

# inside *medical education*

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## NAAMECC MONOGRAPH CLARIFIES COMPLIANCE ISSUES

The North American Association of Medical Education and Communication Companies (NAAMECC), a nonprofit association dedicated to promoting best practices in CME, is offering guidance and clarification on compliance issues that have had everyone—even industry pros—scratching their heads.

The NAAMECC monograph recommendations include:

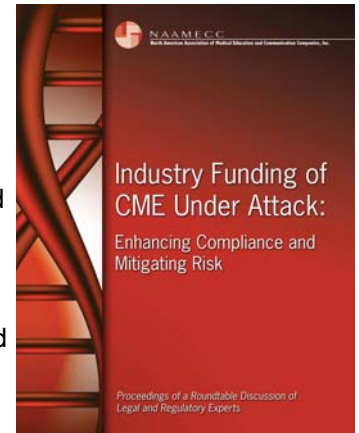
- Type of provider should have little bearing on risk
- Firewalls should be established by all providers to ensure the independence of education
- Ongoing training is needed for both providers and supporters to create a culture of competence

Indicia President Karen Overstreet (NAAMECC president at the time of the meeting) planned a NAAMECC-funded roundtable meeting last May at which a panel of experts (6 attorneys and 1 physician with extensive

experience as federal and state prosecutors and officials for government agencies including the FDA, OIG, and CMS) discussed the myriad complex issues facing CME providers and supporters in today's regulatory

environment. From the meeting transcript, a monograph was produced to capture the detailed discussion and wide-ranging recommendations of the expert panel.

From solicited versus unsolicited grants to the relative risk associated with various types of providers and practices, the document provides clear recommendations on ways to mitigate risk, ensure compliance with ACCME regulations, and handle investigations. The monograph, titled "Industry Funding of CME Under Attack: Enhancing Compliance and Mitigating Risk," is now available in PDF form at no cost from <http://www.naamecc.org>, or readers can obtain a printed copy from Indicia by contacting [karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com](mailto:karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com).



We hope this important project to clarify current legal and regulatory considerations related to commercial support of CME will be valuable for the biopharmaceutical industry and CME community, including NAAMECC members.

## ACCME UPDATE: COMMERCIAL INTEREST DEFINITION IS REVISED; DEADLINE IS EXTENDED

The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) recently modified its definition of a commercial interest. Recent changes prompted comments and requests for clarification from CME professionals and stakeholders, and in response, ACCME leadership has extended the deadline for implementation of the revised standards.

Because the changes to the definition will apply to all certified activities as well as accredited providers and joint sponsors, they are of particular concern. While the changes may require some providers to undergo corporate restructuring to maintain compliance with the

Essential Areas and Elements, including the Standards for Commercial Support, ACCME has extended the deadline for this restructuring to August 2009.

The ACCME also clarified 2 other issues often faced by providers—supporter review of educational content and faculty selection. In the past, supporter review was often allowed for the sake of data accuracy and scientific exchange, but the recent changes now clearly state that supporters cannot review CME content, nor can they recommend or choose faculty for certified educational activities.



**I3D UPDATE**

The Initiative for Decreasing Disparities in Depression (I3D), a unique collaborative effort among Indicia and multiple CME stakeholders, reached a significant milestone recently with

publication of a supplement to the *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*.

The supplement issue (Vol. 27, Suppl. 1, Fall 2007) comprises 7 original articles by I3D researchers, including Dr. Overstreet. Based on extensive literature analyses and the significant expertise of authors from the fields of education and medicine, the articles discuss current practices in depression care, disparities in depression care, treatment of depression in managed care settings, quality improvement, physician learning, and community-

based participatory research. The stated goal of the research was to inform development of effective physician education programs to reduce disparities in care for patients with depression from racial and ethnic minorities.

Faculty and advisors praised the body of work, calling it “a superb series of valuable, cutting-edge projects,” “evidence-based, relevant, and pragmatic,” and “world-class work that is destined to become significant in CME.”

I3D, funded by Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, also received the NAAMECC 2007 award for best practices in the category of “Outstanding Collaboration Among Stakeholders in Continuing Medical Education.”

To learn more about the innovative concepts discussed in the *JCEHP* supplement, go to <http://www.jcehp.com> or contact Karen Overstreet.

**EVENTS OF INTEREST**

March 17–19, 2008

Center for Business Intelligence (CBI)  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Pharmaceutical Meeting  
Planners Forum

Baltimore Convention Center  
Baltimore, MD

<http://www.cbinet.com>

April 16–18, 2008

Accreditation Council for CME (ACCME)  
“Understanding CME Accreditation”  
Workshop

Chicago, IL

<http://www.accme.org>

May 15–16, 2008

Center for Business Intelligence (CBI)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual West Coast Conference on  
Bio/Pharmaceutical and Medical Device  
Grants

San Francisco, CA

<http://www.cbinet.com>

**INDICIA MEDICAL EDUCATION SERVICES**

Concerned about your compliance? Are your stakeholders secure? Indicia can help.

Indicia Medical Education, LLC, offers consultation and training on CME best practices to ensure compliance, mitigate risk to stakeholders, and improve the effectiveness of CME programs. For a consultation, please contact Karen Overstreet at [karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com](mailto:karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com) or call 215-855-9090.

**ASK ACCME ONLINE**

ACCME now offers answers to common questions posed by CME providers and others in medical education. From accreditation and firewalls to commercial support and recent policy changes, the organization’s Web site provides information at <http://www.accme.org/index.cfm/fa/faq.home/Faq.cfm>. Site visitors can also submit specific CME-related questions to [postmaster@accme.org](mailto:postmaster@accme.org).

**Questions or Comments?**

Please send information, comments, or questions for future issues of *Inside Medical Education* to Karen Overstreet at [karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com](mailto:karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com).

**Please visit our Web site at**  
**[www.indiciaed.com](http://www.indiciaed.com) to learn more about these**  
**and other important CME topics.**

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Karen Overstreet, EdD, RPh, FACME  
Executive Editor

Carol Greco  
Managing Editor

Meredith Hughes  
Design and Layout

© 2008 Indicia Medical Education, LLC



1120 Welsh Road, Suite 125  
North Wales, PA 19454  
Phone: (215) 855-9090  
Fax: (215) 855-9110

E-mail: [karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com](mailto:karen.overstreet@indiciaed.com)