

The CME Landscape - Change and Challenges

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Abstracts

“The future influences the present just as much as the past.”

~ (Friedrich Nietzsche, scholar and philosopher)

When it comes to the past, present and future of the continuing medical education (CME) industry, there can be no more prophetic words.

Over the last decade, industry- supported CME — much of it meeting mandatory requirements for physicians in maintaining their licenses—has skyrocketed to an estimated \$1.2 billion in the US, resulting in \$2.4 billion income for accredited CME providers, with another \$240 million of that spent on exhibits and advertising.

While the industry maintains that physicians benefit from access to the latest drug developments and disease intelligence through their sponsorship of courses and accreditation, it begs the question: How much influence is too much?

Tackling the answer has left the continuing education industry in disarray. Congressional hearings have roundly criticized it for over-influencing the healthcare industry, going so far as to suggest that even universities are incapable of policing conflict of interest amongst faculty. In fact, over the past 12 months, 142 medical education providers either lost their CME accreditation or decided not to apply for renewal advice due to less funding, higher fees or increased administrative burden. Public interest advocates have also weighed in —a report by the Josiah Macy Jr Foundation soundly admonished the collaborative relationship between pharmaceutical companies and health professionals as “fundamentally incompatible”.

But is that a perception — or the reality?

Key insights from inside the CME industry

From think tank findings urging a ban on privately-sponsored CME within five years to new funding models innovated by the CME community, FirstWord's new dossier, *The CME Landscape: Change and Challenges* analyses the debate from every angle. Based on intimate access to reports from industry insiders and solid analysis, the report examines how financial collaboration between Big Pharma and continuing medical education providers has become a powerful and growing industry that has caught the attention of regulators and observers. The report offers an overview of the CME industry in the United States and Europe, the pharmaceutical industry's response to criticism and, most importantly, a clear vision of future financing models.

The report investigates the CME industry to determine:

A 360o view of criticisms, responses and actions by both industry and public interest advocates

Possible future funding models from both the CME community and critics

The report

Reviews key concerns by government, public interest critics and academics regarding the net influence privately funded CME plays in physician decisions

Outlines the response by key industry bodies, including North American Association of Medical Education and Communication Companies (NAAMECC) and the Coalition for Healthcare Communication

Examines future funding models reported at the annual Task Force on CME Provider/Industry Collaboration in Baltimore, October 14-16 2009

Overviews the current heterogeneous regulatory environment of continuing medical education requirements, and growing commercial support for CME in the European Union

Outlines the challenges in regulating and funding CME moving forward

Key industry leaders identified in this report

GlaxoSmithKline

Pfizer

Merck, Sharp and Dohme: univadis

Jansen-Cilag

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