

## GUIDE TO THE PROCESS FOR ACCME REACCREDITATION AN OVERVIEW AND SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

### Overview and Background Information

#### Conducting Your Self-Study for Reaccreditation

The self-study process provides an opportunity for your organization to reflect on its program of CME. This process can help your organization assess its commitment to and role in providing continuing medical education and determine its future direction. The process of conducting a self-study is unique to your organization. Depending on the size and scope of your CME program, you may involve many or just a few individuals in the process.

#### Data Sources Used in the Reaccreditation Process

Your organization will demonstrate that your practice of CME is in compliance with the ACCME's accreditation requirements through three primary sources of data: the self-study report, evidence of performance-in-practice, and the accreditation interview.

#### Expectations about Materials

Information and materials submitted to the ACCME must not contain any untrue statements, must not omit any necessary material facts, must not be misleading, must fairly present the organization, and are the property of the organization.

Information and materials submitted for accreditation (self-study report, evidence of performance-in-practice, other materials) must not include individually identifiable health information, in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

#### Missing or Incomplete Information

Providers that meet the deadlines and submission requirements of the reaccreditation review process will receive an accreditation decision from the ACCME. Please note, if the ACCME is unable to render a decision due to missing or incomplete information, the ACCME reserves the right to request additional information, the expenses for which will be borne by the provider.

#### Decision-Making

Your organization's compliance findings and the outcome of the accreditation review are determined by the ACCME based on the data and information collected in the accreditation process. The ACCME will also consider data from monitoring issues, if such data are applicable to the provider. The data and information are analyzed and synthesized by the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC). The ARC makes recommendations on findings and status that are forwarded for action by the ACCME's Decision Committee. All accreditation decisions are ratified by the ACCME Board of Directors that meets three times each year (generally, in March, July, and November/December). The multi-tiered system of review provides checks and balances to ensure fair and accurate decisions. This is further enhanced by the ACCME's use of a criterion-referenced decision-making system.

## **Submitting Recreditation Materials to the ACCME**

The ACCME has moved to a fully online system to simplify and streamline the submission process. All information and materials will be submitted in the ACCME's Program and Activity Reporting System (PARS). You will use PARS to complete and submit the Confirmation of Intent to Apply for Recreditation Form, the Self-Study Report Form, and the Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstract Forms for selected CME activities. You will also use PARS to schedule your accreditation interview.

The forms will be made available to you in PARS in a sequential progression, starting with the Confirmation of Intent to Apply for Recreditation form followed by the Self-Study Report form. After you are notified of the activities selected for performance-in-practice, then the Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstract forms will be made available.

Access PARS at [pars.accme.org](http://pars.accme.org). When you see the login screen, enter your email address and password. To login to PARS for the first time, please click "Can't log in or forgot your password?" Quick-start guides to PARS are located [here](#) to help you get acquainted with the features you'll be using.

You may review and make necessary changes to your organization's contact information in PARS. It is very important that your organization's contact information is up-to-date in PARS.

All users associated with your organization in PARS at the time the recreditation process is initiated will have the ability to access, modify and delete information entered in the online forms. If you add individuals as users in PARS after the recreditation process has been initiated, you will need to contact the ACCME to give these individual access to the online forms.

## **Self-Study Report**

Using the Self-Study Report form that will be assigned in PARS, you will provide the information requested in concise narrative explanations and statements, in tables provided by the ACCME, and with uploaded documents and evidence to verify that your CME program meets the ACCME's requirements. Please note, any uploaded files may not exceed three megabytes.

## **Evidence of Performance-in-Practice**

You will verify that your CME activities are in compliance with the ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies through the performance-in-practice review process. The ACCME will select up to 15 activities from your current accreditation term for which you will present evidence to demonstrate that your CME activities are in compliance with the ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies.

The ACCME's performance-in-practice review entails the following process:

1. The provider's entry of CME activity data into PARS,
2. The ACCME's selection of activities for performance-in-practice review
3. The provider's submission of evidence of performance-in-practice for the activities selected in PARS.

## **Entering your CME Activity Data in PARS**

Clicking on the "Program and Activity Data" link located on your PARS dashboard, you will enter or update known information about the CME activities that your organization has provided, or will provide, under the umbrella of your ACCME accreditation statement, from the beginning of your current accreditation term to the expiration.

## Selecting Activities for Performance-in-Practice Review

Based on the CME activity data you enter in PARS, the ACCME will select up to 15 activities for review. The ACCME will notify you via email once the activities have been selected. Providers are accountable for demonstrating performance-in-practice for all activities selected. It is important that you carefully review the list of activities selected by the ACCME. If you note an error, such as an incorrect activity date or format, or if an activity was cancelled or otherwise did not occur, please notify the ACCME by email at [info@accme.org](mailto:info@accme.org) to make corrections or adjustments to the sample of activities selected.

## Preparing Evidence of Performance-in-Practice

Using the Performance-in-Performance Structured Abstract forms that will be assigned in PARS, you will submit evidence of performance-in-practice for each activity selected by the ACCME. In each form, you will provide the information requested in concise narrative explanations and statements, in tables provided by the ACCME, and with uploaded documents and evidence to verify that the activity meets the ACCME's requirements. Please note, any uploaded files may not exceed three megabytes.

## Accreditation Interview

Your organization will have the opportunity to further describe the practices you present in the self-study report and in evidence of performance-in-practice in a conversation with ACCME volunteer surveyors.

ACCME volunteer surveyors are colleagues from the accredited CME community who are trained by the ACCME. A team of surveyors will be assigned by the ACCME to review your self-study materials, speak with representatives of your CME program, and engage in a dialogue about your organization's policies and practices that ensure compliance with the ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies.

During the interview, the surveyors will seek clarification about any questions they may have regarding the materials you submitted to the ACCME. You can expect ACCME surveyors to:

- 1) conduct their interactions in a professional manner,
- 2) be familiar with your materials and the ACCME's Accreditation Criteria and Policies,
- 3) and communicate clearly and effectively without offering consultative advice or feedback regarding compliance or the expected outcome of the accreditation review.

The ACCME utilizes the conference call as its standard accreditation interview format; Interviews typically average 90 minutes in length. To ensure the validity of the process and based on circumstances and available resources, the ACCME reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding the interview and/or composition of the survey team. The ACCME will provide information about the process of scheduling the accreditation interview and will confirm the interview date and time and assigned surveyors in advance via email.