

## Overview of the Organizational Accreditation Process

### Overview and Background Information

#### Conducting Your Self-Study for Reaccreditation

The self-study process provides an opportunity for your organization to reflect on its program of CME. This process can help your organization assess its commitment to and role in providing continuing medical education and determine its future direction.

Your organization will provide narrative descriptions and evidence of performance-in-practice for the Core Criteria, applicable ACCME Standards of Integrity and Independence, and applicable Accreditation Policies.

The process of conducting a self-study is unique to your organization. Depending on the size and scope of your CME program, you may involve many or just a few individuals in the process.

#### Data Sources Used in the Reaccreditation Process

Your organization will demonstrate that your practice of CME is in compliance with the Pennsylvania Medical Society's (PAMED) accreditation requirements through three primary sources of data: the self-study, evidence of performance-in-practice, and the accreditation interview.

#### Expectations about Materials

Information and materials submitted to PAMED must not contain any untrue statements, must not omit any necessary material facts, must not be misleading, must fairly present the organization, and are the property of the organization.

Information and materials submitted for accreditation (self-study report, evidence of performance in practice, other materials) must not include individually identifiable health information, in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

#### Missing or Incomplete Information

Providers that meet the deadlines and submission requirements of the reaccreditation review process will receive an accreditation decision from PAMED. Please note, if PAMED is unable to render a decision due to missing or incomplete information, PAMED reserves the right to request additional information.

#### Decision-Making

Your organization's compliance findings and the outcome of the accreditation review are determined by PAMED based on the data and information collected in the accreditation process. PAMED will also consider data from monitoring issues if such data are applicable to the provider. Accreditation decisions are determined through a review by our CME Advisory Panel. The Panel review provides checks and balances to ensure fair and accurate decisions. This is further enhanced by PAMED's use of a criterion referenced decision-making system.

PAMED reaccreditation decision will be based on your organization's demonstration of compliance with the Core Criteria, applicable Standards of Integrity and Independence, and applicable Accreditation Policies. If successful in reaccreditation, your organization would be eligible for a status of either Accreditation (with a four-year term) or Accreditation with Commendation (with a six-year term).

## Submitting Materials to PAMED

All information and materials will be submitted in PAMED’s online Portal called OpenWater, <https://cme.secure-platform.com/a>. You will need to create a login and password to access the portal.

You will use OpenWater to complete and submit the Confirmation of Intent to Apply for Reaccreditation form, the Self-Study Report, and the Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstracts for selected CME activities.

You may be asked to upload documents that demonstrate your compliance with PAMED requirements and with the ACCME Standards. Please note, any uploaded files may not exceed 25 megabytes.

## Self-Study Report

You will provide narrative descriptions, documents, and examples to present the practice(s) your organization utilizes using the self-study report to demonstrate that your CME program is in compliance with PAMED and ACCME requirements.

## Evidence Of Performance-In-Practice

You will present evidence of performance-in-practice to demonstrate that your CME activities are in compliance with PAMED and ACCME requirements.

The PAMED performance-in-practice review entails the following process:

1. Your entry of CME activity data for upcoming or outstanding activities within your current accreditation term into the ACCME report system called PARS.
2. PAMED’s selection of activities for performance-in-practice review.
3. Your submission of evidence of performance-in-practice for the activities selected in PARS.

## Entering Your CME Activity Data in PARS

Clicking on the “Program and Activity Data” link located on your PARS dashboard, you will enter or update known information about the CME activities that your organization has provided, or will provide, under the umbrella of your PAMED accreditation statement, from the beginning of your current accreditation term to the expiration.

## Selecting Activities for Performance-in-Practice Review

PAMED will select up to 15 activities to review based on the CME activity data that you have entered in PARS throughout your current accreditation term. PAMED will notify you via email once the activities have been selected. Providers are accountable for demonstrating performance-in-practice for all activities selected. It is important that you carefully review the list of activities selected by PAMED. If you note, for example, an activity was cancelled or otherwise did not occur, please notify PAMED’s CME office, [CMEAdmin@pamedsoc.org](mailto:CMEAdmin@pamedsoc.org).

## Submitting Evidence of Performance-in-Practice

You will submit evidence of performance-in-practice for each activity selected by PAMED using our online portal, OpenWater. You will complete one abstract for each activity. In each abstract, you will provide the information requested with narrative descriptions, in tables, and uploaded documents and evidence to verify that the activity meets PAMED and ACCME’s requirements.

## **Accreditation Interview**

Your organization will have the opportunity to further describe the practices you present in the self-study report and in evidence of performance-in-practice, and provide clarification as needed, in conversation with the PAMED surveyors.

PAMED surveyors are colleagues from the accredited CME community who are trained by PAMED. Typically, a team of two surveyors will be assigned by PAMED to review your self-study materials, meet with representatives of your CME program, and engage in a dialogue about your organization's policies and practices. Occasionally a survey team will be comprised of three surveyors. During the interview, the surveyors will seek clarification about any questions they may have regarding the self-study materials you submitted to PAMED. PAMED surveyors will: 1) conduct their interactions in a professional manner; 2) be familiar with your materials and the ACCME's Core Criteria, Standards of Integrity and Independence, all applicable Accreditation Policies, and the Criteria for Commendation (if applicable); and 3) communicate clearly and effectively without offering consultative advice or feedback regarding compliance or the expected outcome of the accreditation review.

PAMED currently utilizes Zoom video conferencing as its standard accreditation interview format. Interviews can be up to 2 hours in length. The selection of interview dates and times will be completed in a form called Intent to Reapply that will be sent by PAMED. To ensure the validity of the process and based on circumstances and available resources, PAMED reserves the right to make all final decisions regarding the interview and/or composition of the survey team. PAMED will provide information about the process of scheduling the accreditation interview and will confirm the interview date and time and assigned surveyors in advance via email.