

# CONTINUOUS MEDICAL EDUCATION FOR PEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGISTS

IN EUROPE: A PROPOSAL UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE A.E.P.C.

## 1. GENERAL STATEMENT

Knowledge and techniques in the speciality of pediatric cardiology progress at a fast rate. Patients are entitled to receive up-to-date care. Therefore, continuous medical education (CME) is a moral obligation for every pediatric cardiologist.

The AEPC issues strong recommendations regarding (CME) in Europe, according to the guidelines of the UEMS. It encourages national societies to create boards of (CME) and to establish rules and programmes for (CME) along the lines recommended by the AEPC, as outlined below.

The national boards are responsible for the quality of (CME) in their country and decide on rewards or sanctions for participation or non participation of individual specialists.

Postgraduate training and (CME) may be regulated by the same national board.

## 2. GOAL OF CME

The goal of (CME) is to maintain a high level of competence in the evolving field of pediatric cardiology, for every certified specialist in Europe and throughout his professional life.

## 3. MEANS OF CME

(CME) can be accomplished by:

Category 1: attending meetings, conferences, seminars, and symposia, devoted to the disciplines of pediatric cardiology, fetal cardiology, adult congenital heart disease or congenital cardiac pathology, congenital cardiac surgery or pediatric cardiac intensive care, as organized on a national or international basis

Category 2: attending meetings in the related fields of pediatrics, or adult cardiology

Category 3: preparing and giving lectures and presentations in national and international meetings; writing papers in the field of pediatric cardiology, fetal cardiology, adult congenital heart disease

Category 4: participating in formal regional and local courses lasting 2 hours or more, on the subjects described above

Category 5: visiting a recognized center in the own country or abroad for one week or more, to update ones knowledge or acquire a new technique

Category 6 : reading the current literature in the fields mentioned above

Clinical rounds, medical-surgical case discussions, and informal discussions about the speciality are not considered (CME)

#### 4. CREDITS

One hour of CME is the credit unit.

One full day in a congress corresponds to 8 credits, one half day to 4 credits.

Every individual pediatric cardiologist must accomplish a minimum of 250 credits over a 5 year period, as recommended by the UEMS ; that is 50 hours per year.

CME of category 1 must account for a minimum of 100 credits over a 5 year period (20 credits = 20 hours a year)

CME of category 2 may be counted for a maximum of 50 credits within 5 years (10 hours per year)

CME of category 3 may be counted for a maximum of 10 hours per year

CME of category 4 may be counted for a maximum of 15 hours per year.

CME of category 5 may be counted for a maximum of 10 hours per year.

On top of this, 1-2 hours per week (minimum) should be devoted to the reading of the current literature.

Specialists in pediatric cardiology are encouraged to submit themselves to self assessment programmes.

#### 5. PROOF OF HAVING COMPLETED CME

Each pediatric cardiologist attending an international or national meeting (cat. 1 and 2) must request and keep a written statement that he/she has attended the meeting.

In case of partial attendance, the number of credits (hours) have to be reduced accordingly.

Proof must be kept of lectures given in the field, and papers published (cat. 3), as well as of regional meetings attended (cat. 4).

At the end of each year, each AEPC member completes a list of the CME he/she has attended. The list and proofs have to be kept for 10 years, to be produced on request.

At the end of each year, the AEPC member fills a form indicating the number of hours spent on every category of CME. This form has to be sent to the President of the country's pediatric cardiology structure, or the country's CME board. If no such society exists, the form is sent to the national delegate.

#### 6. ACCREDITATION OF CME PROVIDERS

The Advisory Professional Committee of the AEPC can issue a list of international meetings permanently accredited. These may include the annual general meeting of the AEPC, the annual meeting of the ESC if a complete pediatric cardiology programme is offered, the annual scientific session of the American Heart Association and of the American College of Cardiology.

Other meetings seeking accreditation for CME should submit a programme to the national board of the Society of Pediatric Cardiology 12 months in advance. If there is no such body, accreditation can be requested from the Advisory Professional Committee of the AEPC for events addressing an international audience, and from the national delegate for national or regional events.

Each year, the board of the national societies issue a list of accredited CME events to their members, covering the calendar year January to December.

#### 7. QUALITY CONTROL OF CME

Every AEPC member attending an accredited CME event should make a statement about the content and usefulness of the manifestation, i.e. declare it "pertinent", "partially pertinent" or "not useful" for CME in the

field of pediatric cardiology. This statement is to be sent in with the annual form reporting on the CME completed (see 5).

Based on these remarks, a CME event can be removed or added from the annual list of the following year.

## **8. SANCTIONS**

Any sanction for non participation has to be taken by the national body dealing with certification of specialists. The UEMS has not decided on such sanctions so far.

The president or CME board of the national society is entitled to request from any individual specialist the proof that he/she has attended CME events. This may be of particular importance in case of litigation.

## APPENDIX

### GUIDELINES FOR CME PROVIDERS

**Organizers of** international or national meetings, as outlined in categories 1 or 4 of the general rules, should apply for CME accreditation.

They will be given the number of CME credits corresponding to their manifestation. These should figure in the final program of the meeting. Participants must receive a certificate of attendance stating the number of CME credits obtained.

**HOW TO APPLY** International meetings The Advisory Professional Committee (APC) of the AEPC grants CME accreditation. Based on preliminary programs received before end November every year, the APC establishes a list for the coming year, indicating the number of credits for every manifestation. This list will be circulated to all members of the AEPC before end December that year. Organizers of meetings that do not appear on the list may apply for accreditation at the Secretary of the APC (address below).

National and regional meetings: The secretary of the national societies of pediatric cardiology grants accreditation, based on paragraph 4 of the general rules. Only formal meetings or seminars lasting 2 hours or more are eligible.

In countries where there is no such society, the national delegate is responsible for accreditation.

Address of the Secretary of the APC  
Béat FRIEDLI, M.D.  
Hôpital des Enfants  
Hôpital cantonal universitaire  
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