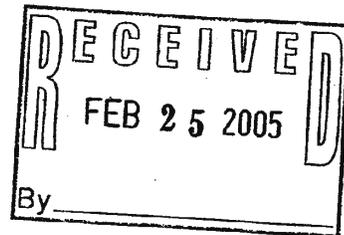




Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DRUG AND DEVICE MANUFACTURERS NO LONGER RECOGNIZED AS ACPE ACCREDITED CONTINUING PHARMACY EDUCATION PROVIDERS

At their January 2005 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) took the following action based on the need for congruence between an Office of the Inspector General Guidance and ACPE Criteria:

1. Commencing February 1, 2005, ACPE will not accept applications from pharmaceutical and biomedical device manufacturers seeking accreditation as providers of continuing education (CE).
2. Effective July 1, 2005, ACPE will not recognize pharmaceutical and biomedical device manufacturers as accredited CE providers and they will not be able to engage in a co-sponsorship relationship with an ACPE-accredited provider.
(This timeframe was chosen to allow the organizations to complete any planned CE programs and permit adequate notice to these providers and pharmacists of ACPE's new policies regarding manufacturers as CE providers).

As a result, any statement of CE credit issued by a pharmaceutical or medical device manufacturer after June 30, 2005, will not be valid evidence of completion of ACPE accredited CE. Manufacturers and ACPE both will make good faith efforts to communicate this action to all stakeholders, including pharmacists seeking accredited CE. Manufacturers still retain the ability to provide educational grants.

Basis for the Action

Over the past three years, the following guidance documents have been released regarding the role of pharmaceutical and biomedical device industries in CE for health professionals:

- a. PhRMA (Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America) Code of Interactions with Healthcare Professionals (2002)

- b. AdvaMed (Advanced Medical Technology Association) Code of Ethics on Interactions with Healthcare Professionals (2004)
- c. Updated ACCME (Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education) Standards for Commercial Support (2004), and
- d. Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Compliance Program Guidance for Pharmaceutical Manufacturers (2003)

The OIG guidance includes Compliance Program Guidance for Pharmaceutical Manufacturers, which provides recommended restrictions regarding CE programs sponsored by manufacturers. This Guidance notes that a manufacturer that maintains any influence over the subject matter of CE programs or the presenters, or provides funding for attendees or other incentives with respect to the attendance of the CE program potentially could be subjected to liability under various federal statutory provisions. While these guidelines provide a safe harbor for manufacturers, strict compliance essentially relegates manufacturers solely to providing unencumbered educational grants to CE providers.

The ACPE Criteria for Quality require the provider to control the content speakers or authors of a CE program. The OIG Guidelines provide that the manufacturer, with regard to continuing education, should have no control over the content or speakers/authors of CE programs. It follows that a manufacturer cannot meet both the ACPE criteria and the OIG Guidelines.

In the past, ACPE has accredited certain pharmaceutical and biomedical device manufacturers as continuing education providers, which, on paper, have met the *ACPE Criteria for Quality and Interpretive Guidelines*. However, ACPE, in carrying out its responsibilities to the boards, the profession and the public, must now accredit only those providers who are in compliance with ACPE criteria and the OIG guidelines.

ACPE is the national agency for accreditation of professional programs in pharmacy and providers of continuing pharmacy education and certificate programs in pharmacy. ACPE is an autonomous and independent agency whose Board of Directors (the decision and policy-making body) includes pharmacy educators, pharmacy practitioners, state board of pharmacy members/executives, and public representation. The ACPE office is located in Chicago, IL.