

INFORMATIONAL REPORT

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON MEDICAL EDUCATION

CME Report 15 - A-08

Subject: 40th Anniversary of the AMA Physician's Recognition
Award and Credit System

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1 The American Medical Association is celebrating the 40th anniversary of the AMA Physician's
2 Recognition Award (PRA) this year. This report regarding the AMA PRA and the credit system
3 that was developed to support this award is submitted to the House of Delegates for informational
4 purposes.

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6 The AMA PRA was established by the House of Delegates in December 1968 to recognize
7 physicians who, by participating in continuing medical education (CME) activities, have
8 demonstrated their commitment to staying current with advances in medicine. The report to the
9 1968 Interim meeting of the House of Delegates that established the AMA PRA included the
10 following goals:

- 11 1. To provide recognition for the many thousands of physicians who regularly participate in
12 continuing medical education.
- 13 2. To encourage each physician to keep up-to-date and to improve knowledge and judgment
14 by continuing medical education.
- 15 3. To provide reassurance to the public that America's physicians are maintaining their
16 competence by regular participation in continuing medical education.
- 17 4. To emphasize the American Medical Association's position as a leader in continuing
18 medical education.
- 19 5. To emphasize the importance of developing more meaningful continuing education
20 opportunities for physicians.
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23 These continue to be the goals of the AMA PRA today. The AMA Physician's Recognition Award
24 is earned by thousands of physicians each year with 2007 showing an increase of 9% over the
25 previous year.

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27 The AMA has played a central role in the development of continuing medical education in the
28 United States by developing the AMA PRA credit system which codified the requirements and
29 standards for earning *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*[™] and *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit*[™]. AMA
30 PRA credit is the most widely accepted CME credit used by physicians of all specialties to
31 document CME participation for licensing boards, certification boards, hospital credentialing
32 committees, insurance groups and other organizations. Forty-five states and three US territories
33 currently have CME requirements for licensure of physicians. All of these states recognize AMA
34 PRA credit to fulfill these requirements. The AMA PRA certificate or approved AMA PRA
35 application is currently accepted by forty states and two territories as documentation of meeting
36 their CME requirements.

1 The AMA PRA credit system has continued to respond to the needs of physicians and to the
2 changes in the practice of medicine. Recognizing that physicians learn in different ways and that a
3 variety of educational formats should be recognized for credit, the Council on Medical Education
4 has approved five new educational formats for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* in the past ten
5 years. In addition to the original formats of live certified activities and enduring materials,
6 approved formats now also include Journal-based CME (1998), Manuscript Review (2003), Test-
7 item Writing (2003), Performance Improvement CME (2004) and Internet Point of Care (2005).
8 Educational experiences not designated for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* that comply with the
9 AMA definition of CME and pertinent CEJA opinions, may be self-claimed by physicians for *AMA*
10 *PRA Category 2 Credit™*. Approximately 50% of the physicians applying for the AMA PRA
11 certificate claim *AMA PRA Category 2 Credit™*.

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13 The Council on Medical Education also adopted policy in 1999 that allows physicians to apply
14 directly to the AMA for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™* for defined activities in which they
15 participate that have been recognized as worthwhile learning experiences but are not certified for
16 credit through an accredited CME provider. These include teaching at live CME activities that are
17 designated for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*, publishing articles in MEDLINE indexed journals,
18 presenting a poster which is included in the published abstracts for a conference certified for *AMA*
19 *PRA Category 1 Credit™*, earning medically related advanced degrees, completing an ABMS
20 member board certification process, and successfully participating in an ACGME-accredited
21 residency or fellowship.

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23 The past forty years have seen many changes in continuing medical education and the AMA has
24 led many of these changes by adapting the AMA PRA and the credit system to include new
25 concepts, introduce new ideas and recognize the multiple ways in which physicians learn and
26 improve. It is necessary that the AMA PRA system continues to be responsive to ensure that
27 physicians are adequately recognized for their participation in certified continuing medical
28 education activities.

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30 As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of this award, the Council on Medical Education would like to
31 remind the House of Delegates of HOD Policy H-300.959 which states that: “(1) the AMA, state
32 medical societies, and specialty societies in the AMA House of Delegates publicize and promote
33 physician participation in the AMA Physician's Recognition Award; and (2) that all physicians
34 participate in the AMA Physician's Recognition Award as a visible demonstration of their
35 commitment to continuing medical education.” (CME Rep. 1, I-93; Reaffirmed with change in
36 title: CME Rep. 2, A-05)