

Organizing CME/CPD activities: update on procedures

Introduction

Organizers of CME/CPD activities need to be aware of the procedures adopted by the CME Center for accrediting them under the MPC (Maintenance of Professional Competence) Program. This ensures that the necessary administrative formalities can be completed within a relatively short period of time, without the need for queries and additional clarifications arising.

Scheduling of Sessions and Allocation of Credits

It is important for program organizers of CME/CPD activities to take into consideration the learning needs of the participants and their attention span. Most members of the audience at a lecture can maintain concentration on the subject being presented for a only short period of time – often not more than 15 or 20 minutes – although attention returns just before the session is to be concluded.

Individual presentations should not be excessively long, and a number of presentations should not be scheduled one after another without a break. Occasionally, there may be a strong educational, administrative or practical reason that requires a session to be of a longer duration than the usual of 45 minutes to 1 hour. However, this would be the exception rather than the rule.

If the application received at the CME Center does not indicate any break where it appears that such a recess is needed, credit points will be calculated making an appropriate adjustment. For instance, in a schedule that has three presentations during a three hour period without a break, the academic activity is taken as running for a total of 2 hours and 30 minutes.

CREDIT MAXIMUM FOR AN ACTIVITY

The maximum number of credit points that would be allotted to a single CME/CPD activity

(e.g. symposium, workshop, seminar, training program etc.) is 25 CME credits.

CREDITS FOR CLINICAL PROCEDURES

Routine patient care activities do not qualify to be considered as CME/CPD under the MPC Program.

Clinical or practical sessions that are planned and conducted with learning as the primary aim of the sessions could be accredited. Here, the organizer or resource person concerned is expected to pay special attention to the relevant educational issues that are important when teaching clinical or practical skills.

Applying for Registration

ADVANCE NOTICE

The application for registration, with all the relevant information, needs to reach the CME Center at least three weeks before the scheduled starting date. This period of advance notice will help the organizer to announce the activity giving sufficient time to the prospective participants so that they may adjust their official duties and other commitments, should they wish to attend the event.

SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

Organizers are requested to use the online form when applying for registration of CME activities. Printouts of the online form are not accepted as the printed version is likely to be incomplete or incorrect. Faxed applications may not be clear when received, and we encourage CME/CPD organizers to use the online format.

Selection of Session Participants

The primary aim of CME/CPD is to improve patient care. Practitioners, therefore, would select activities for participation from the following two groups:

- i. CME/CPD activities in own specialty;

- ii. Activities that would improve performance, although the topics may be outside own specialty.

CME/CPD activities conducted in specialties or subspecialties that are not at all related to one's own area of practice or may not help improve patient care, therefore, do not qualify as CME/CPD.

When conducting the sessions CME/CPD organizers should accommodate only those practitioners who stand to benefit from the proposed topics. It will be profitable for both the presenters and the participants if the outcome expected from the activity and the target audience are clearly indicated beforehand. Furthermore, organizers should not hold the view that large numbers of participants registering in an activity is a measure of its success: restricting attendance to those who have a specific interest in the subject content to be dealt with is a preferred alternative, and is recommended by the CME Center.

Evaluation of CME/CPD Activity

CME/CPD organizers are required to prepare an Evaluation Report on the activity. This report should be forwarded to the CME Center within 4 weeks of completing the event or the group of events (where applicable).

The degree of sophistication of the evaluation will depend on the type of activity under consideration. For major conferences, seminars and workshops, an evaluation needs to be

carried out at conclusion of the sessions and a report prepared.

With respect to ongoing activities that are held frequently at health care, academic or scientific institutions, a group of similar sessions conducted over a specified period may be included in one Evaluation Report. The organizer would decide whether a 3 or 6 month period or a longer one is appropriate in the specific case.

Role of Private Commercial Establishments in CME/CPD

CME Providers and CME/CPD organizers may use the resources provided by pharmaceutical firms and other private establishments. However, the primary responsibility for the activity should be borne by the CME Provider, the sponsor's role being a resource supplier.

The organizer of the activity is responsible for the announcements, participant lists, attendance certificates and evaluation reports. The CME Center will have communications only with the CME Provider or with the CME/CPD organizer, and will not entertain any queries regarding the activity from the sponsors or other parties providing support.

Educational issues and other relevant information appear in *Guidelines to CME Organizers*. The website www.kims.org.kw/cme gives additional details and provides access to the *Guidelines*, too, which may be downloaded as a pdf file.