



Our Commitment to Physician Well-Being and Resilience

December 11, 2017

Each year, ECFMG® sponsors more than 10,000 foreign national physicians in J-1 visa status to participate in U.S. clinical training programs. In addition to the demands of their training programs and the challenges of a changing health care landscape, these residents and fellows must contend with the stresses of living and working in a foreign country, including culture shock and separation from family and friends.

J-1 physicians make essential contributions to health care. They add diversity to the U.S. physician workforce. In many other countries, they build overall health workforce capacity and serve in much-needed specialties.

ECFMG and its [Exchange Visitor Sponsorship Program](#) (EVSP) are refining a number of initiatives to meet the unique needs of these physicians and to support them in their U.S. training programs.

1. Expanding a robust program to gauge the health, safety, and welfare of J-1 physicians
 - Establishing regularly scheduled touch points when all J-1 physicians are contacted for health, safety, and welfare checks and invited to contact EVSP with concerns
 - Send reports to training programs that list all J-1 physicians in the program and require the program to confirm each physician's status
 - Share resources such as the well-being initiatives of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education and the U.S. Department of State (DOS) resource, "Adjusting to a New Culture"
 - Contact J-1 physicians impacted by a significant event, such as a natural disaster or other incident, in their U.S. city/state or home country
 - Increase awareness among J-1 physicians and their training programs that EVSP staff will aid and support them with any questions, concerns, or complaints
 - An internal policy to ensure effective management, tracking, and resolution of complaints
2. Provide support throughout changes in immigration policy, such as the Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamation of 2017
 - Consulting immigration counsel, other organizations, and DOS
 - Communicating directly with J-1 physicians and training programs to share information and guidance
 - Establishing a dedicated web page to centralize information and guidance
 - Developing a [Fact Sheet for Consular Officials](#)
 - Coordinating advocacy efforts with the Association of American Medical Colleges
3. Enriching the educational and cultural experiences of J-1 physicians. In keeping with the educational and cultural exchange goals of the U.S. Exchange Visitor (J-1 Visa) Program, ECFMG is developing resources that facilitate an understanding and appreciation of U.S. history and culture. In addition to fulfilling the goals of the J-1 Visa Sponsorship, these resources offer J-1 physicians recreational opportunities and connections to their communities that contribute to their overall well-being.
 - Publishing a [Cross-Cultural State Resource](#)
 - Recruiting a Cultural and Educational Affairs Program Manager to develop additional educational and cultural resources
 - Establishing a [Twitter platform](#) to communicate current events and cultural offerings to J-1 physicians

ECFMG is a private, nonprofit organization that promotes quality health care worldwide. Please visit www.ecfmg.org to learn more about our programs for physicians, medical educators, and the medical regulatory community.