



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

October 24, 2016

Mr. Bill Prasifka
Chief Executive Officer
Medical Council of Ireland
Kingram Place
Dublin 2
Ireland

Dear Mr. Prasifka:

On September 19, 2016, the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) met to evaluate the documents submitted by the Medical Council of Ireland on behalf of the Government of Ireland describing the current standards and processes used to accredit medical schools in your country.

The purpose of the NCFMEA's review was to determine the comparability of the country's medical accreditation system for Doctor of Medicine programs, or the equivalent, to the system used to accredit such programs in the United States (U.S.). Under U.S. law, accredited schools in a country that NCFMEA finds comparable may apply to participate in the U.S. William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan (Direct Loan) program. Then, if a medical school participates in the Direct Loan program, U.S. students attending the school may apply for Direct Loans to help cover educational expenses. For more information about foreign schools' participation in the Direct Loan program, access the Foreign School Information Web page at <http://ifap.ed.gov/ForeignSchoolInfo/ForeignSchoolInfo.html>.

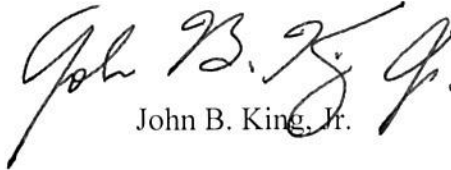
The NCFMEA reviewed the information submitted regarding the Medical Council of Ireland's accreditation activities on behalf of the Government of Ireland for a redetermination of comparability. The NCFMEA wishes to thank Ms. Una O'Rourke, Dr. Siun O'Flynn, and Dr. Anna Clarke for attending the meeting to provide additional information regarding Ireland and the Medical Council of Ireland's accreditation activities. Their testimony was very helpful, and the Committee valued their participation in the meeting.

The NCFMEA determined that it needs additional information in order to make its decision regarding the comparability of the standards used by the Medical Council of Ireland to accredit medical schools in Ireland. Therefore, the NCFMEA will defer its comparability determination until its spring 2018 meeting, pending receipt of supporting documentation and outstanding information identified in the final staff analysis. During the deferral, the NCFMEA's prior determination of comparability remains in effect.

The U.S. Department of Education will contact the Medical Council of Ireland several months before the spring 2018 NCFMEA meeting regarding the preparation and submission of the material. If you have any questions about the meeting, please contact Jennifer Hong, NCFMEA Executive Director, at jennifer.hong@ed.gov or Patricia Howes, Committee Coordinator, at patricia.howes@ed.gov.

Thank you for providing the information regarding the country's accreditation of medical schools. We appreciate your ongoing interest in maintaining high-quality standards for medical education.

Sincerely,



John B. King, Jr.

cc: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, Ireland Desk Office