



MEMORANDUM

TO: CNME-Accredited ND Programs
FROM: CNME Board of Directors
RE: Further Extension of Temporary Policies to Address the COVID-19 Situation
DATE: July 20, 2021

Introduction

In its memorandums to CNME-accredited ND programs dated April 1, 2020, July 28, 2020, and December 15, 2020, the CNME Board of Directors provided guidance on temporary accommodations/flexibilities that ND programs were allowed to implement to address the external legal constraints impacting the delivery of naturopathic medical education due to the coronavirus situation, as well as the challenges and impediments this situation presented on a practical level due to health and other concerns.

Since the coronavirus situation is continuing to impact higher education—albeit at a lesser intensity in many places—the CNME Board has decided to extend the temporary emergency policies set forth in its previous guidance memos, as outlined below. As noted previously, the intent of these temporary policies is two-fold: (i) to provide ND programs the temporary flexibilities they need to effectively plan and deliver the curriculum in light of constraints due to the ongoing coronavirus situation, and (ii) to provide mechanisms by which the CNME can effectively monitor program quality and adherence to accreditation standards during this time.

The following are updated provisions pertaining to CNME-accredited ND programs regarding coronavirus-related modifications to the curriculum content and delivery:

- To extend the flexibilities, on the same terms as before, through the 2021 – 2022 academic year (i.e., until June 30, 2022); *please refer to the CNME memo dated December 15, 2020, for a summary of the terms;*
- To require schools to return to normal operation as soon and as quickly as practicable, given the constraints of their local jurisdictions;
- To require submission of two reports: (i) the report due September 30, 2021 that was referenced in the 12/15/2020 memo to the schools, and (ii) a brief update along with the annual report due in January 2022; *below is specific information regarding the content of these two reports.*

Recognizing that the coronavirus situation is still evolving, the CNME Board will continue to review the situation taking into account any updated guidance from the US Department of Education, and will issue further temporary emergency policies, if that becomes necessary under the circumstances.

Reporting Requirements

The U.S. Department of Education requires recognized accrediting agencies, such as the CNME, to engage in ongoing monitoring and oversight of accredited and candidate programs. The CNME will continue to exercise its monitoring responsibility by requiring submission of reports, as follows:

Report Due by September 30, 2021. CNME-accredited and candidate programs must submit a follow-up report (*5-page limit*) to CNME, containing the following information:

- A summary of the temporary modifications the program ended up making to curriculum content and delivery during the 2020 – 2021 academic year. This summary should include specific information on how the school is handling clinical interactions broken out by telehealth, simulated cases, in-person cases and other approaches.
- A summary of student feedback solicited by the program on students' experience of their naturopathic education in light of the modifications.
- A detailed assessment of student learning outcomes for students in all years of the program, including (i) an analysis of any deficiencies due to changes/accommodations in course delivery mechanisms to address the coronavirus situation, and (ii) an analysis of any areas where outcomes may have been beneficially impacted by these changes/accommodations.
- A summary of anticipated/planned modifications to the ND program for the 2021 – 2022, if any.

Report Due by January 31, 2022. CNME-accredited and candidate programs must submit a brief report (*5-page limit*), included with the 2021 annual report (due 1/31/2022), containing the following information:

- A summary of the temporary modifications the program made to curriculum content and delivery during the fall 2021 semester (or equivalent term) and its plans for the spring 2022 semester (or equivalent term).
- An updated evaluation of the impact that coronavirus-related program modifications have had on student learning outcomes, including any observed deficiencies that may have resulted.
- An updated outline of steps the program intends to take to address any educational deficiencies that may have resulted from program modifications.
- Specific coronavirus-related legal/regulatory requirements that the program believes will apply to the program during **2022**, with relevant documents provided as appendices.

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