

Continuing Medical Education

Planning Process: Regularly Scheduled Series

The CME planning process occurs in six major stages:

1. Identification of Practice Gap/Planning/Conflict of Interest Review
2. CME Application Process
3. Program development/Faculty/Logistical Planning/Promotion
4. Delivery
5. Final Report and Follow-Up Meeting
6. Outcomes Evaluation

A designated "Activity Director" (physician required) is responsible for overseeing all six stages of this process. In addition, the appointment of an individual to provide administrative support as an "Activity Coordinator" is required. The Office of CME can provide meeting/project management services for some activities, subject to time frame and resources available.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED SERIES (RSS)

All regularly scheduled series are designed to present and discuss current, challenging cases seen in the clinical setting. Discussion is held about the latest national research findings related to the case, as well as the best methods for treatment. Physician participation in a regularly scheduled series activity is indicative that the learners have identified and are trying to close their own practice gaps through self-directed learning. In other words, a physician does not attend a CME activity if he or she perceives there is no practice gap.

An annual planning meeting for the RSS must take place, including (but not limited to) the physician Activity Director, departmental or joint-provider staff, physician, and allied health planning committee members, staff from Quality Improvement and a representative of the Office of CME or Education and Library Committee.

Sample agenda for Planning Meeting:

1. Needs Assessment – Examine: "What is" (actual patient care), The GAP (in knowledge, skills and behaviors), and "What should be" (optimal patient care).
2. Select documentation of the needs assessment (e.g. Clinical research findings, QI analysis, national clinical guidelines, department clinical pathways, previous CME evaluations, expert opinion, library search requests, literature/web searches)
3. Write a "Statement of Need(s)" for the activity
4. Complete the RSS Planning Tool, including the development of learning objectives that are measurable in terms of improved practice performance or patient health status.
5. Obtain completed Conflict of Interest (COI) Reporting Forms for the Activity Director and all committee members and planners.
6. Discuss educational design, proposed topics and faculty.

An application for Regularly Scheduled *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* Series (RSSs) without derivative Enduring Materials must be submitted to the Office of CME once a year (unless otherwise indicated by the Office of CME) by the department or joint provider. The Activity Director must take the lead regarding the content of the Application.

Timeframe for Planning and Approval Process

- Renewals of existing RSSs: a minimum of 8 weeks prior to expiration date. The Office of CME will provide the Activity Director with notification 12 weeks prior to begin needs assessment and planning process.
- New RSSs: Plan for a 3 month period. Month 1: Needs Assessment and Planning. Month 2: Completion of application and designation of credit. Month 3: Training for Activity Coordinator and development of on-site materials.

Requirements for the Application include:

- Statement of Need
- Documentation of Needs Assessment
- Completed RSS Planning Tool – which demonstrates the linkage between the identified need, the desired result of the educational activity, and the learning objectives
- Additional meeting minutes, notes, or agendas
- Signed COI Reporting Forms from Activity Director, and Planning Committee members and any known faculty for the RSS
- Identification of an Activity Coordinator
- Proposed topics and speakers
- Proposed budget

When approved, the designation for the RSS is **valid for one year from the time of approval**, unless otherwise indicated by the Office of CME. Any session during that period is designated for credit if it conforms to the global learning objectives of the RSS and provides the same amount of instructional hours. More specific learning objectives for individual sessions are recommended as they link more closely with each session's content.

A departmental Activity Coordinator must be assigned to be responsible for the production and distribution of required documents, on-site coordination and submission of quarterly reports. The Activity Coordinator is also responsible to provide an attendee roster for each activity. The Activity Coordinator will meet and work collaboratively with Amber Carter, CME Coordinator, and will be required to complete a *RSS Activity Coordinators Training Module* prior to the start of the RSS. A coordinators checklist will be provided for guidance.

When a Session occurs (weekly, monthly, etc.), the Activity Coordinator of the sponsoring department or Joint Provider is responsible for:

- Producing appropriate promotional materials, sending required faculty letters, obtaining speaker COI Reporting Forms, ensuring that any COI identified is resolved and documented by the Activity Director, conducting and summarizing the Quarterly Evaluation Tool, budget and accounting.

- On-site administration, including the provision and collection of Session attendance Sign-In Sheets, Evaluation and Attestation forms, written disclosure of speaker COI information, and timely submission of Quarterly Activity Reports.
- Keeping the program free of commercial bias.

COMPLIANCE WITH ACCME, NSMA, AND OFFICE OF CME STANDARDS

The Office of CME will conduct a review of the first approved RSS session and ascertain whether the RSS is being conducted in compliance with ACCME, NSMA, and Sunrise Health System Office of CME Standards. If the RSS is found to be out of compliance, the Office of CME will inform the Activity Director and Coordinator of corrections required to be implemented during the next session. The Office of CME reserves the right to withdraw designation of credit if the requirements are not met.

QUARTERLY REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Completed Quarterly Reports must be submitted for each Regularly Scheduled Series sponsored by a department or Joint Provider on the following dates: March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. Failure to submit Quarterly Reports will result in credit not being awarded to attendees and/or withdrawal of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* for the activity. The checklist requirements for the Quarterly Report are included in the "Took Kit for Regularly Scheduled Conferences (RSSs)."

Individual CME Transcripts of Attendance for the Regularly Scheduled Series will be issued upon request to the Office of CME.

RSS PLANNING PROCESS FLOWCHART

Step One – Planning & Application

- Physician(s) declare intention to Office of CME to develop RSS or to upgrade existing activity to *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*
- Evaluate if time and resources will allow for RSS. If yes, proceed. If no, then reconsider in the future.
- Conduct a “needs assessment” to evaluate if a need for the activity actually exists. If no need, then stop process.
- Identify Activity Director (physician), Activity Coordinator; assemble Planning Committee to include CME representative. Activity Director and Planning Committee complete “Conflict of Interest Reporting” form.
- Conduct Conflict of Interest process for Activity Director and Planning Committee
- Gather needs assessment materials, planning notes, meeting minutes, etc.
- Hold Planning Committee Meeting. A minimum of one meeting is required. An Office of CME staff member must be present.
- Review needs assessment materials – Examine the GAP in knowledge, skills, or behavior, between “What is” (actual patient care), and “What should be” (optimal patient care).
- Synthesize needs into just those will be addressed in the RSS. Ask “What do we intend to achieve from this RSS relative to each specific need?” Write a Statement of Need.
- Prepare learning objectives. Write them in terms of improved physician performance or patient health outcomes.
- Determine possible topics for RSS sessions and identify proposed faculty. Begin informal invitations.
- Activity Director completes RSS Planning Tool and CME Application. Remember to attach all documentation including needs assessment data. Submit to Office of CME for review.

Step Two – Implementation and On-Site Requirements

- Notification of RSS approval for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* is received by email from the Office of CME.
- Activity Coordinator meets with Amber Carter to learn requirements for administering RSSs, receives the “Toolkit for RSSs” and reviews the “Coordinators Checklist.”
- Activity Director, assisted by Activity Coordinator, formally invites faculty speakers as they are identified:
 - Faculty letters and COI Reporting forms are sent and received back in a timely fashion
 - Activity Director reviews COI Reporting forms and documents that review on “Documentation of Review and Resolution of Faculty COI Reporting” form.
 - COI process for all faculty is conducted.
- Activity Coordinator prepares and distributes program announcement flyer (uses template provided by Office of CME) for each session. The flyer may be distributed by email or posted in hard copy at various locations.
- For each session that takes place, Activity Coordinator provides and collects the following documents:
 - Session Attendance Sign in Sheet, including learning objectives, faculty disclosure information, and required CME accreditation and designation language (template provided by Office of CME)
 - Completed Evaluation and Attestation forms

- At each session, the Activity Director reminds attendees to sign-in, introduces the speakers and makes them aware of any additional disclosure information. The verbal disclosure must be documented.
- Activity Evaluations and Attestations must be conducted at least once quarterly.

Step Three – Compliance Oversight and Reporting

- Amber Carter, CME Coordinator and the Activity Coordinator will attend first approved RSS session.
- Compliance with all the required elements will be reviewed.
- Feedback or corrections will be made to Activity Director and Activity Coordinator on the on-site review.
- If corrections are required, the second session will be reviewed for compliance.
- The Office of CME reserves the right to withdraw designation of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* if the requirements are not met.
- The Office of CME will maintain contact and provide guidance throughout the designation period of the RSS. RSS's are designated for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* a one year period, unless otherwise indicated by the Office of CME. Email notification will be sent 3 months prior to expiration to being the next planning cycle.
- Quality Activity Reports are submitted to the Office of CME on March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31. If Reports are not received on time, credit cannot be awarded to attendees.