriptions. To obtain a license, a physician must also have:

- Registration with the Medical Council of Canada; and
- Certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada or the College of Family Physicians of Canada

To fulfill these two requirements, an international medical graduate in Alberta must complete the following steps:

1. Physician Credential Registry of Canada (PCRC) (a division of the Medical Council of Canada)

PCRC is an online repository of source-verified medical credentials for international medical graduates applying to the majority of medical regulatory authorities in Canada. To be eligible to write the Medical Council of Canada examinations, candidates must first submit their credentials to the PCRC to begin the verification process.

2. Evaluating Examination (MCCEE)

All graduates of medical schools outside of Canada and the U.S. must pass the Medical Council of Canada Evaluation Examination. The MCCEE is a general assessment of the candidate's basic medical skills and knowledge. The examination questions cover the following domains: Child Health, Maternal Health, Adult Health, Mental Health, and Population Health and Ethics. This is a four-hour computer-based examination, and is a prerequisite for eligibility to sit for the MCC Qualifying Examinations. This examination is offered in Canada as well as countries outside of Canada. The current fees for this examination are \$1,250 for first-time applicants (\$1,100 fee and \$150 application fee) and \$1,100 for re-applicants.

3. Qualification Examination Part I (MCCQE1)

This is a one-day, computer-based test that assesses the competence of all candidates who have obtained their medical degree (graduates from Canadian medical programs and international medical graduates). The MCCQE1 is required for entry into supervised clinical practice in postgraduate training programs. This examination assesses knowledge, clinical skills, and attitudes as outlined by the Medical Council of Canada's Objectives. The exam consists of multiple choice questions and a clinical decision making component, which consists of short-menu and short-answer write-in questions. The examination is offered twice yearly in Canada. The fee for this examination is \$720.

4. Post-Graduate (Residency) Training

After successful completion of the MCCQE1, IMGs may apply for residency. For residency seats in Alberta, candidates must apply through the Alberta International Medical Graduates Program. For residency seats in other provinces, candidates may apply to the Canadian Residency Matching Service.

1. Alberta International Medical Graduates Program (AIMGP)

The AIMG Program's primary role is to assess applicants for entry into Post-Graduate Year 1 training in Alberta. The Program provides IMGs access to a defined number of postgraduate medical education (residency) positions in high-need specialties. These residency positions are funded by the Alberta government and align

with identified provincial physician resource needs. In 2009, candidates who were not matched in the AIMGP process were eligible to apply to the second iteration of CaRMS.

2. Canadian Residency Matching Service (CaRMS)

FOR RESIDENCY IN OTHER LOCATIONS IN CANADA: In 2010, the match for entry level (R-1) postgraduate positions in all 17 Canadian medical schools will be offered in two iterations. The first iteration will include all graduating students and prior-year graduates from Canada and the US who meet the basic eligibility criteria of CaRMS. The first iteration of the Match will also be open for International Medical Graduates who meet the basic eligibility criteria of CaRMS; who have graduated from an international medical school listed with the International Medical Education Directory (IMED), published by the Foundation for the Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER); and who have written and passed the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination (MCCEE) or are scheduled to write the September **OR** November, 2009 MCCEE.

5. Qualification Examination Part II (MCCQE2)

The Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination Part II is a three-hour Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) that assesses the competence of candidates, specifically the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for medical licensure in Canada prior to entry into independent clinical practice. This examination consists of a series of five-minute and ten-minute clinical stations. At each station, a brief written statement introduces a clinical problem and directs the candidate to appropriately examine a standardized (simulated) patient as well as perform designated activities such as obtaining a focused history, conducting a focused physical examination, or assessing and addressing the patient's issues. Candidates may be asked to interpret x-rays or the results of other investigations, make a diagnosis and/or write admission orders. This examination is offered twice yearly. Fees for the MCCQE2 are \$1650.

Alternative Routes to Licensure in Alberta for IMGs:

1. The RCPSC and the CFPC may allow IMGs to challenge certification exams if they deem the IMG's medical education program to be comparable to a Canadian program. Certification by one of these national colleges is required for full registration in Alberta.
2. The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta may grant conditional or provisional licenses to eligible IMGs. Eligible physicians are placed on the Special Register of the College and are permitted to practice with restrictions. Such licenses may lead to full licensure. For more information on eligibility for conditional and provisional licenses contact the College at www.cpsa.ab.ca or e-mail registration@cpsa.ab.ca.

AIMG Program Eligibility Requirements

For more information on the AIMG Program, please consult their website at www.aimg.ca.

The Alberta International Medical Graduates Program runs a competitive and merit based assessment and orientation program to determine if qualified IMGs have the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to enter a residency program. The assessment program consists of an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), structured interviews and a summative review. Successful candidates proceed to a four-month clinical orientation and evaluation program prior to entry into post-graduate residency positions.

In order to be eligible to participate in Alberta's International Medical Graduate Program, an applicant may be:

- a graduate of a medical school outside of Canada and the United States, or
- a final year medical student in a medical school outside of Canada and the United States, or
- a graduate of an accredited Osteopathy school in the United States

The medical school has to have been in existence for more than 10 years and listed in the FAIMER / International Medical Education (IMED) Directory.

The following is a list of basic eligibility requirements for all applicants who apply for residency education positions in Alberta through the Alberta International Medical Graduate Program. Eligibility claims must be supported with documentary evidence that has been translated into English and notarized as outlined in Supporting Documents.

1. Residency – all applicants must fit one of the following criteria:

- Living in Alberta for at least 6 consecutive weeks immediately prior to the application deadline
- Alberta high school attendee for 2 or more years
- Alberta institution of higher learning attendee for 2 or more years

2. Canadian Status – all applicants must fit one of the following criteria:

- Canadian born citizen
- Naturalized Canadian
- Permanent resident
- Landed immigrant

3. Fluency in English – all applicants must demonstrate fluency of English. If your first language is **not** English, you must submit passing scores on all components on one of the following tests:

- Test of English as a Foreign Language – Internet Based Test (TOEFL-IBT)
- International English Language Testing System (IELTS)

4. Medical School diploma

All IMG applicants must have:

- Completed an undergraduate medical degree (e.g., MD, MBBS, MCChB, in allopathic medicine in a medical school outside of the Canada and the United States that has been in existence for a minimum of 10 years and listed in the FAIMER / International Medical Education Directory

All Final Year Medical Students applicants must:

- Be in the final year of medical school outside of Canada and the United States that has been in existence for a minimum of 10 years, listed in the FAIMER / International Medical Education Directory
- Pass the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination Part 1 prior to the start of Externship.

5. Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination

All applicants applying for assessment must have:

- received a passing grade on the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination (MCCEE).

6. Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination Part 1

All IMG applicants applying for assessment must have:

- received a passing grade on the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Examination Part 1 (MCCQE1).

All Final Year Medical Students applying for assessment must:

- provide evidence of registration for the Spring or Fall examination of the current year and provide a copy of the 'registration complete and accepted' email notification letter from the Medical Council of Canada in their application package

The AIMG Program cannot accommodate all who apply. Please be advised that not all who complete the assessment process will be offered residency positions. This is a merit-based competition with limited availability of residency positions. The Alberta International Medical Graduate Program decisions are final.