

# ***MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK***

## ***Guide to the Application Process for MSSNY CME Accreditation***

### **Purpose**

This *Guide* is a tool to aid the applicant organization seeking initial accreditation by MSSNY as a CME provider. The *Guide* reviews the purposes of accreditation, the responsibilities of the MSSNY and offers an overview of the accreditation process. It describes the data sources and topics used by the MSSNY to make a decision. The *Guide* also includes the timeline to be followed and the resources needed to prepare for accreditation.

### **Purposes of MSSNY Accreditation**

The major purposes of MSSNY accreditation are to ensure quality and integrity of the CME enterprise by

- establishing criteria for the evaluation of educational programs and their individual activities,
- determining if accredited CME providers meet and maintain standards,
- promoting organizational self-assessment and improvement, and
- recognizing excellence.

### **Responsibilities of MSSNY**

The primary responsibilities of MSSNY are to

- set and administer standards and criteria for quality CME for physicians
- certify that accredited providers are capable of meeting the requirements of MSSNY's *Essential Areas* and the *Standards for Commercial Support*.
- relate CME to medical care and the continuum of medical education,

- evaluate the effectiveness of the providers policies,
- assist providers in continually improving their programs and, thereby,
- assure physicians, the public and the CME community that CME Programs meet MSSNY's criteria for compliance with the *Essential Areas* and the *Standards for Commercial Support*.

### **Overview of the Accreditation Process**

**Eligibility:** Institutions and Organizations that have developed a track record for conducting CME activities implementing MSSNY *Essential Areas* and the *Standards for Commercial Support* may apply for accreditation. The content of the completed activities must meet MSSNY definition of continuing medical education. The applicant must have evaluated its completed CME activities and have a plan in place for the evaluation and future improvement of the overall CME program.

MSSNY collects, reviews and analyzes data for three *Essential Areas*:

1. Purpose and Mission
2. Educational Planning and Evaluation
3. Administration

*Purpose and Mission* describe why the organization is providing CME. *Educational Planning and Evaluation* explain how the organization provides CME activities and how well the organization is accomplishing its stated goals via providing CME activities. *Administration* defines what organizational resources are provided and what policies and protocols are used by the CME staff unit.

Within each *Essential Area* are required *Elements* for which measurement *Criteria* have been established. The *Elements* are descriptors of performance in the *Essential Area*. The *Criteria* describe the required levels of

performance and accomplishment for each *Element*.

**Phases:** The accreditation process involves four phases: data collection by the CME provider, data review and analysis by the MSSNY survey team, decision by the full MSSNY Committee on CME and feedback to the applicant organization via a written notification letter.

**Data Collection:** The process of accreditation uses multiple data sources. The MSSNY will use the following data sources to make a determination about accreditation of the applicant organization:

- Pre-application Data - Collected by the MSSNY CME Office to determine if your organization meets the criteria to become accredited
- Application for Accreditation (The primary data collection tool about your organization's qualifications as a CME provider.)
- On-Site Survey (A visit to your organization to review, clarify and document your practice.) The On-Site Survey involves the following:
  - Organizational Review (Your organization and personnel in it)
  - Documentation Review (Documentation of compliance for actual activities)
  - Activity Review (Observation of an Activity) This may occur during the On-Site Survey or separately.

An initial applicant must have completed at least one activity before a MSSNY accreditation decision will be rendered. An activity is considered completed once the provider has had the opportunity to observe and analyze activity evaluation data.

Prior to receiving full accreditation MSSNY must have the opportunity to review a CME activity directly.

**Survey Procedures:** A survey will be scheduled to discuss your CME program with appropriate organization representatives. MSSNY surveyors will wish to review records, policies, procedures, and a sampling of your documentation and may observe a CME activity. The survey team will be made up of two CME professionals chosen by the MSSNY,

who are trained and updated in the procedures and policies of the ACCME. The surveyors will summarize their findings in a report to MSSNY's full Committee on CME.

**Data Review and Analysis, Decision-Making and Feedback:** The completed application, and the surveyors' report, will be reviewed by MSSNY's Subcommittee on Surveys. The data and information is reviewed and a recommendation is made to MSSNY's Committee on Education. MSSNY's Committee on Education is responsible for making a final decision on accreditation. Within two weeks of the meeting at which your application is considered you will receive a report which will include an accreditation decision and specific information on the strengths and weaknesses of your CME Program discovered throughout the data-gathering and decision-making processes.

## Resources for CME Accreditation

The MSSNY makes available the following resources to assist you through the application process:

1. Accreditation Manual
  - Application for MSSNY's Accreditation/Re Accreditation
2. Resources
  - MSSNY's A System to Accredite and Monitor Providers of Continuing Medical Education
  - Resurvey Policy
  - Survey Guide
  - Surveyor Report Form
  - Activity Monitor Report
  - Glossary

The MSSNY CME staff is available to answer questions about accreditation, and the application process. Staff may be reached by email at [msellie@mssny.org](mailto:msellie@mssny.org)

