Requirements for Enduring Materials Used as Self-Study CME Activities

Enduring educational materials can be developed in a variety of formats, e.g., on-line, CD-Rom, printed monograph, and video or audio tape. For CME credit to be designated, they must meet both general requirements for all CME activities and additional requirements for enduring materials, with further requirements for those accessed on-line. Below is an overview of requirements, some operational issues, and how to see examples of enduring materials. Note that when a live CME activity is recorded to create an enduring material, the enduring material is a separate CME activity that must meet those requirements.

General requirements. Requirements for all activities for which CME credit is designated include:

Educational planning. Identify:
- Target audience
- Problems with current practice
- Related educational needs of individuals
- Content and format that will produce the results
- Expected results of the activity
- Evaluation of the activity

Communications with participants
- Marketing materials include: target audience, objectives, and information about content and format, and the formal accreditation and credit designation statements
- Before educational content presented: relevant information from above plus disclosures regarding commercial relationships of faculty and (if any) the activity

Operational processes
- Managing and disclosing relationships with industry
  - People who control content (planners, faculty/authors)
  - CME activity (commercial support, commercial advertising/exhibits)
- Finances follow UMMS policies
- Individual CME certificates provided and attendance recorded

Special requirements for enduring materials. Enduring materials have special requirements because the individuals developing and presenting the activity do not interact directly with the learner and the material is available over an extended period of time.

Additional information communicated in advance of the learner beginning the activity (often also in marketing materials)
- Principal faculty and their credentials
- Medium or combination of media used
- Method of participation in the learning process
- Estimated time to complete the educational activity (same as number of designated credits)
- Dates of original release and most recent review or update
- Termination date after which credit is no longer available

Method for learner assessment. Since learners do not interact directly with faculty, the enduring material must include a component that measures achievement of the educational purpose of the activity with an established minimum performance level. Examples include a post-test or practice-management case studies with a minimum percentage of answers correct to receive credit.

Bibliographical resources. Appropriate resources should be referenced to allow for further study.

Period for which credit is available. Credit can be designated for up to three years, based on how long the information is expected to remain up-to-date and accurate. The material must then be reviewed for appropriateness for the designation of credit to be extended.

Commercial interests. Commercial interests may not provide or distribute enduring materials to learners.
Further requirements for on-line CME. Activities made available over the Internet also have to:

Provide additional information to learners
- Hardware and software required to participate
- Provider contact information if the learner has questions about the on-line CME activity
- Policy on privacy and confidentiality that learners can easily access

Copyright
Accredited providers must be able to document ownership of or permissions to use copyrighted materials.

Separation from commercial content
- The activity may not be placed on a website owned or controlled by a commercial interest
- Advertising of any type is prohibited within the educational content of a CME activity.
- With clear notification that the learner is leaving the educational web site, links to websites of commercial interests may occur before or after the educational content

Operational Issues

Some common operational issues for enduring materials are noted below. Operational decisions for an individual enduring material are based on the specific plans for and circumstances of that activity.

Providing and utilizing an enduring material. Methods must be planned and developed for:
- Prospective learners to become aware of the activity (marketing)
- Interested learners to access to the enduring material
- Learner assessment and checking for minimum performance
- Activity evaluation
- Providing certificates, recording individual participation, and maintaining a record of participation

Monitor the enduring material. Procedures should be in place periodically to:
- Check evaluations to be aware of important feedback that might result in altering the activity
- Monitor developments in the relevant field that might result in altering or withdrawing the activity

Periodic reporting to OCME&LL. Procedures should be in place to report:
- Individual participation, noting physicians and non-physicians (annually or more frequently)
- Summary evaluation information (over the period for which credit is designated or more frequently)
- Summary financial information including revenue (specifying in-kind support, commercial advertising revenue, and revenue from all other sources) and total expenses (once, usually shortly after the enduring material is released and expenses are known).

Examples and On-line Infrastructure

Examples. Understanding the requirements and operational issues is easier if you see their incorporation into actual enduring materials. Examples of on-line enduring materials can be seen at http://ocpd.med.umich.edu/cme/self-study and a variety of other sites. OCME&LL can provide examples of enduring materials in other formats.

On-line infrastructure. OCME&LL maintains a server with the programmed infrastructure to provide on-line: knowledge tests & scoring, activity evaluation, registration, certificates, and participation records. For a fee, this infrastructure can be used with educational content delivered in any enduring format.

Further information. For further information associated with designating CME credit for enduring materials contact: Julie ReBeau, Program Manager, 734.647.8784, juliwils@umich.edu