

Guidelines for Application for Accreditation*

The following information is required in order to provide accreditation:

1. Who is putting on this activity? Who is involved in the planning? Where and when will the activity be held?

It is our expectation that planning will be performed by a planning group (as opposed to an individual) who will assume responsibility for the overall curriculum offered. This should include individuals knowledgeable in principles of medical education as well as the general topic area. We also want to know where and when the activity will occur.

2. A statement regarding a needs assessment and how the appropriate content for the conference was determined:

CME must be based on a need. This is defined as a Needs Assessment. What this means is that the group at which the activity is directed must have a need for acquiring this knowledge. In even plainer English, “Why should the learners care and bother to participate?”

There are many ways in which needs can be assessed. Some examples are:

- Surveys and prior activity evaluations.
- Discovery of a new treatment or therapy.
- Public health data, chart audits, and current events.
- Self assessment.
- Government mandates and specialty society guidelines.

This is why we ask you to write out how you determined your needs assessment. Simply stating that there is a great need for CME is not a needs assessment. It is a generic platitude.

3. The objectives for the conference:

From the needs assessment a set of objectives should be compiled about what the learner is supposed to learn. To have this be a useful activity learning objectives must be:

- Clear.
- Measurable.
- Learner oriented.

More specifically, for the section regarding **learning objectives**, bear in mind what the participants should be able to do by the end of the session. Since the objectives should be specific and measurable, behaviourable verbs are to be utilized. General verbs such as “understand, appreciate, know, become, learn” should *not* be used. For the purposes of the majority of our CME events, participants would be evaluated in 1 or 2 major domains: cognitive (thinking) and psychomotor (doing).

Appropriate verbs to use for cognitive goals: define, diagnose, discuss, evaluate, compare, demonstrate, describe, explain, interpret, differentiate, apply, summarize, formulate, contrast, assess, design

Appropriate verbs to use for psychomotor goals: display, manipulate, arrange, perform, create, operate, adapt, write

Here are a few examples of learning objectives related to various CME events:

Participants will be able to:

- Evaluate hip and knee injuries, and design an appropriate treatment plan for rehabilitation, utilizing information from new evidence-based medicine.
- Describe the medicinal use of honey from ancient to modern times.
- Interpret thoracic x-rays utilizing a systematic approach.
- Demonstrate an ability to intubate an airway mannequin, while maintaining inline immobilization.
- Identify the major causes of hypertension and formulate an appropriate treatment plan for a case scenario.

At least 2 or 3 learning objectives should be written for each CME event and included in the accreditation application form.

4. Who is the target audience and how many individuals are anticipated will participate in the meeting:

You must then clarify what specific group(s) most has (have) this need which is defined by your needs assessment. This is then defined as your “Target Audience”. For example:

- What kind of doctors? Are they primary care physicians, Urologists, Ob-Gyn’s, Dentists, nurses etc.?
- Are they health care providers who have been practicing a long time, or new practitioners?

We want to know how many individuals will participate in the meeting to see how likely you are to meet your learning objectives based on the type of teaching activities listed in your program. For example a hands-on workshop with 50 people won’t be very successful.

5. A copy of the planned program, which includes times of workshops, lectures, etc.

You need to determine the best way to teach this material. Is it a lecture, workshop, hands-on teaching workshop or other method? This should be listed in your program. We look at your needs assessment and learning objectives to determine if the scheduled activities match. Sometimes we will ask additional clarification regarding the content of the sessions. We will also use your program to determine the number of CME credit hours. We need a detailed program for this to be accomplished.

6. Names and short summaries of the speakers including their credentials and place of employment:

We use this section to assess whether the individuals chosen to give the topics are able to provide this information. This is a fairly subjective assessment but we are particularly interested the speakers relationship to industry such as pharmaceutical companies who are often unable by employment to give an unbiased discussion of their topic area.

7. A statement regarding sponsorship and the role of the sponsoring companies in developing the program.

We are very concerned that there is not a conflict of interest in the development of the program. Sponsorship by pharmaceutical companies or other members of the health care industry often come with “strings attached”. We want to be sure there is an arms length relationship between the sponsoring companies and the material presented.

8. Prepare an evaluation form for use by the participants.

Design an evaluation form, which will be completed by the participants. *It is important to include 2 references to learning objectives on the evaluation form, such as: “Program objectives were well defined” and “Program objectives were met.” The participants must evaluate both of these points.*

This “evaluation” can be in many forms, but it must be tied to the learning objectives. Some examples of evaluation methods are:

- questionnaires
- tests
- review of patient data
- focus groups

Evaluations are performed to:

- To find out if the objectives were met.
- To point out the activity’s strong points and weak areas so that future activities can be improved.
- To get an idea of the type of programs that the audience would like in the future.

9. How will you document attendance? How will attendees be provided with a record of attendance?

It is very important that only individuals who actually participate in the education sessions get “credit” for these activities. At a minimum, some mechanism for awarding partial credit for activities must be provided for day long activities. We are also interested in viewing a draft certificate. It is very important that the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences not be included as a sponsor of the meeting when it is only involved in accreditation of the program. Words such as “This program is accredited for X CME hours by the Continuing Medical Education/Continuing Professional Development Committee of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences” is all that is sufficient to indicate our approval on certificates.

10. Have you applied to other entities for accreditation? If yes, why?

We want to know who else you have contacted for accreditation. If you have applied to many different organizations – we would like to know why as it is rarely necessary for more than a single accreditation.

11. How will you provide us with information regarding the conferences after they are complete?

At a minimum, we expect a post-conference report that includes:

- Number of actual participants
- Final program
- Summary of evaluations and lessons learned for subsequent CME programs.
- Certificate of attendance

Additional feedback (e.g. minutes of a post-conference discussion by the steering committee) is also welcome.

Failure to provide this information within 3 months of the conference may result in a decision to not accredit subsequent CME events of your organization/group.

12. Any additional information about the conference you wish to communicate.

This is your chance to tell us anything else you wish us to know.