



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is CME?

Continuing Medical Education (CME) is defined as “educational activities that serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public, or the profession” (source: ACCME and AMA).

Who is the ACCME?

ACCME is the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education and is the organization that sets the standards for the accreditation of all providers of CME activities.

Who is the AMA?

The American Medical Association helps doctors help patients by uniting physicians nationwide to work on the most important professional and public health issues.

What types of activities qualify for CME/CE certification?

A wide variety of educational activities qualify for CME certification, including, but not limited to:

- Lectures and live meetings in which learners are physically or remotely present.
- “Enduring Materials” - CME activities based on recorded or published content (i.e., printed materials, CD-ROMs, audio CDs, DVDs, Internet presentations).
- Journal Based CME.

What type of CME credit do physicians need?

AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ is the most common type of credit physicians need for medical license maintenance. In order for an activity to be designated for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit, it must be planned by an accredited CME provider (e.g., SAPS CME).

May a non-US licensed physician be awarded AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™?

Yes. *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* may be awarded to any physician (defined by the AMA as MDs, DOs, or international physicians with equivalent degrees from other countries). The requirements for awarding *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* to US and non-US licensed physicians are the same.

May non-physicians be awarded AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™?

No. Non-physician health professionals and other participants may not be awarded *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. However, accredited CME providers may issue documentation of participation to non-physicians that states that the activity was certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ may only be awarded to MDs or DOs (or physicians with equivalent degrees from other countries).

How do you determine the amount of credit for certified live activities that are not in one hour increments?

The credit for live activities may be designated in 15 minute or 0.25 credit increments; rounded to the nearest quarter hour. Credit is only designated for the educational portions of an activity, i.e. time for breaks and lunches is not included when calculating credit.

What is the difference between Category 1 and Category 2 credit?

According to the American Medical Association Category 1 CME activities are:

- Formally planned activities that include documentation of acceptable needs assessment, learning objectives, educational design, an evaluation method, and disclosure.
- Planned and implemented in full compliance with the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support
- Prospectively certified for credit by an ACCME-accredited CME Provider.

Category 2 "self claim" credits are:

- Informally planned physician-initiated activities such as practice-based self-study, consultations with colleagues, teaching, M&M conferences, etc.
- SAPS CME is not involved with planning, certifying, or tracking Category 2 activities.

When should the Accreditation Statement be used?

The SAPS CME Accreditation Statement must be used in relevant announcements and activity materials and any document that references the number of AMA PRA Category 1 Credits for which the activity has been designated. Below is the SAPS CME Accreditation Statement for Joint Providers:

Example statement for a jointly provided live activity (more than 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™):

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Medical Association of Georgia through the joint providership of Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME and [Insert Organization Name]. The Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME designates this live activity for a maximum of 1.25 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

Example statement for a jointly provided live activity (1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ or less):

This activity has been planned and implemented in accordance with the accreditation requirements and policies of the Medical Association of Georgia through the joint providership of Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME and [Insert Organization Name]. The Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME is accredited by the Medical Association of Georgia to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Southern Alliance for Physician Specialties CME designates this live activity for a maximum of 1 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

What is the cost of CME/CE certification?

The cost of certifying your activity for CME/CE credit depends on:

- Type of activity (Joint vs. Directly Sponsored)
- Number of credit hours
- Estimated number of participants/learners
- If you are a member of a SAPS CME Member organization

All of our fees can be found on our website: www.sapscme.org

How do I obtain CME/CE credit for my activity?

To become pre-approved for a CME activity with SAPS, you must complete and submit the CME Application/Planning Document

What is the difference between direct, joint, and co-sponsorship?

Direct Sponsorship: If you or a member of your planning committee is a member of one of the SAPS CME Member Organizations, you will be eligible for a direct sponsorship and discounted fees. The member list can be found on our website: www.sapscme.org

Jointly Sponsorship: A CME activity that is developed and implemented by two institutions or organizations and only one of the institutions or organizations is accredited by the ACCME. The accredited provider (SAPS CME) must take responsibility for a CME activity when it is presented in cooperation with a non-accredited institution or organization. A commercial interest cannot take the role of non-accredited entity in a joint sponsorship relationship.

Co-sponsorship: A CME activity presented by two or more accredited providers. One institution must take responsibility for the activity.

Why do CME faculty (speakers, presenters, moderators, activity medical directors, authors, planning committee member, etc) have to complete a CME disclosure form?

The ACCME requires CME providers (i.e., SAPS CME) to require everyone who is in a position to control the content of an educational activity to disclose all relevant financial relationships with any commercial interest(s) in order to prevent potential bias in the educational content. [Click here](#) to review the ACCME's definition of 'relevant' financial relationships. [Click here](#) to review ACCME Standards 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3).

Is it okay for a pharmaceutical sales representative to bring in food for a grand rounds session?

No, pharmaceutical sales representatives or representatives of medical product/device manufacturers cannot pay directly for the food. However, they can provide an educational grant to your organization in support of the food costs (see [ACCME Standard 3](#)).

A pharmaceutical company has offered to provide an educational grant to cover the speaker's honorarium, but they will "take care of the speaker's travel." Is this okay?

No, the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support require that all support from commercial interests be provided to the accredited CME provider in the form of an educational grant (see [ACCME Standards 3.8 and 3.9](#)).

Can a pharmaceutical company choose who will speak at my department's meeting?

No, it is up to the Activity Medical Director to select appropriate topics and speakers for their CME activity based upon the target audience's educational needs. The Activity Medical Director can request a Speaker List from a pharmaceutical representative and then select an appropriate speaker and topic from the list. The Activity Medical Director

should then communicate with the chosen speaker and delineate the learning objectives he/she would like the speaker to address (see [ACCME Standard 1.1](#)).

A pharmaceutical company has provided an educational grant to support a grand rounds session that is certified for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit. The company has signed a grant agreement to cover the meeting expenses; one of the sales representative wants to give a short presentation on the company's newest product at the beginning (or end) of the session...is this allowed?

No, CME providers cannot allow representatives of Commercial Interests to engage in sales or promotional activities while in the space or place of the CME activity (see [ACCME Standard 4.3](#)).