Guidance: Clinical Outcomes

Objective Outcome Measures and Peer Recognition:

The incorporation of objective outcome data or formal recognition by peer clinicians will strengthen the promotion application, particularly for faculty members whose area of excellence is Clinical Expertise.

An outcome measure may reflect either an individual effort or a group endeavor. Group projects are acceptable if the candidate's role is clearly defined and the participation of other individuals is acknowledged. Not all faculty practices lend themselves to such an objective analysis, and for others the outcome information may be difficult to obtain from our clinical partners. In these instances, it is acceptable to explain why the information is not available in the Chair Statement.

Below are several examples of potential objective outcome measures:

Clinical outcome improvement
Example: Improved clinical outcomes or program organization via a QI project
Example: Analysis of accumulated clinical data (e.g., hospital days, blood pressures, pulmonary function testing, medication complication rates)
Example: Improved clinical outcomes versus a validated outcome scale or published data, such as an improved survival rate or reduction in hospital days

Improved adherence to consensus recommendations or management pathways

Example: Increased institutional compliance with medication reconciliation
Example: Increased rate of routine beta blocker administration following an MI
Example: Increased use of an antiplatelet agent following ischemic stroke
Example: Successful implementation of a new recommendation in the practice

Documentation of peer recognition

Example: Selection by peers to one or more outstanding physician lists
Example: Peer recognition implied by numerous or distant patient referrals

Analysis of referral patterns, encounter numbers, patient access data

Example: Patient referrals from increasingly distant locations
Example: Documented success of a new same day appointment program
Example: Successful launch of a new subspecialty clinic
Example: Steady increase in patient referrals to new specialty clinic

Example: A decreased hospital readmission rate following an intervention

Patient reported data

Example: Patient reported outcome data (e.g. pain scales, headache frequency)
Example: Patient utilization data for a patient education website
Example: Post-visit patient evaluations or visit review scores (not unsolicited patient testimonials - these can be included as a supplemental file)

Presentation of Outcome Data

To be effective, the information needs to be understandable and put into context for readers who are not versed in the candidate's discipline. Why is the information significant and how does it illustrate the candidate's clinical expertise? If more than one outcome measure is included, please clearly distinguish each component.

A graph or table can be useful if they make the information easier to comprehend at a glance. For complex figures or tables, however, it is wise to include a legend with a straightforward description of what is being depicted. For example, a map depicting the origin of patient referrals will effectively illustrate the geographic reach of the physician's geographic reputation, but only of it is clear what is being shown and why it is meaningful.