The Physician's Recognition Award and credit system

Information for accredited providers and physicians **2010 revision**

AMA AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Modifications in the 2010 revision

Effective July 1, 2011

Enduring materials—must include an assessment of the learner's performance; credit may be awarded only to those that meet a minimum performance level. (pg. 5)

Journal-based CME activities—must include an assessment of the learner's performance; credit may be awarded only to those that meet a minimum performance level. (pg. 5)

Manuscript review activities—credit may be awarded only to physicians that submit reviews deemed to be acceptable by the editor. (pg. 6)

Performance Improvement CME—a physician must begin a PI CME activity with Stage A. (pg. 6)

AMA Credit Designation Statement—has been modified to indicate the learning format for the activity. (pg. 7)

Effective September 1, 2010

ABMS member board certification and Maintenance of Certification—the number of credits that physicians may be awarded directly by the AMA for the completion of ABMS certifications has been increased. (pg. 9)

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The American Medical Association Physician's Recognition Award and continuing medical education credit system

This document describes the requirements that must be followed by accredited continuing medical education (CME) providers in order to certify activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ and award credit to physicians. It also describes *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit*™, requirements for physicians wishing to obtain the American Medical Association's (AMA) Physician's Recognition Award (PRA) and other important related information. The AMA PRA has recognized physician participation in CME for more than 40 years. AMA PRA credit is recognized and accepted by hospital credentialing bodies, state medical licensure boards and medical specialty certifying boards, as well as other organizations.

Brief history

The AMA was founded by Nathan Davis, MD, in 1847 in Philadelphia. The first two committees constituted by the new organization were the Committee on Medical Education and the Committee on Ethics, emphasizing the importance the association and the medical profession placed on these two areas. The AMA reorganized in 1901 at which time the Committee on Medical Education became the Council on Medical Education as it continues to be known today. This elected body of physicians formulates policy on medical education by making recommendations to the AMA House of Delegates (HOD) through the AMA Board of Trustees.

Due to the state of undergraduate and graduate education at the time, the organization's early efforts focused primarily on these areas. A major accomplishment of the Council on Medical Education in its early history was laying much of the ground work for, and participating in, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's national study of existing medical schools. The study began in 1909 and resulted in what is known today as the Flexner Report, named for its author, Abraham Flexner of the Carnegie Foundation. N. P. Colwell, MD, Secretary to the Council on Medical Education, and Arthur D. Bevan, MD, Chairman of the Council on Medical Education, were major contributors to the work that went into the report. This report had a major effect on the medical school education of physicians and essentially established the model for medical education in the United States until the present, more than 100 years later.

In the 1940s and 1950s the Council on Medical Education increased its focus on postgraduate medical education (PGME). The AMA surveyed practicing physicians to determine how many of them participated in PGME after completion of residency and/or pursued self-directed learning. The Council on Medical Education reported to the HOD in 1955 that almost a third of the 5,000 physicians responding to this survey reported no participation in formal PGME for at least the past five years. The Council on Medical Education declared that PGME (later changed to "continuing" medical education by the HOD) "lacked direction and was suffering from a lack of clearly defined objectives." As a result of the report, the HOD took many actions to support CME in the 1960s, one of which was to establish a standing Advisory Committee on Continuing Medical Education which, by 1967, had developed a nationwide accreditation system for CME providers. In 1968, the AMA established the AMA PRA. The related AMA PRA credit system for physicians was developed as the metric to be used in determining qualifications for the AMA PRA.

Over the next two decades the AMA created other entities to make accreditation decisions. In 1981, the AMA and six other national organizations formed the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). The seven member organizations of the ACCME are: the AMA, American Board of Medical Specialties, American Hospital Association, Association for Hospital Medical Education, Association of American Medical Colleges, Council of Medical Specialty Societies and Federation of State Medical Boards.

Within the United States, the AMA only authorizes organizations that are accredited by the ACCME or by a state medical society recognized by the ACCME, referred to as "accredited CME providers," to designate and award *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ to physicians. With the exception of those activities directly certified by the AMA, individual educational activities *must* be offered only by accredited CME providers, in accordance with AMA PRA credit system requirements, to be certified for *AMA PRA*

The AMA PRA program continually evolves to meet physicians' learning needs. The Council on Medical Education welcomes input from physicians, accredited CME providers, and consumers of CME credit on recommendations for revisions and/or additions to the AMA PRA credit system. These recommendations should be communicated to the AMA Division of Continuing Physician Professional Development (CPPD). We would like to thank the accredited CME provider and physician communities, without whom the changes and improvements reflected in this booklet would not have been possible, and the patients who lend meaning to this work.

In support of the AMA PRA and the credit system, staff from the AMA Division of CPPD is available to answer questions from physicians, accredited CME providers or the public about compliance with the AMA PRA requirements, standards and policies. Questions may be directed to cme@ama-assn.org. Resources are also available online at www.ama-assn.org/go/pra. Anyone who is involved in planning or implementing CME activities is urged to subscribe, free of charge, to the CPPD Informational Network to receive the newsletter, CPPD Report, and other items of interest.

Category 1 Credit™. The AMA, on behalf of its physician constituency, also maintains international relationships for certain educational activities that meet AMA standards.

Ethical underpinnings of CME

The AMA Principles of Medical Ethics, which are part of the more extensive AMA Code of Medical Ethics (Code), are standards of conduct that define the essentials of honorable physician behavior. These ethical statements were developed primarily for the benefit of the patient and recognize the physician's responsibility to patients first and foremost, as well as to society, to other health professionals and to him/herself.

Recognizing the central role of education for the continuing professional development of physicians, Principle V of the Code provides the grounding tenet for CME and medical education, in general:

> V. A physician shall continue to study, apply, and advance scientific knowledge, maintain a commitment to medical education, make relevant information available to patients, colleagues, and the public, obtain consultation, and use the talents of other health professionals when indicated.

In addition, physicians have certain ethical responsibilities when participating in CME activities, either as a learner, faculty or planner. Accredited CME providers must understand the relevant ethical issues for physicians and ensure that participation in certified CME activities will not encourage or require physicians to violate the AMA ethical guidance. As of the time of this writing, the relevant ethical opinions include 8.061 "Gifts to Physicians from Industry," and 9.011 "Continuing Medical Education" which can be found in full at www.ama-assn.org/go/ceja. Questions regarding the interpretation of these opinions should be addressed to ceja@ama-assn.org.

The AMA expects accredited CME providers to present physicians with commercially unbiased, independent and objective information in all of their activities. Accredited providers must meet the substance of the CEJA opinion requirements and be in compliance with the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support℠.

AMA definition of CME

The AMA HOD and the Council on Medical Education have defined continuing medical education as follows:

> CME consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession. The content of CME is the body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession as within the basic medical sciences, the discipline of clinical medicine and the provision of health care to the public. (HOD policy #300.988)

Educational content of certified CME

Certified CME is defined as:

1. Nonpromotional learning activities certified for credit prior to the activity by an organization authorized by the credit system owner, or
2. Nonpromotional learning activities for which the credit system owner directly awards credit

Accredited CME providers may certify nonclinical subjects (e.g. office management, patient-physician communications, faculty development) for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* as long as these are appropriate to a physician audience and benefit the profession, patient care or public health.

CME activities may describe or explain complementary and alternative health care practices. As with any CME activity, these need to include discussion of the existing level of scientific evidence that supports the practices. However, education that advocates specific alternative therapies or teaches how to perform associated procedures, without scientific evidence or general acceptance among the profession that supports their efficacy and safety, cannot be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

Activities ineligible for AMA PRA credit

CME credit may not be claimed for learning which is incidental to the regular professional activities or practice of a physician, such as learning that occurs from:

- Clinical experience
- Charity or mission work
- Mentoring
- Surveying
- Serving on a committee, council, task force, board, house of delegates or other professional workgroup
- Passing examinations that are not integrated with a certified activity

Categories of AMA PRA credit

There are two categories of AMA PRA credit: *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* and *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*.

Earning *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

There are three ways for physicians to earn *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

1. By participating in certified activities sponsored by accredited ACCME or SMS CME providers. Information for accredited CME providers to certify activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* can be found on pages 4–8 and at www.ama-assn.org/go/cmeprovider.
2. By participating in activities recognized by the AMA as valid educational activities. Information about these activities

can be found on page 9 and at www.ama-assn.org/go/directcredit.

3. By participating in certain international activities recognized by the AMA. Information regarding these activities can be found on page 9 and at www.ama-assn.org/go/internationalcme.

Earning *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*

AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™ is self-claimed and documented by physicians for participating in activities that are not certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. More information about *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* can be found on page 10 or at www.ama-assn.org/go/cme.

Eligibility for AMA PRA credit

AMA PRA credit may only be claimed by, and awarded to, physicians, defined by the AMA as individuals who have completed an allopathic (MD), osteopathic (DO) or an equivalent medical degree from another country.

AMA monitoring of accredited CME providers

To assure the integrity of the AMA PRA credit system, the AMA monitors for compliance with AMA PRA credit system requirements in several ways including through the ACCME accreditation self study process, the investigation of complaints received and the review of information found in the public domain. Whenever warranted, the AMA will proceed with follow-up inquiries to ascertain and address compliance with AMA PRA credit system requirements. In most cases, the AMA is able to assist accredited CME providers with finding strategies that will bring their program and activities into compliance with AMA PRA standards.

Withdrawal of privilege to designate credit

The AMA reserves the right to withdraw an accredited CME provider's privilege to certify activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* should the accredited CME provider fail to bring the program and activities into compliance with AMA PRA policies, regardless of accreditation status. Accredited CME providers have appropriate recourse through a due process system that has been established for the investigation of any issue related to the AMA PRA requirements. Information about this process can be found at www.ama-assn.org/go/cppd.

Requirements for educational activities eligible for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

Certification of activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* by accredited CME providers

Accredited CME providers must ensure that activities that are certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* meet all AMA requirements which include the core requirements and format-specific requirements.

Core requirements for certifying activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

Every activity that is certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* must:

1. Conform to the AMA's definition of CME.
2. Address demonstrated educational needs.
3. Communicate to prospective participants a clearly identified educational purpose and/or objectives in advance of participation in the activity.
4. Be designed using AMA approved learning formats and learning methodologies appropriate to the activity's educational purpose and/or objectives; credit must be based on AMA guidelines for the type of learning format used.
5. Present content appropriate in depth and scope for the intended physician audience.
6. Be planned in accordance with the relevant CEJA opinions and the ACCME Standards for Commercial Support℠, and be nonpromotional in nature.
7. Evaluate the effectiveness in achieving its educational purpose and/or objectives.
8. Document credits claimed by physicians for a minimum of six years.
9. Be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* in advance of the activity; i.e. an activity may not be retroactively approved for credit.
10. Include the AMA Credit Designation Statement (see page 7) in any activity materials that reference CME credit with the exception of "save the date" or similar notices (see page 8).

Learning formats and format–specific requirements for certifying activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

The Council on Medical Education currently has approved seven learning formats that accredited CME providers may certify for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

1. **Live activities**

A live activity is a certified CME activity that occurs at a specific time as scheduled by the accredited CME provider. Participation may be in person or remotely as is the case of teleconferences or live Internet webinars. These may be offered through a variety of delivery mechanisms; examples include, but are not limited to, national, regional or local conferences, workshops, seminars, regularly scheduled conferences, journal clubs, simulation workshops, structured learning activities presented during a committee meeting and live Internet webinars.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*, a live activity must:

- Meet all core requirements for certifying an activity.

Designating, claiming and awarding credit for participation in a live activity

- Credit designation for each live activity is determined by measuring formal interaction time between faculty and the physician audience; 60 minutes of physician participation in a certified live activity equals one (1) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit ™*; credit is designated in 15 minute or 0.25 credit increments; accredited CME providers must round to the nearest quarter hour.
- Physicians should claim credit based on their participation time in 15 minute or 0.25 credit increments; physicians must round to the nearest quarter hour.
- The time for simultaneous certified sessions within a live activity can only be counted once toward the designated maximum.
- Only segments of the live activity that comply with the AMA core requirements may be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. These certified segments must be clearly identified in the activity materials and included in the designated maximum amount of credit.

Faculty credit

Accredited CME providers may also award *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* to their physician faculty to recognize the learning associated with the preparation and teaching of an original presentation at the accredited CME provider's live activities that are certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

Awarding credit to physician faculty for a live activity that is certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

- Physician faculty may be awarded credit based on a 2-to-1 ratio to presentation time. For example, faculty may be awarded 2 *AMA PRA Category 1*

Credits™ for a one-hour presentation or 1.5 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ for a 45-minute presentation for sessions that were designated for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™. Credit should be rounded to the nearest one-quarter credit.

- Credit may only be claimed once for an original presentation; credit may not be claimed for subsequent presentations of the same material.
- Physician faculty may not claim credit as a participant for their own presentations; however, they may claim credit for other segments they attend as a participant at a certified live activity.

2. Enduring materials

An enduring material is a certified CME activity that endures over a specified time. These include print, audio, video and Internet materials, such as monographs, podcasts, CD-ROMs, DVDs, archived webinars, as well as other web-based activities.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, an enduring material activity must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Provide clear instructions to the learner on how to successfully complete the activity.
- Provide an assessment of the learner that measures achievement of the educational purpose and/or objective(s) of the activity with an established minimum performance level; examples include, but are not limited to, patient-management case studies, a post-test, and/or application of new concepts in response to simulated problems.
- Communicate to the participants the minimum performance level that must be demonstrated in the assessment in order to successfully complete the activity for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.
- Provide access to appropriate bibliographic sources to allow for further study.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in an enduring material

- Credit designation for each enduring material must be determined by a mechanism developed by the accredited CME provider to establish a good faith estimate of the amount of time a physician will take to complete the activity to achieve its purpose and/or learning objectives (e.g. the average time it takes a small sample group of the target audience to complete the material); credit is designated in 15 minute or 0.25 credit increments; accredited CME providers must round to the nearest quarter hour.
- Credit should be awarded only to physicians who meet at least the minimum performance level on the assessment as established by the accredited CME provider.

3. Journal-based CME

A journal-based CME activity is a certified CME activity in which an article, within a peer-reviewed, professional journal, is certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ prior to publication of the journal.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, a journal-based CME activity must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Be a peer-reviewed article.
- Provide an assessment of the learner that measures achievement of the educational purpose and/or objective(s) of the activity with an established minimum performance level; this may include, but is not limited to, patient-management case studies, a post-test and/or application of new concepts in response to simulated problems.
- Communicate to the participants the minimum performance level that must be demonstrated in the assessment in order to successfully complete the activity for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in a journal-based CME activity

- Accredited CME providers should designate individual articles for one (1) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.
- Credit should be awarded only to physicians who meet at least the minimum performance level on the assessment as established by the accredited CME provider.

4. Test item writing

A test item writing activity is a certified CME activity wherein physicians learn through their contribution to the development of high stakes examinations, or certain peer-reviewed self-assessment activities, by researching, drafting and defending potential questions.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, a test-item writing activity must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Be developed only for:
  - The National Board of Medical Examiners examinations.
  - American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) member board certification examinations.
  - National medical specialty society peer-reviewed, published, self-assessment activities.
- Document that guidance was given to the physician question writers on how to use evidence for writing quality questions.

- Be at a depth and scope that require a review of the literature and a knowledge of the evidence base for the questions.
- Include a group peer review of the questions in which the physician question writers personally participate.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in a test item writing activity

- Accredited CME providers should designate each test item writing activity for ten (10) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*s™.

5. Manuscript review (for journals)

Manuscript review is a certified CME activity in which a physician learns through the critical review of an assigned journal manuscript.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, a manuscript review activity must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Involve a review of an article that has been submitted for publication in a journal that is included in the MEDLINE bibliographic database.
- Involve a review of a manuscript that is an original contribution to the medical literature that requires multiple reviewers.
- Provide clear instructions to the physician on how to successfully complete the activity
- Be at a depth and scope that require a review of the literature and a knowledge of the evidence base for the manuscript reviewed.
- Have an oversight mechanism to evaluate the quality of reviews submitted.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in a manuscript review activity

- Accredited CME providers should designate each accepted manuscript review, as documented by the journal editor, for three (3) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*s™.
- *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ should only be awarded for a review that is deemed acceptable by the editor.

6. Performance Improvement Continuing Medical Education (PI CME)

PI CME is a certified CME activity in which an accredited CME provider structures a long-term three-stage process by which a physician or group of physicians learn about specific performance measures[1], assess their practice using the selected performance measures, implement interventions to improve performance related to these measures over a useful interval of time, and then reassess their practice using the same performance measures. A PI CME activity may address any facet (structure, process or outcome) of a physician's practice with direct implications for patient care.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, a PI CME activity must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Have an oversight mechanism that assures content integrity of the selected performance measures. These measures must be evidence based[2] and well designed (e.g., clearly specify required data elements, ensure that data collection is feasible).
- Provide clear instructions to the physicians that define the educational process of the PI CME activity (documentation, timelines, etc.).
- Provide adequate background information so that physicians can identify and understand the performance measures that will guide their PI CME activity, and the evidence base behind those measures.
- Validate the depth of physician participation by a review of submitted PI CME activity documentation.
- Consist of the following three stages:

Stage A: Learning from current practice performance assessment

Assess current practice using the identified performance measures, either through chart reviews or some other appropriate mechanism. Participating physicians must be actively involved in the analysis of the collected data to determine the causes of variations from any desired performance and identify appropriate intervention(s) to address these.

Stage B: Learning from the application of PI to patient care

Implement the intervention(s) based on the results of the analysis in Stage A, using suitable tracking tools. Participating physicians should receive guidance on appropriate parameters for applying the intervention(s).

1 A clinical performance measure is a mechanism that enables the user to quantify the quality of a selected aspect of care by comparing it to a criterion. (Institute of Medicine, 2000)

2 Evidence based medicine is "the integration of best research evidence with clinical expertise and patient values." Sackett DL, Strauss SE, Richardson WS, et al. "Evidence-based medicine: How to practice and teach EBM." Second edition. London: Churchill Livingstone; 2000.

Stage C: Learning from the evaluation of the PI CME effort

Re-assess and reflect on performance in practice measured after the implementation of the intervention(s) in Stage B, by comparing to the assessment done in Stage A and using the same performance measures. Summarize any practice, process and/or outcome changes that resulted from conducting the PI CME activity.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in a PI CME activity

- Accredited CME providers should designate each PI CME activity for twenty (20) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™.
- Physicians that complete only one or two stages should be awarded five (5) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ for each stage that was completed. Completion of the full PI CME cycle should be encouraged.
- Physicians completing, in sequence, all three stages (A – C) of a structured PI CME activity should be awarded twenty (20) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™. This acknowledges that the best learning is associated with completing the entire three-stage PI CME activity.

7. **Internet point-of-care learning (PoC)**
An Internet PoC learning activity is a certified CME activity structured by an accredited CME provider in which a physician engages in self-directed, online learning on topics relevant to their clinical practice. Learning for this activity includes a reflective process in which a physician must document their clinical question, the sources consulted and the application to practice.

To be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™, Internet PoC activities must:

- Meet all AMA core requirements for certifying an activity.
- Have an established process for the accredited CME provider to oversee content integrity, with responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, the appropriate selection and use of professional, peer-reviewed literature, and ensuring that search algorithms are unbiased.
- Provide clear instructions to the physician on how to access the portal/database, which databases have been vetted for use, how participation will be tracked and how the accredited CME provider will award credit.
- Verify physician participation by tracking the topics and sources searched. Implement reasonable safeguards to assure appropriate use of this information.
- Provide access to some mechanism by which physicians can give feedback on overall system effectiveness.
- Establish a mechanism by which physicians may claim *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ for this learning activity, by completing and documenting the required three-step cycle:
    1. Review original clinical question(s).
    2. Identify the relevant sources from among those consulted.
    3. Describe the application of their findings to practice and whether it resulted in a change in knowledge, competence or performance as measured by physician practice application or patient health status improvement.

Designating and awarding credit for participation in Internet PoC

- Accredited CME providers should designate each structured Internet PoC cycle for one-half (0.5) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.

Additional information for accredited CME providers

AMA Credit Designation Statement
The AMA Credit Designation Statement indicates to physicians that the activity has been certified by an accredited CME provider as being in compliance with *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ requirements. The AMA Credit Designation Statement must be written without paraphrasing and be listed separately from accreditation or other statements.

The following AMA Credit Designation Statement must be included in relevant announcement and activity materials (see page 8):

> The [name of accredited CME provider] designates this [learning format] for a maximum of [number of credits] *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*(s)™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

The learning format listed in the Credit Designation Statement must be one of the following AMA approved learning formats:

1. Live activity
2. Enduring material
3. Journal-based CME activity
4. Test-item writing activity
5. Manuscript review activity
6. PI CME activity
7. Internet point-of-care activity

Use of phrase "*AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™"
The phrase "*AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*" is a trademark of the American Medical Association. Accredited CME providers must always use the complete italicized, trademarked phrase. The phrase "Category 1 Credit" must never be used when referring to *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™.

Use of the AMA Credit Designation Statement in program materials and activity announcements

Program materials

The AMA Credit Designation Statement must be used in any program materials, in both print and electronic formats, (e.g. a course syllabus, enduring material publication, landing page of an internet activity) that reference CME credit.

Activity announcements

Activity announcements include all materials, in both print and electronic formats, that are designed to build awareness of the activity's educational content among the target physician audience. The complete AMA Credit Designation Statement must always be used on any document or publication that references the number of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ designated for the activity.

A "save the date" announcement (such as a card mailer with limited space) may indicate that the activity has been approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ without stating an exact number of credits if the accredited CME provider has already certified the activity. This announcement may read, "This activity has been approved for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™" or similar language. Accredited CME providers may never indicate that " *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ has been applied for" or any similar wording.

Recording credit
Accredited CME providers must have a mechanism for physicians to claim credit and must award the actual number of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ claimed by each physician. The records documenting the credit awarded must be retained by accredited CME providers, for each certified activity, for a minimum of six years after the completion date of the activity.

Although it is necessary to uniquely identify the physicians who claim CME credit, AMA HOD policy opposes the use of Social Security numbers to do so. An alternative that might be used is the physician's Medical Education number, a unique 11 digit proprietary identifier assigned by the AMA to every US physician.

Credit certificates, transcripts or other documentation available to physicians
Only physicians (MDs, DOs and those with equivalent medical degrees from another country) may be awarded *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ by accredited CME providers. Accredited CME providers must be able to provide documentation to participating physicians of the credit awarded at the request of the physician. When an accredited CME provider issues a certificate, transcript or another means of documentation, it must reflect the actual number of credits claimed by the physician. An example of wording that might be used on certificates awarding *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ to physicians follows:

> The [name of accredited CME provider] certifies that [name of physician][degree] has participated in the [learning format] titled [title of activity] [at location, when applicable] on [date] and is awarded [number of credits] *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*(s)™.

Documentation provided to participating physicians must accurately reflect, at a minimum, the following:

- Physician's name
- Name of accredited CME provider
- Title of activity
- Learning format
- Location of activity (if applicable)
- Date(s) of live activity or date that physician completed the activity
- Number of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ awarded

Designation of new procedures and skills training
Through new procedures and skills courses, accredited CME providers can train physicians on topics that may allow them to request new or expanded clinical privileges. The AMA PRA requirements for new skills and procedures training consists of four levels so that accredited CME providers and physicians can clearly identify the depth and complexity of the training. Accredited CME providers will need to assess, at the activity's conclusion, the participant physician's level of achievement. This is in addition to planning and implementing the activities to meet the AMA core requirements and the format-specific requirements for the activity to be certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™. The requirements for designation of new procedures and skills training and the certificate wording for each of the levels may be found at www.ama-assn.org/go/cmeprovider.

Credit certificates, transcripts or other documentation available to nonphysician participants
Nonphysician health professionals and other participants may not be awarded *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™. However, accredited CME providers may choose to issue documentation of participation to nonphysicians that states that the activity was certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™. An example of wording that might be used on documentation for a nonphysician participant follows:

> The [name of accredited CME provider] certifies that [name of nonphysician participant] has participated in the [learning format] titled [title of activity] [at location, when applicable] on [date]. This activity was designated for [number of credits] *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*(s)™.

Joint and co-sponsorship
If a certified activity is either jointly sponsored (by an accredited CME provider and a non-accredited organization) or co-sponsored (by two or more accredited CME providers), then the accredited CME provider certifying the activity must keep a record of the *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*™ claimed for each physician participating in that activity.

Activities for which *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* is awarded directly by the AMA

Some activities do not occur under the auspices of an accredited CME provider. The Council on Medical Education recognizes the learning that occurs in completing these activities and allows physicians to claim *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* directly from the AMA for the activities defined in this section.

To claim credit for these activities the physician should apply to the AMA for a certificate indicating the *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit ™* awarded for completion of each activity. Information and the direct credit application can be found at www.ama-assn.org/go/directcredit. These activities include:

Teaching at a live activity

Preparing and presenting an original presentation at a live activity that has been certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* (if the accredited CME provider has not already awarded credit for this).

Documentation: a copy of the page(s) used by the provider to announce or describe the activity which includes the name of the speaker, accredited CME provider, AMA Credit Designation Statement, date and location of the activity.

Credit assignment: two (2) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per one (1) hour of presentation time.

Publishing articles

Publishing, as the lead author (first listed), a peer-reviewed article in a journal included in the MEDLINE bibliographic database.

Documentation: a reprint or copy of the page(s) of the journal, which include the name of the author listed first, the name of the journal and date published.

Credit assignment: ten (10) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per article.

Poster presentations

Preparing a poster presentation, as the first author, which is included in the published abstracts, at an activity certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*.

Documentation: a copy of the page(s) in the published activity documents that lists the author and poster abstract, accredited CME provider, AMA Credit Designation Statement, title and date of activity.

Credit assignment: five (5) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per poster.

Medically related advanced degrees

Obtaining a medically related advanced degree, such as a masters in public health (not available if the academic program certified individual courses for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*).

Documentation: a copy of the diploma or final transcript.

Credit assignment: twenty five (25) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*.

ABMS member board certification and Maintenance of Certification (MoC©)

Successfully completing an ABMS board certification or MoC process.

Documentation: a copy of the board certificate or the specialty board notification letter.

Credit assignment: sixty (60) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™*.

Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education accredited education

Successfully participating in an Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) accredited residency or fellowship program.

Documentation: a copy of the certificate or letter of completion from the approved residency/fellowship program

Credit assignment: twenty (20) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year

The successful completion of an ABMS member board certification process or an ACGME accredited residency or fellowship program also qualifies a physician for the AMA PRA. Please see the section regarding the AMA PRA or visit www.ama-assn.org/go/pra for more information.

International activities for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

Physicians may earn *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* for participation in some international activities. As of this writing, the AMA has agreements with the European Union of Medical Specialists and the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Information about the different ways to earn AMA PRA credit through international activities can be found on the AMA website at www.ama-assn.org/go/internationalcme.

Requirements for *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*

AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™ is self-designated and claimed by individual physicians for participation in activities not certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* that:

- Comply with the AMA definition of CME; and
- Comply with the relevant AMA ethical opinions; at the time of this writing this includes 8.061 "Gifts to Physicians from Industry" and 9.011 "Continuing Medical Education," and
- Are not promotional; and
- A physician finds to be a worthwhile learning experience related to his/her practice.

Examples of learning activities that might meet the requirements for *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in activities that have not been certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*
- Teaching physicians, residents, medical students or other health professionals
- Unstructured online searching and learning (i.e., not Internet PoC)
- Reading authoritative medical literature
- Consultation with peers and medical experts
- Small group discussions
- Self assessment activities
- Medical writing
- Preceptorship participation
- Research
- Peer review and quality assurance participation

Organizations may not certify activities for *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* or advertise that an activity qualifies for *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*. Organizations may choose to maintain records of physician participation in activities that have not been certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* but, since they may not certify or award such credit, should not record them as *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*.

A physician must individually assess the educational value for each learning experience in which he or she participates to determine if it is appropriate to claim *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*.

Claiming *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*

Documentation: the physician should self claim credit for appropriate *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* activities and document activity title or description, subject or content area, date(s) of participation and number of credits claimed. Physicians may not claim *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™* for an activity for which the physician has claimed *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. Each physician is responsible for claiming and maintaining a record of their *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*.

Credit calculation: as with live activities, physicians should claim credit based on their participation time with 60 minutes of participation equal to one (1) *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*; credit is claimed in 15 minute or 0.25 credit increments; physicians must round to the nearest quarter hour.

The AMA Physician's Recognition Award

Professional recognition of accomplishments in CME

Since 1968, patients and colleagues have recognized the AMA PRA as evidence of a physician's commitment to keeping current with the advances in biomedical science, as well as other developments in medicine. The goals of this award remain the same as established more than 40 years ago:

- To provide recognition for the many thousands of physicians who regularly participate in CME
- To encourage all physicians to keep up-to-date and to improve their knowledge and judgment by CME
- To provide reassurance to the public that America's physicians are maintaining their competence by regular participation in CME
- To emphasize the AMA's position as a leader in CME
- To emphasize the importance of developing more meaningful continuing education opportunities for physicians
- To strengthen the physician's position as the leader of the health service team by focusing attention on his or her interest in maintaining professional competence.

The AMA encourages all physicians to become involved in a program that honors them as professionals who participate in CME in order to better meet the needs of their patients.

In addition, the AMA PRA is widely accepted by multiple entities as proof of participation in CME. Most state licensing boards and hospitals will accept the AMA PRA or the AMA approved application as proof of having met CME requirements.

AMA PRA requirements

Eligibility

Physicians may apply for the AMA PRA if they hold a valid and current license issued by one of the United States, Canadian or Mexican licensing jurisdictions, or are engaged in an ACGME-accredited residency training program in the United States.

Credit requirements for the AMA PRA

In order to apply for an AMA PRA, physicians must earn a specified number of *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™, either through accredited CME provider certified activities, from the AMA for direct credit activities, or international activities. The rest of the credits required for the award may be either *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™.

The AMA offers one-, two- and three-year AMA PRAs. The requirements for each are as follows:

One-year award

- Twenty (20) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and thirty (30) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™ (50 credits total)
- Or one year ACGME residency/fellowship training

Two-year award

- Forty (40) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and sixty (60) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™ (100 credits total)
- Or two years ACGME residency/fellowship training

Three-year award

- Sixty (60) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and ninety (90) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™ (150 credits total)
- Or three years ACGME residency/fellowship training
- Or ABMS board certification or MoC

The AMA PRA with commendation is available for physicians who meet the following requirements:

One-year award with commendation: ninety (90) credits total

- Sixty (60) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and thirty (30) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™

Two-year award with commendation: one hundred and eighty (180) credits

- One hundred and twenty (120) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and sixty (60) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™

Three-year award with commendation: two hundred and seventy (270) credits

- One hundred and eighty (180) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ and ninety (90) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*™ or *AMA PRA Category 2 Credits*™

The AMA requires that at least half of the credit applied toward the AMA PRA be within the physician's specialty or area of practice. Ethics, office management and physician-patient communication can serve as appropriate topics for CME, but are not considered specialty specific education.

Award duration

The AMA PRA signals a commitment to ongoing participation in CME and acknowledges past participation in CME activities. The AMA grants the award based on the prior one to three years of CME credit attainment. The award's term begins on the first of the month following the completion date of the latest CME activity listed on the application for which the physician claimed *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*. For example, a physician applying for a three-year award whose last activity was on May 21, 2010, will be issued a certificate valid from June 1, 2010 until June 1, 2013. If a physician is renewing his/her AMA PRA the renewal date will be the same as the expiration date of his/her last AMA PRA if he/she earned the allotted credits in the time period of his/her expiring AMA PRA.

Activity-specific credit limits for the AMA PRA

For the purpose of applying for an AMA PRA certificate, certain activities include specific limits on the amount of credit a physician can claim, per year, toward their AMA PRA:

- Teaching at live activities certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*: Limit of ten (10) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year.
- Internet PoC: Limit of twenty (20) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year.
- Manuscript review: Limit of five (5) reviews—or fifteen (15) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year.
- Poster presentation: Limit of one (1) poster—or five (5) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year.
- Publishing articles: Limit of one (1) article—or ten (10) *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™* per year.

Other types of credit that may be used for the AMA PRA

For the purpose of obtaining an AMA PRA application physicians may identify credit earned within the following CME systems on a one-to-one basis for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*

- American Academy of Family Physicians' prescribed credit
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists' formal learning cognates

AMA PRA agreements with other organizations

The AMA has agreements with specialty societies, state medical societies, medical staff groups and other organizations whereby an AMA PRA can be issued to any US licensed physician as established by an agreement between the AMA and the organization. A list of the organizations with which the AMA currently has this type of agreement can be found at www.ama-assn.org/go/pra.

Organizations that are interested in developing a similar agreement should contact the AMA at cme@ama-assn.org for more information.

Jurisdictions that accept the AMA PRA certificate for licensing purposes

All US licensing jurisdictions requiring CME recognize the AMA PRA credit system. Some of these licensure boards will also accept a current and valid AMA PRA or the AMA approved AMA PRA application as documentation of having met their CME requirements.

Information about the state licensing requirements and what each accepts may be found online (www.ama-assn.org/go/pra) or in the AMA's annual publication, "State Medical Licensure Requirements and Statistics." For the most current information on states with CME requirements for licensure, we suggest that the particular jurisdiction be contacted directly.

The Joint Commission compliance

The Joint Commission (TJC) requires that, at hospitals and health care organizations it accredits, physicians with clinical privileges document their participation in CME. TJC will accept, subject to their review, correctly completed AMA PRA applications stamped "approved" by the AMA as documented physician compliance with TJC CME requirements. TJC requires that physicians conduct at least half of their reported CME in their specialty or area of clinical practice.

Disclaimer

Physicians should note that the AMA PRA does not serve as a direct measure of physician competency and should not be used for that purpose. Physician competency represents the assessment of many complex measures, of which CME participation is only one.