



# Appeal of ACGME-accredited Programs with Osteopathic Recognition among Third-year Osteopathic Medical Students

January 2017



## Survey Results:

# Appeal of ACGME-Accredited Programs with Osteopathic Recognition Among Third-Year Osteopathic Medical Students<sup>1</sup>

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Within the single graduate medical education (GME) accreditation system (SAS), all GME programs accredited by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) can apply for accreditation by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). To maintain and be recognized for their osteopathic focus, these programs can choose to apply for “osteopathic recognition” within the SAS. Additionally, in order to be recognized for any changes in their osteopathic orientation, current ACGME programs may also choose to apply for osteopathic recognition. Osteopathic recognition is a key mechanism by which osteopathic principles and practices (OPP) are integrated into the new accreditation system.

As programs and institutional leaders consider osteopathic recognition for their programs, information on student demand for internship, residency and fellowship programs with an osteopathic focus may better inform their decision-making process.

In March 2015, the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) conducted a poll of current third-year osteopathic medical students at colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs). The goal of the survey was to determine if COM students were interested in pursuing (GME) programs with osteopathic

recognition within the SAS. The survey was repeated in November-December 2016.

## About Osteopathic Recognition

The ACGME's Osteopathic Principles Committee (OPC) defines osteopathic recognition as the following:

*“Osteopathic recognition is conferred upon any ACGME-accredited graduate medical education program providing requisite training in osteopathic principles and practice after appropriate application and review for adherence to established requirements.”<sup>2</sup>*

Programs seeking osteopathic recognition are reviewed by the OPC to assess their compliance with the requirements for osteopathic recognition. Although programs can apply for osteopathic recognition, it is not required for accreditation.

## Data

Responses were received from students at 32 of the colleges, branch campuses, and additional locations with third-year students enrolled. An estimated 22.2 percent of third-year students across all the colleges responded to the survey (exact third-year counts are not available) and individual COM response rates ranged from eight percent to 67 percent. Four colleges had no respondents. A total of 1,523

third-year osteopathic medical students responded to the survey. Although four COMs had no students respond to the survey, one of those colleges had administered a similar survey. That report is in the publication process.

## 2016 Findings

The survey included two multiple response questions and two open-ended comment questions. The first question asked “Would an ACGME-accredited program with osteopathic recognition be more appealing to you than an ACGME-accredited program without osteopathic recognition?” (Yes/No). There were 1,522 valid responses to the question (see Chart I):

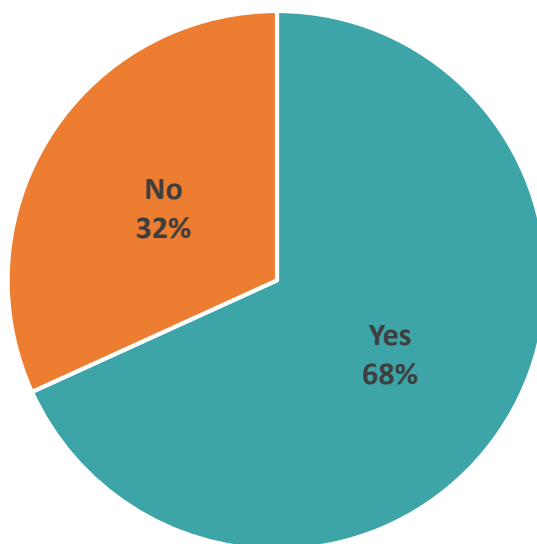
- 68.2 percent (1,038) responded “yes”
- 31.8 percent (484) responded “no.”

The second question asked respondents “How strongly does osteopathic recognition of an ACGME-accredited program influence its place in your rank order of preference for a GME position?”

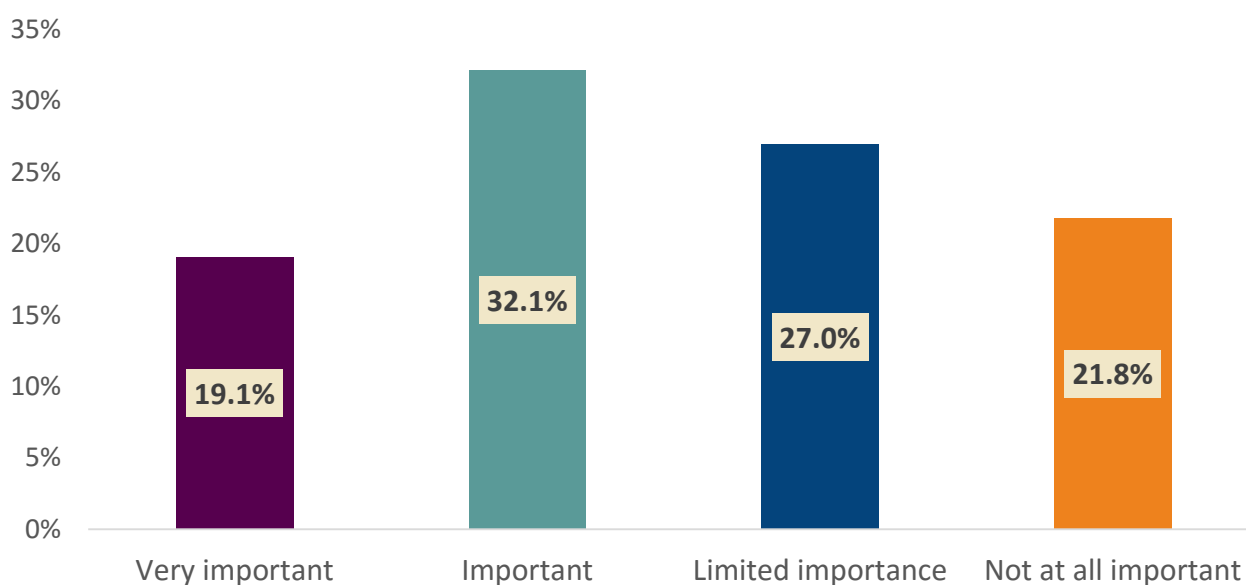
Responses were “very important,” “important,” “limited importance,” and “not at all important.” The responses were (see Chart II):

- Very important – 19.1 percent
- Important – 32.1 percent
- Limited importance – 27.0 percent
- Not at all important – 21.8 percent

**Chart I. Would a program with osteopathic recognition be more appealing than one without osteopathic recognition?**



**Chart II. How strongly does osteopathic recognition of an ACGME-accredited program influence its place in your rank order of preference for a GME position?**



## Reasons for Choosing ACGME Programs with Osteopathic Recognition

Both questions of the survey allowed respondents to provide an explanation for their given response. The primary reason cited for selecting a program is to maintain their commitment to osteopathic medicine and the osteopathic profession. Respondents strongly desire utilizing and building on their osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) and OPP skills in residency and future practice.

## Conclusion

As the transition to the single GME accreditation system moves forward, designation of programs with osteopathic recognition is a key piece of information for osteopathic medical students that are beginning the process of deciding on their residency training options. This survey shows that for a vast majority of osteopathic medical students, osteopathic recognition is perceived as a mechanism by which they can continue to train and practice as osteopathic physicians. Students seek to continue building and utilizing the OPP skills taught in the colleges of osteopathic medicine. Finally, students perceive that programs with osteopathic recognition are more likely to be 'DO friendly' and would be more open to the use of OMT in patient care during their residency.

## Notes

1. Updated administration, Fall 2016, originally published May 2015:  
<http://www.aacom.org/docs/default-source/single-gme-accreditation/or-survey-may-2015.pdf?sfvrsn=8>
2. Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Osteopathic Recognition Requirements.  
<https://www.acgme.org/acgmeweb/tabid/469/ProgramandInstitutionalAccreditation/OsteopathicPrinciplesCommittee.aspx>. Accessed January 1, 2017.

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### About AACOM

The American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM) was founded in 1898 to support and assist the nation's osteopathic medical schools, and to serve as a unifying voice for osteopathic medical education. AACOM's mission is to provide leadership for the osteopathic medical education community by promoting excellence in medical education, research, and service, and by fostering innovation and quality across the continuum of osteopathic medical education to improve the health of the American public.