

ACOE (The Accreditation Council of Oncology in Europe)



Mission & objectives: The primary function of the Accreditation Council of Oncology in Europe (ACOE) is the accreditation of European CME activities in oncology.

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL OF
ONCOLOGY IN EUROPE

CME consists of educational activities, i.e. live event and distance learning material, which serve to maintain, develop or increase the knowledge, skills, professional performance and relationships that a clinical or experimental oncologist, cancer nurse or other health professional uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession.

In relation to this function, ACOE reviews and evaluates CME activities in the field of oncology, more specifically ACOE assesses the quality and the educational value of the scientific programme of the activity.

ACOE accreditation label provides delegates with a guarantee of a high quality and unbiased educational activity.

ACOE provides standards in the form of *guidelines* for an organiser to observe.

In addition to its core mission, ACOE may also be involved in developing the general concept of CME in Europe. In this capacity, its role includes the following:

- To act as an advisor and facilitator in bringing relevant educational developments to the attention of ECCO – the European CanCer Organisation.
- To actively promote CME in general and the accreditation of CME in Europe by means of text, seminars, segments of conferences devoted to CME and any other appropriate method of publication.
- To set up and maintain contacts with non-oncology CME groups in Europe as well as CME experts in the USA and other Countries outside of Europe to facilitate free flow of ideas and information.
- To assist societies and interested groups in the planning of a comprehensive long term programme of CME activities which will reach as many health professionals in Europe as possible.

ACOE standards

ACOE appraises CME activities, i.e. live events and e-learning material, on the basis of a set of universally recognised standards and guidelines, which include:

- the purpose of the activity and its expected learning outcomes;
- the teaching methods;
- the evaluation procedure;
- the management governing the organisation of the activity and its unbiased character as regards promotional actions.

ACOE only accredits international CME activities, which comply with its guidelines, available from its website. ACOE accredited activities are awarded an agreed number of CME credit points (1 CME credit point per educational hour), with a maximum of 6 credits per day and 3 for a half day. ACOE accreditation label provides delegates with a guarantee of a high quality and unbiased educational activity.

European Accreditation

To facilitate the recognition of CME credits awarded to doctors attending events outside of their home country by the medical authorities within their home state, the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) set up in January 2000 a clearing-house system for CME credits – the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME).

In the field of Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) the EACCME will serve this purpose by ensuring accessibility to CME activities and securing European exchange of CME credits for medical specialists in Europe.

EACCME does not have the facilities to evaluate or accredit conferences itself and only consider events, which have already received accreditation from an accrediting body such as the ACOE. The EACCME system works by setting down standards, which an accrediting body must agree to apply in evaluating a conference. ACOE guidelines comply with the EACCME standards for accreditation.

To grant European CME credits to an event, the EACCME will ask the competent national authority where the event takes place to evaluate the quality of the event. Once this evaluation is performed and therefore the event approved by the competent national authority, the event is granted European CME credits that are valid in all European countries participating in the EACCME system.

Agreement between UEMS/EACCME and ACOE: In 2007, a Mutual Agreement was signed between the UEMS/EACCME and ACOE. Under the terms of this agreement, all applications in the field of Oncology will be evaluated by ACOE in terms of quality and independence of the CME events. In this evaluation process, ACOE will work according to EACCME rules and will liaise with the UEMS/EACCME office for submission of the accreditation requests to the relevant National Accreditation Authority in order to obtain their recognition of the European Accreditation.

Mutual Recognition of CME credits – Overview of the situation: ACOE is monitoring developments on CME accreditation in the 27 EU Member States including progress on the mutual recognition of CME credits. More information is available on ACOE's website (www.acoe.be/CME Credit recognition).

ESO and ACOE have jointly organised a CME workshop: *Towards a harmonised CME system in Europe*, that will take place during ECCO 15 – 34th ESMO, Tuesday 22 September 2009, 11:00–18:15h. This workshop is organised under the auspices of the European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS) and its Advisory Council on CME (EACCME). The workshop will seek to provide a platform for representatives from national CME competent authorities, oncology health professionals and representatives from European accreditation boards to appraise the disparities in CME principles between European countries, learn from each other, exchange views and practices. Attendance at the workshop is upon invitation only.

For information about the Accreditation Council of Oncology in Europe (ACOE) or information on the accreditation system, please contact:

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