

## **Alliance Addresses Strategies to Enhance the CME Profession**

### ***Message from the President, Sue Ann Capizzi***

For the better part of the past year the Alliance for CME has been engaged in analysis and discussion of the question: "How to effectively enhance the CME profession through education and recognition of CME professionals?" In April, 2007, the Board participated in an externally facilitated discussion that examined the financial and political ramifications of three possible approaches to responding to this question: 1) education, 2) certificate programs, and 3) certification. In October 2007, the Alliance convened over a dozen stakeholder organizations to dialog about "Promoting Professional Competence." (See November, 2007 Almanac Article) Membership opinions related to this issue were gathered from a membership survey that generated excellent data that was shared with the Board in April 2008. During this time the Alliance also met with leaders from the National Commission for Certification of CME Professionals, Inc. (NC-CME) to learn more about the certification program that this organization has launched.

At the most recent Alliance BOD meeting held July 12-13, 2008, the Directors engaged in a systematic and thoughtful process to synthesize what has been learned and determine what position(s) the Alliance should take and what role(s) the Alliance should play in addressing this issue. The following five statements are the results of those discussions:

**1) *The Alliance supports the concept that education, certificate programs and certification should all play a role in enhancing the CME profession.***

Information gathered from the field indicates that each of these strategies has unique benefits that contribute to enhancing the CME profession and that each is complementary to the others in a system of professional development for CME Professionals.

**2) *The Alliance supports the concept that one of its roles in enhancing the CME profession is to provide access to educational opportunities based upon the established Alliance competencies.***

In keeping with the Alliance's mission to "provide professional development opportunities for CME Professionals," the Alliance will continue its current initiatives to be the "educational home" for the CME profession and will structure its educational offerings in accordance with the validated Alliance competencies.

**3) *The Alliance supports the concept that one of its roles in enhancing the CME profession is to develop certificate programs based upon needs, roles and responsibilities and built upon the Alliance competencies. [NOTE: Certificate Programs are defined as a core body of knowledge packaged through educational programs, etc.]***

A new initiative for the Alliance will be to create certificate programs for the CME profession that respond to the needs for proficiency in specific areas/venues. An example of such a program might be a "Certificate in Outcomes Evaluation." To this end, the Alliance will commission a task force that will be charged with developing the process by which the Alliance along with other stakeholders will define and develop specific certificate programs.

**4) *The Alliance should not engage in the development of its own certification program for CME Professionals.***

The Alliance is a membership organization with primary responsibility for the education/professional development of its members. The Alliance recognizes the value of

professional certification but believes that, in keeping with the model of medical specialty societies that are distinct from medical certification boards, our role may be collaborative but should be separate from any certifying/credentialing body for CME Professionals. The Alliance also maintains its current position that “The Alliance expects other organizations developing and offering formal certification programs to adhere to the highest standards and specifications for certification.” One indicator of meeting such standards may be accreditation by the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA).

**5) The Alliance supports the efforts of the NC-CME to develop a certification program for CME professionals.**

The Alliance recognizes the good faith efforts of the NC-CME ([www.NC-CME.org](http://www.NC-CME.org)) to develop a certification program for CME professionals. The NC-CME is an organizational member of NOCA (the National Organization for Competency Assurance) which provides technical and educational information concerning certification practices. The NC-CME has just completed its first cycle of certification examinations.

The Alliance has offered NC-CME collaborative support in the form of a liaison from the Alliance and through active involvement in defining the educational pathways to certification through the Alliance competencies.

The Alliance is pleased to offer this summary reflecting on “Strategies to Enhance the CME Profession” and to clarify our positions and the roles we intend to play. For further information concerning this communication please contact the Alliance at [acme@acme-assn.org](mailto:acme@acme-assn.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sue Ann Capizzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sue Ann Capizzi, MBA  
President