



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is Continuing Professional Education (CPE)?

All healthcare professionals are required to participate in continuing professional development throughout their careers. Educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance of healthcare professionals are known as continuing education (CE). The purpose of CE is to improve the ability of healthcare professionals in caring for patients. The content of CE is the body of knowledge and skills generally accepted to be within basic medical sciences, clinical medicine, and the provision of healthcare to the public. CE may also be called continuing medical education (CME) when referring specifically to continuing education for physicians.

### What are the categories of CME and what do they mean?

American Medical Association (AMA) *PRA Category 1 Credit*<sup>™</sup> is the most commonly accepted form of CME credit for physicians. AMA PRA Credit is recognized and accepted by hospital credentialing bodies, state medical licensure boards, medical specialty certifying boards, medical specialty societies, Joint Commission, and other organizations. AMA PRA Credit is also the basis for receiving the AMA Physician's Recognition Award.

- Category 1 CME is formally planned, and meets the criteria of both AMA and the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). Category 1 credit is subjected to the highest standards and can only be awarded by an accredited provider.
- Category 2 CME consists of non-supervised learning activities such as journal clubs, reading, teaching, and attendance at meetings with a medical content.

### Is NFID an accredited provider of continuing education?

Yes, NFID has been accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) since 1999. NFID was most recently awarded Accreditation with Commendation status and was reaccredited for a six year term through July 2019.

### Why is accreditation important?

Accreditation by ACCME is a mark of quality for continuing education activities that are planned, implemented, and evaluated by ACCME accredited providers in accordance with ACCME's Essential Areas and Elements and Accreditation Policies. ACCME accreditation assures the medical community and the public that such activities provide physicians with information that can assist them in maintaining or improving their practice of medicine. Visit [www.accme.org](http://www.accme.org) for additional information about CME accreditation.

### How do I identify legitimate AMA PRA Category 1 Credit<sup>™</sup> activities?

*AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*<sup>™</sup> may only be awarded by the AMA or by organizations accredited by ACCME or an ACCME-recognized state medical society (SMS). Visit [www.accme.org](http://www.accme.org) for a list of the approximately 2,500 recognized providers.

Physicians should be aware that some non-accredited organizations advertise "Category 1 Credits" or "CMEs offered" but these are not the same as "*AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*<sup>™</sup>." When selecting CME activities, physicians should be certain the credit is being awarded by an accredited CME provider. Accredited CME providers are required to have two statements on their promotional materials. One must state the source of their accreditation (ACCME or SMS); while the other designates the maximum number of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*<sup>™</sup> for the activity. To help physicians identify legitimate *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*<sup>™</sup> activities, the AMA requires its CME providers to trademark the credit phrase ("*AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*<sup>™</sup>"). If credit is not indicated in this manner, physicians should question whether the activity is in fact eligible for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*<sup>™</sup>.

### **What is a commercial interest?**

ACCME defines a “commercial interest” as a proprietary entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing healthcare goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients, with the exemption of non-profit or government organizations and non-healthcare related companies.

### **What involvement do commercial interests have in NFID CE activities?**

None. Commercial support is given in the form of unrestricted, independent educational grants. NFID policies ensure that commercial interests have no influence or control over the content of any educational activity. NFID independently determines CE needs, educational objectives, all persons in a position to control the content, the educational methods, and activity evaluations.

### **How do I know the content is valid and based on science rather than biased toward a particular point of view?**

Content validity is ensured in several ways. Speakers are required to disclose any conflicts of interests and must provide a copy of their presentation to NFID in advance of the activity for the purpose of peer review. Speakers are notified in writing of NFID’s requirements and must sign and return an attestation form that they will comply with the following requirements:

- Balance and scientific accuracy in the presentation, with content free of influence by industry or financial contributors.

NFID’s medical director, staff, and activity planning committees work closely with all speakers to ensure understanding and adherence to these requirements. NFID staff and/or leaders attend all educational activities to monitor compliance and learners are surveyed about their perception of any bias.

All presentations give a balanced view of therapeutic options. Speakers attest in writing that they will comply with the following requirements:

- If providing recommendations involving clinical medicine, they will be based on evidence that is accepted within the profession of medicine as adequate justification for their indications and contraindications in the care of patients.
- All scientific research referred to, reported, or used in support of justification of a patient care recommendation will conform to the generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection, and analysis.
- If discussing specific healthcare products or services, use generic names to the extent possible. If trade names need to be used, use trade names from several companies when available, and not just trade names from any single company.

Additional information is included in [NFID Policies for Managing Commercial Support and Conflicts of Interest](#).

### **How is a CE activity planned?**

The first step is determining the educational need. Information on educational need may be based on surveys of prior learners, members of planning committees and subject matter experts, new practice guidelines or techniques, medical literature, and other related sources. The second step is to identify professional practice gaps and link educational needs with desired results through learning objectives that are built around the documented practice gap and allows for measurement of results. The third step involves evaluating the effectiveness of the CE activity in meeting the identified need and professional practice gap, by demonstrating how, as the result of the activity, improvements in knowledge, competence, or performance in practice were achieved. Activity evaluations and information about outcomes guide future educational activities.

### **Who is involved in CE planning?**

The NFID Board of Directors is the governing body of NFID. The Board of Directors established a Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Committee to provide direction to the overall program. This committee oversees and reviews the program in terms of the CE mission of NFID.

The planning of Individual educational activities is led by NFID’s medical director. NFID collaborates with numerous organizations and invites leading subject matter experts and scientists to assist in developing educational activities. All individuals involved in the planning of each activity are clearly identified and their names are provided to activity participants prior to their participation in the activity.

**What documentation does a participant receive for participating in a CE activity? How long must NFID maintain participation records?**

NFID issues a credit certificate at the completion of all NFID educational activities. Records verifying participation will be maintained by NFID for six years from the date of the activity.

**Who should I contact for more information about NFID CE activities?**

Professional Education  
National Foundation for Infectious Diseases  
7201 Wisconsin Avenue  
Suite 750  
Bethesda, MD 20814  
301-656-0003  
[cme@nfid.org](mailto:cme@nfid.org)