

Case Study – Part 1

You have just returned from running a large CME conference in Myrtle Beach, SC. Your flight was delayed in Atlanta and you got home around midnight. Unfortunately, you have a committee meeting the next morning at 8 a.m., so you can't take the day off.

Following the committee meeting, you sequester yourself in your office to try to catch up on emails, voice mails, and administrative work. As the CME Director for your large health system that includes several hospitals and outpatient clinics, the administrative work seems endless.

You take a swig of coffee, take a deep breath, then dive into your email inbox. Your eye is drawn to an email marked "Urgent" from Suzie Simpleton at your affiliate, Smallville Regional Hospital, with the subject line "Dual Accreditation for Cardiology Case Discussions series." You click the email open:

Hi there - I hope you are well! I'll be in Jacksonville next week, so let's grab lunch and catch up!

I have a quick question for you. Dr. Bob Smith, the head of our cardiology department, scheduled Dr. Jim Dansberger, a cardiologist from Upstate Memorial Hospital, to present next Friday on "New Approaches to the Treatment of Heart Disease in Women" in our Cardiology Case Discussions series.

When we asked for Dr. Dansberger's disclosure, he said that he had already provided it to Lisa at Med Ed Advisors. When I asked him who Med Ed Advisors is, he let me know that they are the ones accrediting the presentation and covering his travel and honorarium. He also said they are paying for the catering for the Cardiology Case Discussions. I was thrilled to hear someone else will cover the costs for this program, because, as you know, our budget is tight!

So, here's my question. We usually provide the CME certificates for this program, and our doctors can download them from our CloudCME software. Should we dually accredit this course in addition to Med Ed Advisors' accreditation, so that our doctors will also have a record of their credit through our CloudCME website?

Thanks for your guidance,

Suzie

Questions for Discussion:

- Are there any "red flags" that go up for you related to this email?
- What further information would you ask Suzie to provide at this point?

- Does your facility allow external parties to accredit activities presented on your “campus”? Is there any formal protocol in place to spell out the requirements for such an arrangement?

Case Study – Part 2

After you follow up with Suzie, you find out that Dr. Smith had received an email from Med Ed Advisors offering to provide full funding for selected guest speakers to speak at Smallville Regional during their grand rounds meetings. This offer included coverage of faculty expenses, honorarium, catering for attendees, and CME accreditation.

Dr. Smith selected Dr. Dansberger from the list of presenters and topics provided by Med Ed Advisors, and Med Ed Advisors handled everything else, including booking Dr. Dansberger’s travel and ordering food from Panera Bread for the meeting.

Questions for Discussion:

- What, if anything, should you do?
- Does this type of arrangement fall within the ACCME and AMA guidelines/requirements?
- Can this session be “dual accredited” by both Smallville Regional and Med Ed Advisors? Or should you insist that your health system accredit the program independently?
- Is it acceptable to have an outside entity provide food for this CME activity? If so, what steps should be taken to ensure this program follows the guidelines and standards of ACCME and AMA?