

# **COUNCIL ON NATUROPATHIC MEDICAL EDUCATION**

## **Annual Report Review Guide for CNME-Recognized Programs**

### **Introduction**

CNME engages in ongoing monitoring of naturopathic medicine programs recognized by CNME (i.e., CNME candidate and accredited ND programs) to ensure that they remain in compliance with CNME's accreditation standards during the time between comprehensive onsite visits. As part of this ongoing monitoring process, CNME requires every recognized program to submit an annual report by January 15 that provides information for the previous calendar year. The Board formally reviews the annual reports at the semi-annual meeting held in the spring.

Electronic copies of all of the annual reports are made available to CNME Board members via the CNME Dropbox folder prior to the spring Board meeting. Additionally, an "Annual Report Review Form" is provided to each review team. This form lists any outstanding recommendations and areas of interest that a program must address, and teams record their suggestions for Board action on the form.

In order to facilitate the annual report review process, the Council's Executive Director assigns: (i) individual Board members specific annual reports to review (usually reports are reviewed by a 2-person team consisting of a lead reviewer and a secondary reviewer), and (ii) two Board members with financial experience to review all of the audited financial statements. The Executive Director is also responsible for reviewing the annual reports and serves as a resource for Board members if any questions arise.

At the spring Board meeting, Board members make a brief report—generally two to five minutes or shorter in length—to the full Board on the content of the annual reports, with a primary focus on (i) areas that may indicate compliance issues, and (ii) information that demonstrates that outstanding compliance issues have been satisfactorily addressed and can be removed. Board members can also report on any major positive changes/developments of note. If the report or any accompanying documents demonstrate clearly that the program is out of compliance with a standard, the Board may impose a sanction in accordance with CNME's policies. If potential compliance issues are identified but more information is needed to assess the situation, the Board may require a focused report or a focused evaluation visit to determine whether there are, indeed, any compliance issues that the program must address.

### **Annual Report Review Process**

In reviewing an annual report, Board members should focus on the following questions:

1. Is the report complete?
2. Are answers or information provided responsive?
3. Were there any major changes in personnel (administrative staff, faculty, and board members) during the preceding year that may indicate either institutional instability or non-compliance with CNME accreditation standards?
4. Were there any major changes in finances during the preceding year that may indicate institutional instability?

5. Were there any major changes in the academic program during the preceding year that may indicate non-compliance with CNME accreditation standards?
6. Were there any major changes in any other areas during the preceding year that may indicate either institutional instability or non-compliance with CNME accreditation standards?
7. Are there any indications that student attrition or student performance may be issues?
8. Are there any indications that the institution/program failed to report substantive changes as required by CNME?
9. Is the program catalog/calendar accurate? Does it contain required information?
10. Is the institution/program effectively addressing (or has it satisfactorily addressed) recommendations/areas of interest from the previous evaluation visit within the timeframe allotted by the CNME? Should any recommendations/areas of interest be removed based on the documentation and information presented (note that the board votes on removal)?
11. Are there any other matters that may indicate potential issues/problems with the program, or that it would be useful to report to the CNME Board of Directors?
12. Is more information needed from the program before the Council meeting in order to review compliance with CNME standards? Should a program representative be asked to be available by phone during the Council meeting to answer questions?

When reporting to the Council on a program's annual report, the Board member who is the lead reviewer on the report review team should (i) present a summary of major changes and potential compliance issues, (ii) recommend a course of action to the full Board if the review team has identified areas of possible non-compliance with standards, and (iii) recommend removing or extending an outstanding finding (recommendation/area of interest). Board members assigned to review reports may wish to consult with the Executive Director before the spring meeting regarding potential compliance issues that they have identified.