



CME Policies and Procedures Handbook

Revised September 16, 2024



The mission statement of the CME Program is to:

✓ **“Advance medical knowledge and skills in Georgia.”**

This is broadly framed to support the full range of continuing education activities toward the achievement of improved institutional and provider competence and performance, as well as improved patient outcomes and experience.

To identify and plan educational activities that meet our mission and comply with our CME accreditation requirements, a set of policies and procedures have been defined regarding expectations, processes, and standards.

The CME Team is available to support the development of effective learning. Please contact the CME Team early to start discussing your learning activity and how it can be both maximally effective and qualify for CME credit.

✓ **Purpose:**

To ensure the quality of continuous professional development opportunities at the Medical College of Georgia and its affiliates and to provide excellent service in continuing medical education

✓ **Key Stakeholders**

Primary

- MCG’s Augusta campus physicians
- MCG’s regional campus physicians
- MCG departments hosting CME activities

Secondary

- Physicians attending MCG-sponsored CME events
- MCG’s Educational Partners/Affiliates
- Wellstar MCG Health

Tertiary

- Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME)

✓ **Types of CME Activities**

- Regularly scheduled series - directly and jointly sponsored
- Conferences - directly and jointly sponsored
- Enduring materials/On Demand material (asynchronous content up to three years)
- Learning by Teaching (new preparation for clinical teaching)

✓ **Scope - Services**

- Review activity applications for quality
- Support CME activity planners
- Support CME end users
- Maintain MCG’s online CME dashboard (MCG CloudCME)
- Monitoring conflicts of interest disclosures, recording attendance, evaluating activities, awarding credits, hosting transcripts
- Support registration and payment needs of CME activities
- Prepare a report for ACCME’s annual review and documentation and self-study for ACCME’s three-year accreditation review (*Note: Accreditation with Commendation is a six-year term for accreditation review*)



✓ **Support**

- MCG Dean’s Office
 - ACCME annual license
 - CloudCME platform annual license

✓ **CME service fees**

- MCG sponsored conferences
- MCG affiliates’ regularly scheduled series and conferences
- Applied toward the above costs covered by the MCG Dean’s Office

✓ **SERVICE FEE SCHEDULE:**

MCG’s Continuing Medical Education Office			
Service Fee Structure <small>(Rev. 9/16/24)</small>			
	MCG Sponsored	MCG Educational/Clinical Affiliate	MCG Non-Affiliate
Regularly Scheduled Series			
Fee (annually)	\$1,000 100% Waived	\$2,000 TBD	\$2,000 TBD
plus \$5 per awarded credit hour	100% Waived	TBD	TBD
Maintenance of Certification (MOC)			
Fee (annually)	Included with RSS	Included with RSS	Included with RSS
plus \$10 awarded credit hour	100% Waived	TBD	TBD
Enduring Materials			
Fee (3 years) One time set-up	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$4,000
Fee (3 years) Ongoing Series	\$3,000	\$4,500	\$6,000
Events (workshops, conferences) Credit Only			
	\$2,000	\$2,500	\$4,500
Events (workshops, conferences) Credit and Registration			
	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$5,500
Events (workshops, conferences) Credit, Registration, and Payment*			
	\$3,000	\$3,500	\$6,500
<small>* An example of fees for a regularly scheduled series at MCG with 500 credit hours awarded would be (\$1000 + \$2500 = \$3,500). ** The credit card transaction fee for all online registrations is 3.5%.</small>			
NOTES:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services rendered will only be those included in your executed Service Fee Agreement. Any additional services requested after the Service Fee Agreement is signed will be added to your final Service Fee Invoice. 			
<small>Please allow a minimum of one month after the completion of your activity for your registration fees (minus your service fees) to be submitted to your department.</small>			



Contents

Mission Statement, etc2

Section 1 - Accreditation of our CME Team5

Section 2 - CME Credits Currently Provided5

Section 3 - Activity Types Currently Supported.....5

Section 4 - Roles and Responsibilities6

Section 5 - CME Team6

Section 6 - Commercial Interest and Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosures.....7

Section 7 - Disclosure of Financial Relationships / Multiplicity (Conflict) of Interest.....8

Section 8 - Financial Support for CME Activities9

Section 9 - Commercial Support (excluding Commercial Exhibits and Advertisement)10

Section 10 - Advertising, Promotion, and Commercial Exhibits10

Section 11 - CME Application & Application Process.....11

Section 12 - Activity Organization for a Course/Registration/Fees12

Section 13 - Attendance and Attestation.....13

Section 14 - Retroactive CME Credits.....13

Section 15 - Course13

Section 16 - Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS)13

Section 17 - Evaluation14

Section 18 - Activities.....14

Section 19 - CME Program14

Section 20 - Joint Providership.....15

Section 21 - Financial Analysis and Management15

Section 22 - Activity Financial Planning15

Section 23 - Service Fee Waiver or Reduction Request16

Section 24 - Privacy.....16



1. Accreditation of our CME Team

- 1.1. The Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.
- 1.2. The role of the MCG CME Team is to provide CME-related services and to ensure approved activities meet or exceed the quality expectations for ACCME's Criteria and Standards for Commercial Support the MCG CME Office, MCG Industry Relations Policy and guidelines and the MCG CME missions are maintained when reviewing CME activity applications for credit.
- 1.3. If an employee has a conflict of interest concerning a CME educational activity, the employee will be recused from reviewing the activity application. The CME office will make the final decision on the approval/denial of CME educational activity applications.

2. CME Credits Currently Provided

- 2.1. Multiple continuing education credit types are relevant for different medical professions. Our CME Program currently offers the following credit types:
- 2.2. AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™
- 2.3. Maintenance of Certification (MOC)* for the American Board of Anesthesiology (ABA), American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM), American Board of Otolaryngology (ABOHNS), American Board of Pathology (ABPath), American Board of Pediatrics (ABP), American Board of Surgery (ABS), American Board of Orthopaedic Surgery (ABOS), and American Board of Thoracic Surgery (ABTS)

****Beginning January 1, 2025, we will be offering American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) MOC. Additional MOC will be offered in the future.***

- 2.4. Continuing Education credit (CE)
- 2.5. Attendance credit

Contact the CME Team to discuss how we can be of assistance.

3. Activity Types Currently Supported

- 3.1. Our CME Team supports different activity types. The first two types listed below are the most common within our organization now.
- 3.2. Course/Conference: A Course/Conference is a live activity where the learner participates in person. A course is planned as an individual event. Examples: annual meeting, conference, seminar.
- 3.3. Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS): A course is identified as a Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS) when it is designed as a series with multiple sessions that occur on an ongoing basis (offered weekly, monthly, or quarterly) and is primarily planned by and presented to the accredited organization's professional staff. Examples of activities that are planned and presented as a Regularly Scheduled Series are: Grand Rounds, Tumor Boards, and M&M Conferences.
- 3.4. Enduring Material/On Demand Learning: An Enduring Material/On Demand Learning is a printed, recorded, or computer-presented activity that may be used over time at various locations and which constitutes a planned activity. It is available when the learner chooses to complete it. It is "enduring," meaning that there is not just one time on one day to participate in it. Rather, the participant determines when he/she participates.

Examples: online interactive educational module, recorded presentation, podcast.



- 3.5. Internet Live Course: An Internet Live Course is an online course available at a certain time on a certain date and is only available in real-time, just as if it were a course held in an auditorium. Once the event has taken place, learners may no longer participate in that activity. Example: webcast.
- 3.6. Journal-Based Activity: A Journal-Based Activity includes the reading of an article (or adapted formats for special needs), a provider-stipulated/learner-directed phase (that may include reflection, discussion, or debate about the material contained in the article(s)), and a requirement for the completion by the learner of a pre-determined set of questions or tasks relating to the content of the material as part of the learning process.
- 3.7. Quality Performance Based Improvement: Quality Performance Based Improvement Activities are based on a learner's participation in a project established and/or guided by a provider in which a learner identifies an educational need through a measure of his/her performance in practice, engages in educational experiences to meet the need, integrates learning into patient care and then re-evaluates his/her performance.
- 3.8. Learning from Teaching: A Learning from Teaching Activity recognizes that learning can occur as physicians prepare to teach. Learning from Teaching represents a range of activities in which a physician invests time in learning about a subject he/she will be teaching or in preparing for an upcoming teaching activity (e.g., supervision, bedside teaching, grand rounds, teaching workshop, or module).

The remainder of this document focuses on the two pre-dominant activity types, Course and RSS.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1. Various stakeholders participate in the planning, execution, and evaluation of each CME Activity. Each of the roles defined below plays a role in each activity type, even though the number of individuals per role may vary depending on the size of your activity.

5. CME Team

- 5.1. Your CME Team is here to support you through the CME process from initial application through delivery and lessons learned for the planning of future events. The CME Team can help you understand the CME accreditation requirements and has experience developing and planning successful learning events.
- 5.2. Therefore, the role of the CME Team is to guide you through the processes, coach on educational aspects and inspire the activity planning with innovation and best practices in adult learning. The role of the CME Team is not to organize the logistical side of a learning event (e.g., room booking, speaker travel, catering, etc.), but we can provide some assistance, for example, in the form of sharing experience, contacts, and checklists for project management.
- 5.3. The CME Team also ensures quality, reviews applications, manages income, educates and trains (educating activity directors and coordinators in the use of CloudCME) & prepares documentation for PARS and accreditation review self-study.

Please reach out to the CME Team as soon as possible in your process of generating ideas and formulating plans to leverage the full support that the team can offer.

- 5.4. The responsibilities below should clarify what the CME Team will cover. However, being involved early in the planning process, the team hopes to be flexible and as service oriented as possible:
 - 5.4.1. Assist in the development of CME Activities independent of commercial interest (i.e., training on electronic disclosure preparation & checking for electronic disclosure information, assisting in the management of & helping to resolve potential multiplicities of interest, managing commercial support) (see Commercial Interest)
 - 5.4.2. Coach the Planning Committee in the identification of professional practice gaps and educational needs



and inspire innovation and best practices in adult learning throughout the planning and organization of the activity

- 5.4.3. Approve the finalized CME Application with the Activity Planning Committee (see CME Application)
- 5.4.4. Help the Activity Planning Committee implement CME Committee feedback in the activity design
- 5.4.5. Advise on activity financial plan based on historic data and best practices (see Financial Management)
- 5.4.6. Process financial transactions for revenue-generating activities and close out activity accounts
- 5.4.7. Further support the Planning Committee through the activity planning phase:

NOTE: Each activity is required to have a director, who assumes full responsibility for the oversight and implementation of the activity. The Director must have an MCG faculty appointment. Having an Activity Coordinator is highly recommended to assist in the operations of the activity and interaction with the CloudCME dashboard.

5.4.8. For Courses:

- 5.4.8.1. Work with the Planning Committee and Marketing on promotional materials and management of the registration process; if part of the Service Agreement
- 5.4.8.2. Review presentations before the activity, to ensure objectivity and create a website for participants to download the presentations, if agreed with the speaker
- 5.4.8.3. Assist with registration on the day of the event if event registration fees are due
- 5.4.8.4. Provide name badges and sign-in sheets based on the registration lists

5.4.9. For RSS:

- 5.4.9.1. Your CME Team will be less involved in the planning of each session, but we are open to discussing the support you may need

5.4.10. Propose evaluation questions and set up the attestation to allow participants to claim credit (see Evaluation)

5.4.11. Facilitate discussion about participant evaluation and lessons learned

5.4.12. Report evaluations to the Planning Committee and develop program-based analysis



6. Commercial Interest and Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosures

- 6.1. We commit to a CME Program that is independent of commercial interests, which includes appropriate management of commercial support, separation of promotion from education active promotion of improvements in health care, and NOT promotion of proprietary interests of a commercial interest.
- 6.2. A commercial interest is hereby defined as *“any entity producing, marketing, re-selling, or distributing health care goods or services consumed by, or used on, patients.”*
- 6.3. Organizations exempt from this definition are:
 - 501-C Non-profit organizations
 - Government organizations
 - Non-health care related companies
 - Liability insurance providers
 - Health insurance providers
 - Group medical practices
 - For-profit hospitals
 - For-profit rehabilitation centers
 - For-profit nursing homes
 - Blood banks
 - Diagnostic laboratories



7. Disclosure of Financial Relationships / Multiplicity (Conflict) of Interest

- 7.1. A multiplicity (conflict) of interest as defined by the ACCME occurs “when an individual has an opportunity to affect CME content about products or services of a commercial interest with which he/she has a financial relationship.”
- 7.2. Regardless of whether relevant financial relationships exist or not, disclosure to learners needs to be provided before the start of the learning event.
- 7.3. A relevant financial relationship is hereby defined as a “financial relationship between the person in control of content (or their spouse/partner) and an ACCME-defined commercial interest of any amount (\$) in the past 12 months and the products/services of the ACCME-defined commercial interest are related to the content of the CME activity.”
- 7.4. On an annual basis, the CME Team collects information on financial relationships from CloudCME Memberships by and through the submission of electronic Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosures. Should there be a case in which a financial relationship becomes relevant to an activity, the presenter in any activity would recuse himself/herself from further discussing/reviewing the activity in question.
- 7.5. Activity Planning Committee information is collected at the point of the CME application. Should there be a case in which a relevant financial relationship is detected in the planning phase of an activity, the individual in question would be required to step down from the Activity Planning Committee, and the content of the activity would be re- reviewed by the CME Committee, as well as, the remaining members of the Activity Planning Committee, to evaluate whether there is bias present in the activity content and it would be discussed how to eliminate such bias if detected.
- 7.6. For Courses, additional disclosures are collected upon finalization of presenters, speakers, moderators, etc.
- 7.7. For an RSS, this is an annual process in which the CME Team works with the Activity Planning Committee on their own updated financial relationship information and lists of presenters, speakers, moderators, etc. planned for the year and more generally participants who can influence the content of a session. These individuals are contacted subsequently to collect financial relationship information. Since not all speakers are usually finalized for the full year, we move ahead as much as possible and complete the disclosure collection as information becomes available.
- 7.8. If relevant financial relationships exist, the CME Team works with the Planning Committee Director to resolve the potential conflict of interest. Options include:
 - 7.8.1. Recusing the person from controlling aspects of planning and content with which they have a conflict of interest
 - 7.8.2. Using peer review of planning decisions (for planners) by person(s) who do not have conflicts of interest related to the content
 - 7.8.3. Using peer review of content (for authors/presenters) by person(s) who do not have conflicts of interest related to the content
 - 7.8.4. Ensuring that clinical recommendations are evidence-based and free of commercial bias (e.g., by peer-reviewed literature, adhering to evidence-based practice guidelines)
 - 7.8.5. Using other methods that meet ACCME’s expectations
- 7.9. We use an electronic Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosure on CloudCME before the beginning of the event. For an event, the activity coordinator is responsible for reviewing each session to ensure that the presenter has a valid electronic COI Disclosure before the activity.
- 7.10. Should there be a case in which commercial bias is detected during a presentation, the Activity Planning Director or Coordinator and the CME Team will investigate the reason this was not identified in the planning process and will define additional steps, if needed, for a more effective process moving forward. The investigation always starts with a review of the steps taken to ensure independence.



7.11. Conflict of Interest (COI) Disclosures must be completed in CloudCME on an annual basis (one year from the date of your last submission). This COI Disclosure is valid for any MCG-related CME event/activity for one year. Failure to submit this COI Disclosure will result in no credits being awarded for the presenter's portion of the event that does not have a valid COI Disclosure. You must also submit an updated COI Disclosure if your relationship with a commercial interest changes between submissions.

7.11.1. Financial relationships are relevant if the following three conditions are met for the prospective person who will control the content of the education:

7.11.1.1. A financial relationship, in any amount, exists between the person in control of content and an ineligible company.

7.11.1.2. The financial relationship has existed during the past 24 months.

7.11.1.3. The content of the education is related to the products of an ineligible company with whom the person has a financial relationship

7.12. All COI Disclosures must be completed online within two (2) weeks before any activity takes place.

As a reminder, any entity whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients is considered an ineligible company & your relationship with this company must be disclosed. If unsure whether your relationship with any entity is eligible or ineligible, please reach out to MCG's Office for Continuing Medical Education at 706-721-8775 or CME_MCG@augusta.edu for clarification before submitting your COI Disclosure.

8. Financial Support for CME Activities

8.1. To reduce the risk of commercial bias affecting educational content provided at CME activities, MCG's CME Office monitors any financial support provided by ineligible companies to CME activity hosts. Depending on the type of financial support [(1) Commercial Support - Grant or In-Kind Contribution, (2) Exhibitor Fee or Vendor Fee], specific rules apply for how the support can be spent. These requirements are part of [ACCME's CME Accreditation Standard 4](#).

8.2. For grants and in-kind contributions provided by ineligible companies, MCG's CME Office distributes a Commercial Support agreement to all parties (i.e., MCG's CME Office, a company providing financial support, and activity host). All parties must sign the agreement before the start of the activity. Once signed, all parties can access the completed agreement online. If an agreement is incomplete before the start of the activity, the activity host must decline any financial support (if not already received) or return to the company (if already received). Upon completion of the activity, the activity host must report to MCG's CME Office how all the grant/in-kind contribution support was applied toward the activity (e.g., costs related to venue, catering, marketing, staffing, presenter travel).

8.3. For exhibitor and vending fee payments, MCG's CME Office distributes an Exhibitor/Vendor agreement to all parties (i.e., MCG's CME Office, a company that will be exhibiting or vending, activity host). All parties must sign the agreement before the start of the activity. Once signed, all parties can access the completed agreement online. If an agreement is incomplete before the start of the activity, the company cannot be an exhibitor or vendor at the activity, and the activity host must decline any financial support (if not already received) or return to the company (if already received). CME activity hosts do not need to report to MCG's CME Office how this income is spent.

8.4. Definition: An ineligible company is one whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients. Examples of ineligible companies are outlined on the [ACCME Website](#).



Notes:

- 8.5. The activity host must inform the activity participants of the ineligible companies providing financial support to the activity.
- 8.6. Augusta University's Legal Department has vetted the MCG CME Office's CME Commercial Support agreement and Exhibitor/Vendor Agreement. The CME Activity Grant agreement addresses the following areas: 1) attestation to no commercial bias in education content, 2) the name of the company providing grant support, and 3) the amount of the grant support. To avoid confusion, redundancy, and legal liability, activity hosts may not use their financial support agreements.
- 8.7. MCG's CME Office may discontinue CME services for an activity if an activity host does not adhere to MCG's CME Office requirements for financial support.

9. Commercial Support (excluding Commercial Exhibits and Advertisement)

- 9.1. All commercial support associated with a CME activity must be given with the full knowledge and approval of your CME Team. Commercial Exhibits and Advertisements differ from Commercial Support in that they are promotional activities, paid for by commercial interests, in exchange for promotional representation (and are therefore not considered to be Commercial Support).
- 9.2. In the case commercial support is offered for a CME activity, the terms, conditions, and purpose of the commercial support must be documented in a Letter of Agreement for Commercial Support form between the commercial supporter, the CME Team, and the Planning Committee Director. The agreement must specify the commercial interest that is the source of the commercial support. Last, this agreement needs to be signed by all parties before the learning activity.
- 9.3. Social events, or meals, at commercially supported events cannot compete with or take precedence over educational events. Therefore, any social event or meal can only be offered before or after the educational content is presented – they cannot happen in parallel. Any food/beverage service and social event provided by commercial support will be stopped 10 minutes before the beginning of a learning event and will only begin 5 minutes after the closing of a learning event.
- 9.4. No matter the CME activity, commercial support cannot be used to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for non-teacher or non-author participants. We can use commercial support to pay for travel, lodging, honoraria, or personal expenses for bona fide employees and volunteers. In any case, we need to be able to provide documentation detailing the receipt and expenditure of the commercial support.

10. Advertising, Promotion, and Commercial Exhibits

- 10.1. All official marketing material must be approved or developed by the Office for Continuing Medical Education. This is to ensure that all marketing materials have the appropriate accreditation statement for the activity. Examples of marketing materials are included but not limited to:
 - 10.1.1.1. Save-the-Date-Cards
 - 10.1.1.2. Fliers
 - 10.1.1.3. Brochures
- 10.2. CME credit can only be mentioned after the CME application has been approved by the CME reviewers. A few rules for mentioning CME credits in your promotional material:
 - 10.2.1.1.1. If learning objectives are mentioned in the marketing material, the number of CME credit hours and our accreditation statement need to be included.



- 10.2.1.1.2. If you want to state the number of CME credit hours, our accreditation statement needs to be included in the material.

It is important that the CME Team participates in developing your material before it is published (e.g., social media, emails, electronic and print advertising, websites, brochures, etc.).

- 10.3. Additionally, there are various guidelines to follow to appropriately manage promotion and commercial exhibits of commercial interests:
 - 10.3.1. Print advertisements and promotional materials cannot be interleaved within the pages of the CME content. Advertisements and promotional materials may face the first or last pages of printed CME content if these materials are not related to the CME content they face and are not paid for by the commercial supporters of the CME activity.
 - 10.3.2. For computer-based materials, advertisements, and promotional information will not be visible on the screen
 - 10.3.3. at the same time as the CME content and not interleaved between computer windows or screens of the CME content.
 - 10.3.4. Advertising of any type is prohibited within the educational content of CME activities on the internet including, but not limited to, banner ads, subliminal ads, and pop-up window ads.
 - 10.3.5. For computer-based CME activities, advertisements and promotional materials may not be visible on the screen at the same time as the CME content and not interleaved between computer windows or screens of the CME content.
 - 10.3.6. For audio and video recording, advertisements and promotional materials will not be included within the CME. There will be no “commercial breaks.”
 - 10.3.7. For live, face-to-face CME, advertisements and promotional materials cannot be displayed or distributed in the educational space immediately before, during, or after a CME activity. Providers cannot allow representatives of commercial interests to engage in sales or promotional activities while in the space or place of the CME activity.
 - 10.3.8. For journal-based CME, none of the elements of journal-based CME can contain any advertising or product group messages of commercial interests. The learner must not encounter advertising within the pages of the article or the pages of the related questions or evaluation materials.
 - 10.3.9. Our education activities are not permitted to be marketed on commercial interests’ websites or marketed by commercial interests.

11. CME Application

To ensure that only activities that fit with the overall mission statement are approved for CME credit, we have a required activity review (application) process. Besides ensuring that the activities meet the CME mission statement, the process also aims to offer an outside perspective on the activity planning to prepare and organize the best possible learning intervention to close an identified practice gap.

11.1. Application Process

- 11.2. Each activity is to be reviewed by a CME Team member. There are two review steps: the initial and the final review. In cases where a third opinion may be needed, the Senior Associate Dean for Evaluation, Accreditation, and CQI and/or the Vice Dean for Academic Affairs will assist.
- 11.3. The initial Application focuses on the general activity information, disclosures of the Activity Planning Committee, the practice gap, educational needs, desirable physician attributes, and potential financial support.



- 11.4. Additionally, we are looking for an agenda & presenters list (we have a template that is compatible with CloudCME to use for each). In the ideal case, the CME Team has been involved with the Activity Planning Committee from the very beginning and could therefore coach in the completion of the required material.
- 11.5. The CME Team member receives the Application via electronic submission on CloudCME and has two weeks to provide feedback. Having reviewed this initial application, the CME Team member approves or rejects the application and gives general recommendations for improvements. At this point of approval, the Activity Planning Committee can now start advertising their activity for CME credit.
- 11.6. Once the CME Team member approves the Application, the number of CME credits will be confirmed by comparison to the agenda. At any point during the planning process, the CME credits can be adjusted or even denied if ACCME requirements are not fully met. Should an activity be denied CME credit after it has been promoted for CME credit, all registered participants will be contacted and informed of this change. Registrants can then cancel their registration free of charge.

Applications for CME services that are submitted less than 4 weeks before the activity will not be reviewed.

12. Activity Organization for a Course

The activity organization includes various steps focused on coordination. One piece the CME Team participates in is assisting with the registration process. For all CME activity types, we offer an official registration process through CloudCME.

12.1. Registration and Registration Fees

- 12.2. Registration is the process in which participants sign up for a CME activity and potentially pay for the event if there is a registration fee connected to the activity.
- 12.3. The registration happens through CloudCME to track participants and to allow participants to easily claim credit after the event.
- 12.4. A few elements need to be finalized before registration can be opened:
 - 12.4.1.1. The sessions that participants should be able to sign up for if more than one
 - 12.4.1.2. The registration fee(s) per participant group
- 12.5. The CME Team will set up the registration page according to the agreement with the Activity Planning Committee and the CME Team will evaluate the functionality of the registration page(s). Only then will they share the registration page with the Activity Planning Committee for final review.
- 12.6. A good rule of thumb is to open registration at least six weeks before the start of the Course. Please consider special events, holidays, etc. when setting your registration timeline.
- 12.7. Registration fees are defined by the Service Fee Structure. The CME Team can decide to offer various registration types with different registration fees connected to them. Students of the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta
- 12.8. Universities are not charged for continuing education activities.
- 12.9. Depending on the event, it may be an innovative idea to offer early bird pricing or late fees. Charging cancellation fees is also up to the Activity Planning Committee.
- 12.10. Upon registration on CloudCME, the payment can be made before the event through the secure electronic registration process or on the day of the event via the same process.
- 12.11. Once registration has been opened the CME Team will share a how-to guide to show the activity coordinator how to access registration information. The Planning Committee should decide on further



marketing activities based on this data.

- 12.12. Any registration refunds will be initiated by the CME Team and processed via reversal of credit card payment within ten (10) business days of the notification of the cancellation of the activity.

13. Attendance and Attestation

- 13.1. All attendance to any activity is recorded via text messaging. Attendance reports can be extracted from CloudCME following the activity. Attendance is recorded sixty (60) minutes before and five (5) days after each RSS activity, and sixty (60) minutes before and fourteen (14) days after each conference via text messaging. All attendees who wish to record attendance and/or claim CME credit must do so electronically via mobile telephone for all activities.
- 13.2. Attendance cannot be recorded manually by administrative assistants or coordinators or via CloudCME online.
- 13.3. Attestation refers to the process whereby participants claim their credit after a CME activity. Participants can claim partial credit in 15-minute (0.25-hour) increments. This means that to claim credit participants need to attest to the amount of time they spent on each activity. Participants should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

14. Retroactive CME Credits

Retroactive CME Credits will only be issued for ninety (90) days past the date of the activity in which attendance was not recorded. It is the responsibility of the attendee (or their administrative assistant) to provide the Office for Continuing Medical Education with the date, activity name, and activity code for any missing CME credit.

15. Course

- 15.1. The attendance and attestation for Courses are available after the CME activity through an evaluation process. Electronic instructions will be provided to the activity coordinator to share with the participants on the day of the activity.
- 15.2. All CME Courses have an electronic attestation and remain open and active to receive physician's credit claims for at least thirty (30) calendar days after the conclusion of the activity. All attendance is recorded via text and CME credits are awarded after the completion of an Evaluation.

16. Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS)

- 16.1. All CME RSS activities have an electronic attendance via text message process. The activity code for participants to claim their credit electronically via text messaging remains open and active for one (1) hour before, and five (5) days after the conclusion of the activity.



17. Evaluation

- 17.1. All CME Activities need to be evaluated to analyze changes in learners (competence, performance, or patient outcomes) – Courses after the event and Regularly Scheduled Series at least twice per year.
- 17.2. These evaluations are reviewed bi-annually by the CME Team.

18. Activities

- 18.1. The evaluations for CME activity for a Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS) evaluate the effectiveness of the CME activity in terms of how the learning translates into changes in the daily practice which should eventually lead to improved patient outcomes.
- 18.2. We have defined a set of standard questions to be asked for a bi-annual RSS evaluation:

REQUIRED Bi-Annual Program Analysis & Analysis of Change

Participant Demographics: *

- Physician (MD/DO)
- Advanced Practice Providers (CNP/CRNA/PA)
- Other Health Care Professional
- Other

The mission statement of the MCG CME Program is to: "Advance medical knowledge and skills in Georgia". Do you believe CME Office meeting their Mission Statement? *

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree (please explain)

Based on what you learned in this RSS the past 6 months, what ONE change are you most likely to make in your practice or with your health care team? *

- Implement a new skill in the care of my patients
- Create/revise protocols, policies and/or procedures
- Seek additional information about the topic(s) presented
- Better engage other members of the team in the care of my patients
- Promote patient and family engagement in care planning and decision-making
- My current practice has been reinforced by the information presented
- No longer practicing/Still in training

Please describe any specific change(s) you intend to make in your practice or with your team as a direct result of what you have learn from this RSS over the past 6 months

- 18.3. For courses, we will pull a summary of the evaluation data at least two (2) weeks after the activity is completed and provide it to the Activity Planning Committee.

19. CME Program

- 19.1. Once per year, the CME Team defines key performance indicators (KPI) and related target numbers to assess the success of the CME Program overall.
- 19.2. If there is a discrepancy between the target and the actual achievements of the CME Program, concrete actions are defined and tracked at least bi-annually to continuously improve the CME Program.



20. Joint Providership

- 20.1. The ACCME defines joint providership as “the providership of a CME activity by one accredited and one non-accredited organization”. In such a case, our CME Team, as the accredited provider, takes responsibility for a CME activity. Our CME Team also ensures that we inform the learners of the joint providership relationship using the appropriate accreditation statement on all printed material and otherwise needed.
- 20.2. We charge the non-accredited organization a service fee which depends on the size of the activity, the effort needed for planning and organization, and the value of the activity for the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University.

21. Financial Analysis and Management

The fiscal management of an activity refers to the handling and accounting of all monies received and spent on a certain CME activity. According to the ACCME, the CME Team is required to produce accurate documentation detailing the receipt and expenditure of commercial support. To simplify the scenarios, we divide our activities into:

- 21.1. Non-Revenue Generating Activities
 - 21.1.1. As the name implies, non-revenue-generating activities are those that do not bring in any funding from any outside source (e.g., registration fees, grants, commercial support, exhibitors, and donations). Most RSS and Enduring Material activities fall into this category, although it may apply to a Course.
 - 21.1.2. These activities usually have low expenses paid out of a departmental account or no expenses at all. Even though the finances of these activities are managed by the organizing department, the CME Team does require the department/the Activity Planning Committee to fully comply with the CME policy on budgeting, expense timelines, etc.
- 21.2. Revenue Generating Activities
 - 21.2.1. Revenue-generating activities refer to any type of activity that brings in outside income (e.g., registration fees, grants, commercial support, exhibitors, and donations). These activities will be given a separate account and any money transfers will be managed by the CME Team, with full transparency to the sponsoring department.

22. Activity Financial Planning

You may have historical data and previous experiences on which to base your financial assumptions if you have been involved in CME planning before. For a brand-new CME activity, reach out to your CME Team to get insights into similar CME events and learn from best practices identified by our institution or our national peers.

- 22.1. The financial plan sets the baseline for the activity, so there are a few things to take into consideration when creating your financial plan.
- 22.2. The financial plan should be discussed early in the activity planning and reviewed iteratively as the organization becomes more concrete.
- 22.3. All planned revenue needs to be realistic, and the amount should be decided using historical data or another rational basis for comparison.
- 22.4. The Planning Committee will set the registration and exhibitor fees, using historical data, similar events, and/or insights from the CME Team as references.



- 22.5. Financial plans for revenue-generating events should always include the Education Allocation as a known expense when building their financial plan.
- 22.6. Even though we aim for zero-sum learning events (not for profit), your financial plan should be positive to account for unexpected changes.

23. Service Fee Waiver or Reduction Request

- 23.1. A CME activity director may request a waiver or reduction of the CME service fee charged by MCG's CME Office. The steps for a fee waiver or reduction are below:
 - 23.1.1. CME Activity Director completes and submits MCG's CME Office Service Fee Waiver/Reduction Form
 - 23.1.2. The MCG's CME Office Director will review the request and make a recommendation to MCG's Academic Affairs senior leadership.
 - 23.1.3. MCG's Academic Affairs senior leadership makes the final decision on waiving or reducing the fee or asking for more activity details from the activity director to appropriately consider the request.
- 23.2. Criteria for a waiver or reduction include:
 - 23.2.1. the extent to which the activity directly impacts MCG faculty or learners,
 - 23.2.2. the extent to which MCG faculty or learners are engaged in the provision of the activity,
 - 23.2.3. direct or indirect benefits to MCG, and
 - 23.2.4. commercial support for the activity.
- 23.3. MCG's CME Office Director will inform the CME activity director of the waiver/reduction decision within four (4) weeks from the date of submission of the request.

PLEASE NOTE:

Submitting documentation well in advance of the anticipated event start date will ensure that requested CME services can be provided in time. Applications for fee reductions/waivers are valid for one activity. An additional application will need to be submitted for additional activities. A regularly scheduled series is considered one activity.

24. Privacy

- 24.1. Certain personal information about you will be required to sign up for CME activities.
 - 24.1.1. Registration and Account Setup: You are asked to provide your name, contact information, and professional information amongst other details. This solely serves the purpose of uniquely identifying you to manage your credit collections, grant you the right credit types, run reports on conference participation, and contact you, if needed. This account and registration information is stored on a third-party online learning management system that has agreed to meet our institutional security standards.
 - 24.1.2. Payment Information: Some CME activities charge a registration fee. The CME Team does not have access to your banking information if you register online.
 - 24.1.3. Courses and Regularly Scheduled Series: When you attend one of our CME activities in person, we collect information to maintain a record of participation.
 - 24.1.4. Evaluations and Surveys: We use attestation surveys to grant you the correct amount of CME credit. We also use evaluations to gather information about your opinion on a particular CME activity.



As required by our accreditation agency, we will maintain your data for a minimum period of at least six (6) years.

All of our CME Team are trained on these procedures and we do everything in our power to safeguard your information.

The CME Office ensures that we follow the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University's policy on the disclosure of Confidential Information. It is our responsibility to maintain strict confidentiality and security of paper and electronic records in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and the Georgia Personal Identity Protection Act (GPIPA), in addition to other federal and state laws.

Although the CME Office does allow the use of personal information of faculty, staff, and attendees to be used to inform of Conferences, RSS/Grand Rounds, and other activities (i.e., Save-the-Date, flyers, etc.), this information must never be disclosed to sources outside the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University (i.e., pharmaceutical representatives or others for solicitation).