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Administered by the  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
Foundation

## **CHRONOLOGY OF SELECTED EVENTS PERTAINING TO CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION (CME) IN GENERAL/FAMILY PRACTICE (INCLUDING ABFP CERTIFICATION & RECERTIFICATION) 1947-1999**

- June 1947** American Academy of General Practice (AAGP) founded. First major medical organization to require continuing medical education as a condition of membership. Members are required to document 150 hours of postgraduate study every three years to maintain active membership.
- March 1949** AAGP Congress of Delegates approves first basic definition and policy on postgraduate study for AAGP members.
- 1950** 68 schools or other organizations provided postgraduate or medical study courses.
- 1952** AAGP Board of Directors recommends that By-Laws be changed so that evaluation of postgraduate study courses be conducted by the Commission on Education, rather than by the Commission on Membership and Credentials.
- 1955** Written certification of attendance by administrators of postgraduate study courses required for each AAGP member reporting postgraduate study hours.
- 1961** Commission on Education recommends the use of the terms "continuing" or "continuation" medical education, rather than postgraduate education.
- First CME course via open-circuit television proposed.
- Committee on Joint Study in Continuing Medical Education formed under the auspices of the AMA to consider a need for a national coordinating agency for continuing medical education.
- 1963** "Life" category of AAGP membership approved (no continuing study requirements for members of at least 10 years and 70 years of age).
- July 1964** Programmed instruction installments first published in *GP*, the journal of AAGP.

- Feb. 8, 1969** Certifying board in family practice approved (leads to formation of the American Board of Family Practice [ABFP]). Mandatory recertification required. Also requires same CME for recertification.
- 1970** To be eligible for active membership in AAGP, a candidate who graduated from medical school after July 1, 1970, must have completed a 2-year graduate training requirement.
- First examination given by ABFP. Successful candidates sitting for 1970 and 1971 exams become charter diplomates.
- 1971** "Fellow" category of AAFP membership approved (requiring completion of 600 hours of postgraduate study or attainment of diplomate status in the ABFP).
- 1972** Commission on Education again recommends that the term "continuing education" be used in place of "postgraduate education" for Academy purposes (see 1961).
- 1976** Creation of an AAFP Committee on Continuing Medical Education approved by Congress of Delegates.
- First recertification exam by ABFP (first recertification exam by any medical specialty).
- 1977** Implementation plan for AAFP Home Study Self-Assessment Program ratified by Congress of Delegates.
- 1978** Practice eligible route to ABFP candidacy expires (candidates for the ABFP certification exam subsequently must have satisfactorily completed a 3-year approved family practice residency).
- 1981** AAFP Committee on Continuing Medical Education becomes a Commission.
- Sept. 1983** AAFP Video CME Program initiated.
- 1988** More than half of all AAFP members are certified by ABFP (predominant practitioner has become board-certified family physician).
- AAFP Congress of Delegates adopts a resolution allowing members up to twenty hours per year (sixty hours every three years) of CME credit for teaching medical students and residents the art and science of family practice.
- AAFP and Lifetime Medical Television enter into a formal contractual agreement to produce Family Practice Update on the Lifetime Cable Channel. The program runs until 1993.
- Members first applying for active membership after December 31, 1988 must be residency trained.

- 1992** AAFP Congress of Delegates directs Commission on Continuing Medical Education to act upon providing Prescribed credit for osteopathic manipulation courses.
- Policy revised to allow AAFP members who teach physician assistant students and nurse practitioner students to be granted Prescribed CME credit.
- 1993** AAFP acquires the Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO) Program from the University of Wisconsin Department of Family Medicine and Practice.
- 1996** Congress of Delegates adopts resolution that the AAFP should begin to approve CME credit for computer literacy training and medical informatics courses.
- AAFP approves the creation of a third category of criteria for designation of CME credit hours for journal-based CME, in addition to the existing criteria established for courses and enduring materials.
- Commission on Continuing Medical Education files criteria for approval of programs that include information about complementary and alternative practices. These programs, when evidence-based, become eligible for Elective and Prescribed CME credit.
- 1998** AAFP launches the first Annual Clinical Focus (ACF) on "Prevention and Management of Cardiovascular Disease" in cooperation with the American Heart Association.
- Commission on Continuing Medical Education reports to Congress of Delegates that the AAFP awarded CME credit hours to 8,275 courses during the 1997-1998 fiscal year.
- AAFP Video CME program registers sales of approximately 17,288 tapes since inception in 1983.
- New course, "AFP Online CME Cases," presented on the AAFP Web site.
- Last year for Degree of Fellow under old requirements (Pathway 1).
- 1999** Pathway 2 requirements take effect January 1, 1999 for Degree of Fellow. Application requirements are that (1) members must have held Active membership for six years, or held a combination of Resident and Active membership for a total of six years, and (2) the member must have accrued a total of 100 points as defined by the application. Experiences and activities can be cited from the academic training and CME, publishing and research, volunteer teaching, public service, medical practice, and service to the specialty in order to obtain points.