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CME Commendation Criteria 33: It's Easier Than You Think

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Carilion Clinic Continuing Medical Education is proud to be a leader in providing CME in Virginia. For many years we have instituted policies and supported CME activities that help us not only meet the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) and the Medical Society of Virginia's (MSV) accreditation requirements but we have surpassed them, in having attained **Accreditation with Commendation Status**, a status that sets our organization apart from many others. As part of that status, Carilion Clinic CME must show that we meet critical elements of a set of **commendation** criteria. Recently, at a workshop for CME partners across Carilion, we engaged in a wonderful exercise in one such criterion. Reflecting on that informative experience for a smaller group, we thought that a larger audience might also benefit from a brief review.



One group of the commendation criteria challenges an organization to **Demonstrate Educational Leadership**. Under this broad heading are found three specific criteria: 1) that a provider engages in CME research/scholarship, 2) that the provider supports the continuous professional improvement of its CME team, and 3) that the provider demonstrates innovation and evolution of its CME program. It is the first one on which we will concentrate our comments today.

Faculty at an academic institution are encouraged, challenged, and supported to produce scholarly work. These scholarly pursuits not only enhance general medical and scientific knowledge and advance patient welfare, but also acknowledge the academic prowess of the individual researcher and, by extension, the reputation of their respective organizations. For us at Carilion Clinic and Virginia Tech Carilion, we can certainly be

proud of any and all these outcomes! This particular commendation criterion, formerly Criterion 33 (not that anyone need commit this number to memory!) that deals with research specifically asks the provider (Carilion Clinic CME) to engage in CME research and scholarship. Of course, a well-thought-out rationale exists for this criterion. The ACCME states that “Engagement by CME providers in the scholarly pursuit of research related to the effectiveness of and best practices in CME supports the success of the CME enterprise. Participation in research includes developing and supporting innovative approaches, studying them, and disseminating the findings.” In essence, if a CME educational partner--a physician champion of CME activities in any clinical or educational department or anyone interested in hosting a CME activity--hatches an innovative CME project, activity, course, conference, or regularly scheduled series, and then explores how to make this CME research, then they kill the proverbial two birds with a single stone.

Critical elements that a provider has to meet in order to achieve compliance with this criterion are only two. One, the provider and its partners need to conduct scholarly pursuits **relevant** to CME. The research needs to have a CME component in order to qualify. The ACCME wants to see that physicians are taught in new, innovative, creative ways and the CME provider supporting these projects. The second critical element, like all research, involves disseminating findings, i.e., submitting, presenting or publishing a poster, abstract, or manuscript to or in a peer-reviewed forum. Please note that simply “submitting” a well-crafted CME research project allows us to meet the standard for this criterion. This, of course, is much simpler than publishing in a peer-reviewed journal and yet still qualifies a researcher to receive credit for their academic work.

So, this commendation criterion is rather simple, prima facie. The details will always matter. And the details are why Carilion's CME office is ready to work through this process with you and support you through all the possible steps. Please be in touch with us if we can help. **Our contact information is listed below.**

Resources from the Office of Continuing Medical Education

- [Overview of the CME Program](#)
- [CME Program Mission Statement](#)
- [CME Application](#)
- [Contact Information](#)

**SCHOLARSHIP IS TO BE CREATED
NOT BY COMPULSION, BUT BY
AWAKENING A PURE INTEREST
IN KNOWLEDGE.**

- Ralph Waldo Emerson -

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