

Glossary of Selected Terms and Definitions

from the

Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®) and American Medical Association (AMA)

Accreditation

The framework by which a program of CME is assessed to determine whether the program meets the accreditor's requirements. See also "Accredited CME provider."

Accreditation criteria

The requirements against which CME providers' compliance is determined in order to achieve or maintain accreditation.

Accredited CME

The term used to refer to continuing medical education that has been deemed to meet the requirements and standards of a CME accrediting body.

Accredited continuing education

The term accredited continuing education, replaces continuing medical education to be inclusive of all health professions. Accredited was included to explicitly differentiate between accredited and nonaccredited education providers and education. This change was conducted when the new standards were developed.

Accredited CME provider

An organization accredited as a provider of continuing medical education. Accredited CME providers assume the responsibility and accountability for developing certified educational activities.⁰ ACCME-accredited providers represent a range of organizational types and offer CME primarily to national or international audiences of physicians and other health care professionals. Intrastate-accredited providers offer CME primarily to learners from their state/territory or contiguous states.

Activity

See "CME activity."

Advertising and exhibits income

Advertising and exhibits are promotional activities and not continuing medical education. Therefore, monies paid by commercial interests to providers for these promotional activities are not considered to be commercial support under the ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education. Arrangements for these activities must be made in compliance with the Standards, specifically Standard 5: Manage Ancillary Activities Offered in Conjunction with Accredited Continuing Education.

AMA core requirements

The AMA requirements that every activity certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* must meet. They can be found in the AMA PRA booklet.

AMA Credit Designation Statement

The statement that indicates that the activity has been certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*, and includes the type of activity and number of credits.

AMA Physician's Recognition Award (PRA)

The AMA PRA has recognized physician participation in CME since 1968. The AMA established the PRA certificate and the related AMA PRA credit system to recognize physicians who, by participating in CME activities, demonstrate their commitment to staying current with advances in medicine. More information can be found in the AMA PRA booklet.

AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™

The type of CME credit that physicians earn by participating in certified activities sponsored by CME providers accredited by either the ACCME or an ACCME-recognized State/Territory Medical Society; by participating in activities recognized by the AMA as valid educational activities and awarded directly by the AMA; and by participating in certain international activities recognized by the AMA through its International Conference Recognition Program.

AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™

Credit that is self-claimed and self-documented by physicians by participating in activities that are not certified for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ and that the physician individually determines comply with the AMA definition of CME; and comply with the relevant AMA ethical opinions (see CEJA Opinions relevant to CME); and are not promotional; and the physician finds to be a worthwhile learning experience related to his/her practice.

Certified CME

Nonpromotional learning activities certified for credit prior to the activity by an organization authorized by the credit system owner, or nonpromotional learning activities for which the credit system owner directly awards credit.

CME activity

An educational offering that is planned, implemented, and evaluated in accordance with the ACCME Accreditation Criteria, Standards for Commercial Support, and policies; the AMA Physician's Recognition Award CME credit system standards and policies; and the AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs pertinent opinions.

CME credit

The "currency" assigned to CME activities. Physicians and other healthcare professionals use credits to meet requirements for maintenance of licensure, maintenance of specialty board certification, credentialing, membership in professional societies, and other professional privileges. The requirements for credit designation are determined by the organization responsible for the credit system. Besides the AMA, other organizations in the US that administer credit systems for physicians include the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Osteopathic Association. Please refer to those organizations for more information. See *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* and *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* above.

Commercial bias

Content or format in a CME activity or its related materials that promotes the products or business lines of an ineligible company. As described in the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education, providers are responsible for protecting learners from commercial bias and marketing. In addition to preventing influence from ineligible companies, the Standards prohibit faculty from actively promoting or selling products or services that serve their professional or financial interests.

Commercial support

Financial or in-kind support from an ACCME-defined ineligible company that is used to pay all or part of the costs of a CME activity. The requirements for receiving and managing commercial support are explained in the ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education, specifically Standard 4: Manage Commercial Support Appropriately.

Competence

In the context of evaluating effectiveness of a CME activity in the ACCME System, the extent to which learners know how to implement (or stop doing) what the activity intended to teach them.

Compliance

The finding given when a CME provider has fulfilled the ACCME's/Recognized Accreditor's requirements for the specific criterion in the Accreditation Criteria or policy.

Continuing Medical Education (CME)

The educational activities that serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession. CME represents that body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine, and the provision of health care to the public. Please refer to the term accredited continuing education.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD), or Continuing Physician Professional Development (CPPD)

Includes all activities that doctors undertake, formally and informally, including CME, in order to maintain, update, develop, and enhance their knowledge, skills, and attitudes in response to the needs of their patients.

Co-provided activity

A CME activity presented by two or more accredited providers. One of the accredited providers must take responsibility for the activity in terms of meeting ACCME and AMA requirements and reporting activity data to the ACCME. See also "directly provided activity."

Course

A live CME activity where the learner participates in person. A course is planned as an individual event. Examples: annual meeting, conference, seminar.

Designation of CME credit

The declaration that an activity meets the requirements for a specific type of credit. The accredited provider is responsible to those organizations that administer credit systems for compliance with applicable credit requirements. Note: The designation of credit for CME activities is not within the purview of the ACCME or ACCME Recognized Accreditors. See also "CME credit."

Directly provided activity

One that is planned, implemented, and evaluated by the accredited CME provider. This definition includes co-provided activities (offered by two accredited providers) reported by the accredited provider that awards the credit.

Eligible organizations

Organizations that are eligible to be accredited in the ACCME System. Those organizations whose mission and function are: (1) providing clinical services directly to patients; or (2) the education of healthcare professionals; or (3) serving as fiduciary to patients, the public, or population health; and other organizations that are not otherwise ineligible.

Enduring material

An activity that endures over a specified time and does not have a specific time or location designated for participation; rather, the participant determines whether and when to complete the activity. Examples: online interactive educational module, recorded presentation, podcast.

Faculty

The individuals responsible for teaching, authoring, or otherwise communicating the activity content to learners.

Financial relationships

Accredited providers must collect information from all planners, faculty, and others in control of educational content about all their financial relationships with ineligible companies within the prior 24 months. There is no minimum financial threshold; individuals must disclose all financial relationships, regardless of the amount, with ineligible companies. Individuals must disclose financial relationships with ineligible companies regardless of their view of the relevance of the relationship to the education. See also relevant financial relationships.

Hours of instruction

Hours of instruction represents the total hours of educational instruction in a CME activity. The information is used for the purpose of reporting the activity to ACCME. For example, if a one-day course lasts eight hours (not including breaks or meals), then the total hours of instruction reported for that course is eight. Hours of instruction may or may not correspond to the number of AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™ for which the activity is designated.

Ineligible companies

Organizations that are not eligible to be accredited in the ACCME System. These companies were referred to as commercial interest in the Standards for Commercial Support. The new term is interceded to clarify that eligibility for accreditation is not based on whether an organization is for-profit or nonprofit but is based on its primary mission and function. These are companies whose their primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients. The ACCME does not consider providers of clinical services directly to patients to be commercial interests. Ineligible companies are prohibited from engaging in joint providership with accredited providers.

In-kind commercial support

In the context of the ACCME's Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education, non-monetary resources provided by a ineligible companies in support of a CME activity. Examples of in-kind support include equipment, supplies, and facilities.

Internet enduring material activity

An enduring material provided via the Internet, meaning that there is no specific time designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines when to complete the activity. Examples: online interactive educational module, recorded presentation, podcast.

Internet live activity

A live course available via the Internet at a certain time on a certain date and is only available in real-time, just as if it were a course held in an auditorium. Example: webcast.

Internet Point of Care (PoC) learning (Internet searching and learning)

An activity in which a physician engages in self-directed, online learning on topics relevant to their clinical practice from a database whose content has been vetted by an accredited CME provider.

Jointly provided activity

An activity that is planned, implemented, and evaluated by an accredited provider and one or more non-accredited entities.

Journal-based CME

An activity that is planned and presented by an accredited provider and in which the learner reads one or more articles (or adapted formats for special needs) from a peer-reviewed, professional journal.

Knowledge

In the context of educational needs for a CME activity in the ACCME System, the extent to which learners have a need for new information.

Learner

An attendee at a CME activity. See also "physician learners," and "other learners."

Learning from teaching

Personal learning projects designed and implemented by the learner with facilitation from the accredited provider. It recognizes the learning that occurs as physicians prepare to teach.

Live activity

Activity that occurs at a specific time as scheduled by the accredited CME provider. Participation may be in person or remotely as is the case of teleconferences or live internet webinars.

Maintenance of Certification/Continuing Certification

Maintenance of Certification (MOC), also known as Continuing or Continuous Certification, is the process by which a physician who has initially become board certified in the specialty practice of their choice maintains their board certification status. The ACCME collaborates with some of the member boards of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) to facilitate the integration of accredited CME and MOC. These collaborations enable CME providers to offer educational activities that count for both CME credit and MOC credit and to report learner-participation data, which is transmitted

Manuscript review activity

Activity in which a learner participates in the critical review of an assigned journal manuscript during the pre-publication review process of a journal.

Mitigate

The ACCME requires accredited providers to take appropriate steps to prevent all those with relevant financial relationships from inserting commercial bias into content. Accredited providers are required to mitigate relationships prior to the individuals assuming their roles, and document the steps taken to mitigate relevant financial relationships. The term mitigate replaces resolve, in guidance related to relevant financial relationships, to clarify that accredited providers are expected to mitigate the potential effect of these relationships on accredited continuing education. The expectation hasn't changed, only the term used to describe it.

Noncompliance

The finding given by the ACCME/Recognized Accreditor when a CME provider does not fulfill the ACCME's requirements for the specific criterion in the Accreditation Criteria or policy.

Other activities

The other activity format is used for blended (combining existing and/or new formats), new, or unique approaches that do not fall into one of the established activity types as long as the activities meet the AMA core requirements and the ACCME's accreditation requirements.

Other learners

Learners other than those who have obtained an MD, DO, or equivalent medical degree from another country.

Parent organization

An outside entity, separate from the accredited provider, that has control over the accredited provider's funds, staff, facilities, and/or CME activities.

Performance

In the context of evaluating effectiveness of a CME activity in the ACCME system, the extent to which learners do what the CME activity intended them to be able to do (or stop doing) in their practice.

Performance Improvement CME (PI CME)

An activity structured as a three-stage process by which a physician or group of physicians learn about specific performance measures, assess their practice using the selected performance measures, implement interventions to improve performance related to these measures over a useful interval of time, and then reassess their practice using the same performance measures.

Physician learners

Activity learners who are MDs or DOs, or have an equivalent medical degree from another country.

Provider

See "Accredited CME provider."

Regularly scheduled series

A course planned as a series with multiple, ongoing sessions, e.g., offered weekly, monthly, or quarterly; and is primarily planned by and presented to the accredited organization's professional staff. Examples include grand rounds, tumor boards, and morbidity and mortality conferences.

Relevant financial relationships

As defined in the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education, specifically, Standard 3: Identify, Mitigate, and Disclose Relevant Financial Relationships, relevant financial relationships are financial relationships of any amount with ineligible companies if the educational content is related to the business lines or products of the ineligible company. Providers are required to collect information from all those individuals in control of educational content about all of their financial relationships with ineligible companies within the prior 24 months. The provider is then responsible for determining which relationships are relevant.

Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education

ACCME requirements designed to ensure that accredited continuing education serves the needs of patients and the public, is based on valid content, and is free from commercial influence. The Standards comprise five standards: Ensure Content is Valid; Prevent Commercial Bias and Marketing in Accredited Continuing Education; Identify, Mitigate, and Disclose Relevant Financial Relationships; Manage Commercial Support Appropriately; Manage Ancillary Activities Offered in Conjunction with Accredited Continuing Education. Released in December 2020, the Standards for Integrity and Independence replace the Standards for Commercial Support.

Test-item writing activity

An activity wherein physicians learn through their contribution to the development of examinations, or certain peer-reviewed self-assessment activities, by researching, drafting and defending potential test items.