

7.1 Definition/Description of an OPTI – According to the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), they established the Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institution (OPTI) in 1995.

Each OPTI is a community-based training consortium comprised of at least one college of Osteopathic medicine and one hospital. Other hospitals and ambulatory care facilities may also partner with an OPTI. Community-based healthcare facilities such as ambulatory care clinics, rehabilitation centers and surgicenters may now have the resources and support necessary to provide physicians training with an OPTI's assistance.

Osteopathic medicine is recognized in all 50 states as a leader in quality medical care. It meets community needs by focusing on providing primary care medicine. More than one-half of the nation's 48,000 D.O.s are primary care physicians. OPTIs contribute to the community by promoting and providing distinctive osteopathic health care.

Osteopathic physicians (D.O.s) comprise a separate and distinct branch of medical care. D.O.s complete four years of basic medical education, followed by three to six years of graduate medical education consisting of an internship and specialized residency training. The 18 accredited OPTIs encompass more than 150 osteopathic internship programs and over 500 osteopathic residency programs.

OPTIs are recognized for providing a comprehensive, seamless model of education for physician training – from colleges of osteopathic medicine through graduate medical education programs and beyond. An OPTI adds value to medical training by assuring the osteopathic concepts of holism, wellness and prevention, caring for the patient's individual health needs, environment and ability to access quality health care.

7.1.1 Postdoctoral Training Benefits - OPTIs provide an enhanced quality assurance mechanism for AOA-approved postdoctoral training programs. Partnerships and collaboration between academic medicine, hospitals and other community based healthcare facilities are an integral part of OPTI. This collaborative effort helps to combine the partners' resources to minimize duplication of support service as for medical education.

An OPTI embraces multiple partners. This structure allows for ease in piloting new curricula at one or more sites, encouraging innovative and creative ideas in curricular design and sharing resources.

While an OPTI provides a seamless continuum of osteopathic medical education, it also requires continuous educational assessment. AOA-approved internships and residencies continue to be reviewed on-site and OPTIs are reviewed regularly. This review includes a systematic self-study, and annual reporting of data on accreditation procedures established by the Council on Postdoctoral Training and Bureau of Professional Education. The goal is to assure the highest quality osteopathic graduate medical education.

As a result of Co-sponsored Graduate Medical Education Programs, the OPTI is accountable for compliance and quality of all training programs within its consortium. Thus, the hospitals and the college are required to respond to corrective plans to all deficiencies cited by program inspections in accordance with established policy. Institutions that comprise the consortium will acknowledge and abide by the OPTI requirements by reviewing and accepting the annual report for submission in September to the AOA's Executive Committee of the Committee on Postdoctoral Training (ECCOPT).

The CORE System has a transfer policy consistent with AOA requirements and language in AOA postdoctoral training documents as cited in the CORE Operations Manual.

Part of the OPTI accreditation process includes encouraging clinical medical education research. Research programs are available to osteopathic interns and residents throughout each year of training. These research programs are developed in conjunction with guidelines and requirements of osteopathic specialty colleges for residency training programs and the Council on Postdoctoral Training for internship programs.

Growth of postdoctoral training continues since the inception of OPTI. Hospitals that have traditionally participated in allopathic medical education, under the supervision of an osteopathic hospital or college of medicine, increasingly train D.O.s.

7.1.2 OPTI Locations - OPTIs are located throughout the country. Certain OPTIs were founded to serve specific regions others cross state lines and serve a widespread geographic area.

For a complete listing of partner institutions with an OPTI access the AOA web site at www.aoanet.org choose **Postdoctoral Physicians**, then click **Listing of Affiliated Partner Hospitals in Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institutions (OPTI)**.

7.1.3 CORE AOA Accreditation – At their January 18-19, 2003 meeting the Bureau of Professional Education (BPE) of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA):

RESOLVED, that the site survey team report of the on-site evaluation of the Centers for Osteopathic Research and Education (CORE), Athens, Ohio conducted on May 16 and 17, 2002 be APPROVED and approved continuing accreditation with resurvey in three (3) years as recommended by the site surveyors for the Centers for Osteopathic Research and Education, Athens, Ohio.

7.1.4 OPTI Annual Fee – The CORE pays an annual OPTI fee to the AOA. If the amount of the annual Osteopathic Postdoctoral Training Institution (OPTI) fee exceeds the approved funds allocated for this purpose, the difference shall be assessed from prior year carryover. If carryover is unavailable or insufficient to cover the unbudgeted amount of the OPTI fee, OPTI Participating Members will pay a special assessment to cover this additional expense.