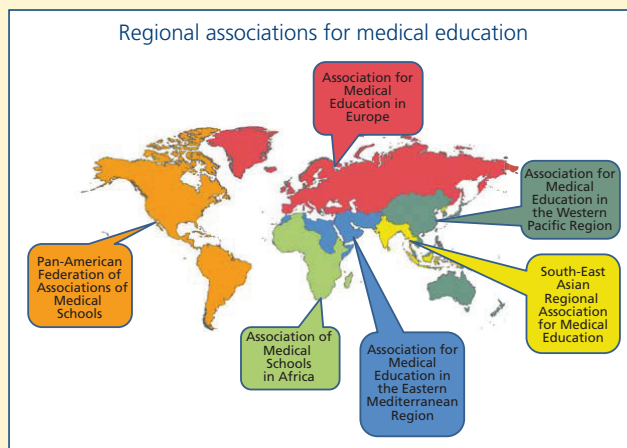


## AM Last Page: The World Federation for Medical Education (WFME)

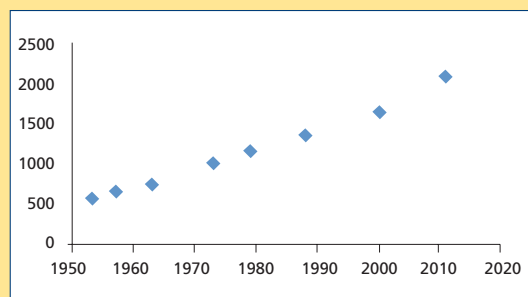
Stefan Lindgren, MD, PhD, president, and David Gordon, FMedSci, visiting professor, WFME

### What is the WFME?

WFME is the global organization concerned with the education and training of doctors whose ultimate mission is to strive for better health care for all mankind. Its primary objective is to enhance the quality of medical education worldwide through the promotion of the highest scientific and ethical standards in medical education. WFME began in 1972, bringing together the World Health Organization (WHO), regional medical education associations from around the world, and other partners. WFME, the umbrella organization for six regional medical education associations, follows the regional structure of WHO and is a non-governmental organization in official relation to WHO.<sup>1</sup>



### What is the current need for WFME?



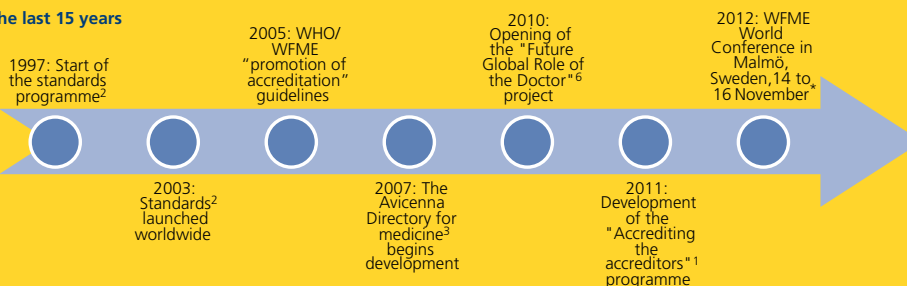
The growth in the number of medical schools worldwide from 1953 to 2010.<sup>5</sup> The 2011 number is estimated from the Avicenna Directory.<sup>3</sup>

- WFME believes that medical education should have common high standards internationally and that the best practices in medical education should be disseminated globally.
- WFME launched its program to define international standards for medical education in 1997. Three international task forces with broad representation from all six WHO-WFME regions developed the current WFME Global Standards, which were published in 2003.<sup>2</sup>
- Global dissemination is a growing challenge. The number of medical schools in the world has grown remarkably in the last sixty years. Many new medical schools are excellent, but some are not.
- Reliable and valid data on the number and quality of medical schools are hard to obtain. WFME leads in developing the Avicenna Directory,<sup>3</sup> the WHO-recognized world directory of medical schools. A new World Directory of Medical Schools, incorporating Avicenna and the International Medical Education Directory,<sup>4</sup> is under development, pending approval by the governing bodies of WFME and the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research.

### What are current and future WFME projects?

- Because the accreditation of medical education—that is, certifying the suitability of medical education programs and the competence of medical schools to deliver quality medical education—is of the highest importance, WFME has worked with WHO both to develop Guidelines for Accreditation and to promote accreditation of medical education. WFME is also working in partnership to develop procedures to validate national accreditation processes—“Accrediting the accreditors.”<sup>1</sup>
- WFME is leading a project called “What is the Future Global Role of the Doctor?”<sup>6</sup> We must examine what *doctors* will do in the future to understand what *medical education* should aim to do in that future.

#### WFME—The last 15 years



\*WFME practice is to hold a world conference every 8 or 10 years to disseminate the outcome of recent and ongoing projects.

#### References

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