

The Definition of Continuing Medical Education

(from the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education)

ACCME Definition or What is Considered CME?

Continuing medical education consists of educational activities which 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. The content of CME is that body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine, and the provision of health care to the public.

ACCME Note

The ACCME definition of CME is broad, to encompass continuing educational activities that assist physicians in carrying out their professional responsibilities more effectively and efficiently. Examples of topics that are included in the ACCME definition of CME content include:

- Management, for physicians responsible for managing a health care facility
- Educational methodology, for physicians teaching in a medical school
- Practice management, for physicians interested in providing better service to patients
- Coding and reimbursement within a medical practice

When physicians participate in continuing education activities that are not directly related to their professional work, these do not fall within the ACCME definition of CME content. Although they may be worthwhile for physicians, continuing education activities related to a physician's nonprofessional educational needs or interests, such as personal financial planning or appreciation of literature or music, are not considered CME content by the ACCME.