

# The ACCME Believes that Due Consideration be Given to the Elimination of Commercial Support of Continuing Medical Education Activities

## For Comment

In January 2007, the ACCME initiated a nation-wide discussion by announcing that it would be considering taking action regarding the funding structure of continuing medical education. In March 2008, the ACCME again expressed the belief that due consideration be given to the elimination of commercial support of continuing medical education. Many stakeholders inside and outside the CME enterprise have expressed their views on this subject. The ACCME recognizes that although CME exists in a data-driven, evidence-based world, many are motivated by firmly held personal beliefs about propriety and professionalism. The ACCME values both perspectives and now seeks input on this matter.

---

### **The proposal is that the commercial support of continuing medical education end.**

---

The ACCME requests that the profession, the public and the CME enterprise weigh in on this subject. This needs to be debated by the medical profession and the education community. It needs to be discussed with colleagues, with other professions, with students, the government, stakeholders of CME including the public.

The debate should not go on without discussion of alternatives as nothing would be worse than the deconstruction of a system without the identification of alternatives.

To frame the debate, the ACCME proposes that there are at least three possible scenarios: **1)** the status quo with commercial support of CME an acceptable funding mechanism, **2)** the complete elimination of commercial support and **3)** a new paradigm.

ACCME proposes a new paradigm where ACCME accreditation will continue to reflect only what is in the best interests of the public. The ACCME proposes that if the following conditions were **all** met, then the commercial support of individual activities would be in the public interest and could continue to be allowed.

- 1 When educational needs are identified and verified by organizations that do not receive commercial support and are free of financial relationships with industry (eg, US Government agencies), **and**
- 2 If the CME addresses a professional practice gap of a particular group of learners that is corroborated by *bona fide* performance measurements (eg, National Quality Forum) of the learners' own practice; **and**
- 3 When the CME content is from a continuing education curriculum specified by a bona fide organization, or entity, (eg, AMA, AHRQ, ABMS, FSMB), **and**
- 4 When the CME is verified as free of commercial bias.

Alternatively, these conditions could provide a basis for a mechanism to distribute commercial support derived from industry-donated, pooled funds.

**Please provide the ACCME with your comments on these possible scenarios. Your ideas for other solutions are also welcome.**

**In order to comment click [here](https://accme.wufoo.com/forms/call-for-comment-2/) or go to <https://accme.wufoo.com/forms/call-for-comment-2/>.**

**(UPDATED 8/6/2008: Comments may be submitted through September 12, 2008.)**