



MEMORANDUM

TO: CNME-Accredited and Candidate ND Programs
FROM: CNME Board of Directors
RE: Temporary Emergency Policies to Address the COVID-19 Situation
DATE: April 1, 2020

Introduction

Due to the COVID-19 situation, the U.S. Department of Education has authorized USDE-recognized accrediting agencies, such as the CNME, to implement temporary emergency policies to provide accredited programs flexibility in meeting accreditation standards. Based on this authorization, the CNME Board of Directors has adopted a set of temporary policies pertaining to CNME-accredited/candidate programs to support them in continuing to deliver naturopathic medical education during this challenging time while meeting CNME requirements. These temporary policies will remain in effect indefinitely, and may need to be revised or added to as changing circumstances may necessitate.

Temporary Emergency Policies

The following are the temporary CNME policies regarding delivery of the clinical portion of an ND program (these policies supersede the guidance on supervised clinical practice contained in the March 15, 2020 memorandum):

- **1,200-Hour Clinical Internship Requirement.** In order to enable students scheduled to graduate in 2020 to meet the CNME 1,200-hour clinical internship requirement, programs may make use of off-site, asynchronous, and online activities to complete clinical internship hours beyond the 850-hour mark in order to reach the 1,200-hour minimum total.
- **Required 450 Patient Visits.** Programs may use any or all of the following to enable students to complete the 450-patient-visit requirement:
 - Simulation for primary and secondary contacts;
 - Telemedicine/telehealth visits; and
 - Supervised mock patient cases.
- **Modalities and Checkoffs.** Programs may exercise flexibility in determining that clinical interns have fulfilled specific requirements for using the range of clinical procedures such as hydrotherapy treatments, physical examinations, etc.
- **Conditions Seen.** Programs must review the extent to which each intern has met the required number of conditions seen/treated, and make a good faith attempt to remediate deficiencies using their own judgment as to how best to do so.

COUNCIL ON NATUROPATHIC MEDICAL EDUCATION

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The following guidance on didactic coursework was provided in the CNME memorandum of March 15, 2020 and is still in effect:

- **Didactic coursework:** Each institution must make its own decisions about the best actions to take to ensure continued education for its students, while keeping in mind all local, state/provincial, and federal regulations and recommendations. The CNME already allows for use of distance/online delivery of education (see the “Guidelines on the Use of Information & Communication Technology in Naturopathic Medical Education” on page 52 of the CNME *Handbook of Accreditation*). Programs in the current circumstances may make whatever use of online/distance education technologies they consider necessary for continued course delivery of in-person classes that have been suspended.

Reporting Requirements

The U.S. Department of Education requires recognized accrediting agencies to engage in ongoing oversight of accredited programs. In order to fulfill this requirement, the CNME will require CNME-accredited/candidate ND programs to submit a report on the modifications they have made in delivering naturopathic medical education based on the policies stated above as follows:

- By Friday, May 8, 2020, submission of a report (maximum of two pages) that outlines the specific modifications the institution has made or intends to make to the program to address the COVID-19 situation; and
- By Friday, July 31, 2020, submission of a report (maximum of five pages) summarizing in detail the modifications that the program implemented in response to the COVID-19 situation and any plans for further modifications.

If a program has any questions or comments about the above policies, please contact CNME Executive Director, Dr. Daniel Seitz, at 413-528-8877 or by email at danseitz@verizon.net.