Measuring Patient Outcomes

The ACCME updated the Essential Areas and Elements required for compliance effective January 2006 to include new criteria in regards to measuring patient outcomes as outlined below:

**Essential Area C1**

… expected results) with expected results articulated in terms of changes in competence, performance, or patient outcomes that will be the result of the program.

**Essential Area C3**

The provider generates activities/educational interventions that are designed to change competence, performance, or patient outcomes as described in its mission statement.

**Essential Area C11**

The provider analyzes changes in learners (competence, performance, or patient outcomes) achieved as a result of the overall program’s activities/educational interventions.

**Essential Area C18**

The provider identifies factors outside the provider’s control that impact on patient outcomes.

All programs must include a process for measuring patient outcomes. This may be done individually for specific courses or as a random sample for meetings/conferences. A summary of the results are required to be submitted as part of the post course evaluation data within 60 days after the course.

Note: If utilizing a follow-up survey format a summary the results are to be submitted within 6 months after the course. Survey to be sent to attendees within 60 days after course. Suggested timeline as follows:

- Survey sent to attendees within 60 days after course allowing 30 days to complete and return
- Follow-up at 90 days allowing an additional 30 days to complete and return
- Compilation of survey results at 120 days
- Submission of results between 120-180 days

Examples of formats that may be used are:

1) Follow-up Survey – sent to attendees within after the event requesting information on procedural changes made to their practice as a result of information learned.
2) Pre-test/Post-test – test given to each attendee at the beginning of a session and again at the end of a session to measure learning outcomes. It is imperative that pre/post test results be matched up for each attendee.
3) Audience Response System (ARS) – questions asked at the beginning and again at the end of a session to measure learning outcomes.

Example of question that may be used for Follow-up Survey:

1) Based on what you learned during the <insert course name>, have you implemented at least one change since returning to your practice or work? Please explain.
Examples of questions that may be used for both the Pre-test/Post-test and ARS options are:

1) How would you rate your “insert content topic” knowledge?
   a) I’m a beginner
   b) I know the basic concepts only
   c) I have a good understanding of the material
   d) I should be teaching this darn thing!

2) What will happen to emergency physician Medicare payments in 2008?
   They will:
   a) Decrease by 10.6%
   b) Increase by 0.50%
   c) Decrease by about 1%
   d) Stay the same

3) The 2008 Medicare PQRI program will require reporting of:
   a) At least 80% of all performance measures
   b) At least 80% of at least 3 performance measures
   c) All applicable performances measures for service rendered
   d) Only those measures you want to apply to your bonus payment