



The Honorable Diana DeGette
U.S. House of Representatives
2111 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Fred Upton
U.S. House of Representatives
2183 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

December 12, 2019

Dear Congresswoman DeGette and Congressman Upton:

On behalf of the Continuing Medical Education (CME) Coalition, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on your recent call to action on Cures 2.0 — an important next step in your efforts to advance medical research and foster a new era of medical innovation. Your landmark legislative achievement, 21st Century Cures, has already had a meaningful impact on crucial issues such as preventing and screening cancer, improving our understanding of the human brain, and advancing the field of regenerative medicine. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead to ensure that America's medical professionals have the requisite training to adopt the groundbreaking scientific developments that your legislation promises to unleash.

The practice of medicine is constantly changing. Many treatments, therapies and procedures that are routine by today's standards were not even contemplated when many of today's doctors were in medical school. In fact, many illnesses, such as HIV/AIDS, had not even been discovered when many of our current cohort of medical professionals received their formal training. Therefore, encouraging access to continuing education for medical professionals regarding the latest science and treatments is absolutely vital to improving patient outcomes and encouraging innovation in our health care system.

As you are probably aware, physicians are required by almost every state to routinely participate in CME to maintain licensure and certification, with the goal of improving our ability to diagnose, treat and care for patients. Moreover, there have been numerous studies done as to the effectiveness of CME. Over the course of 39 systematic reviews published between 1977 and 2014, the overall impact has been settled: CME courses "can more reliably change health professionals' knowledge and competence than their performance and patient health outcomes."¹

In recent years, policymakers have increasingly recognized that there is an important role for enhanced provider education to address discrete policy challenges. For example, the Centers for

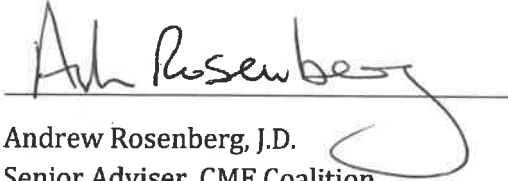
¹ Cervero, R. M., & Gaines, J. K. (2015). The Impact of CME on Physician Performance and Patient Health Outcomes: An Updated Synthesis of Systematic Reviews. *Journal of Continuing Education in the Health Professions*, 35(2), 131-138. doi:10.1002/chp.21290

Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently advanced a policy to incentivize medical education for providers by recognizing Quality Improvement CME (QI-CME) as an 'Improvement Activity' under the Merit-Based Incentive Payment System (MIPS). Additionally, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has acknowledged the role of CME in combating opioid misuse by leveraging continuing education on safe prescribing and safe use practices in their Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategy (REMS) for opioids. And most recently, the House Energy & Commerce and Senate HELP committees included a provision in their bipartisan surprise billing and drug pricing legislation that would direct the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to improve continuing education for health care providers regarding lower cost biosimilar products.

Looking forward, as you consider policies to spur the development of new treatments and support access to live-saving cures, it will be essential to address how America's health care professionals will become prepared to adopt and administer these medications. A dedicated effort to provider education will pay dividends by improving the quality of care and increasing access to innovative treatments.

Founded in 2010 as the "voice of CME," the CME Coalition offers significant expertise in this area. Representing over 40 leading CME providers and supporters, our members facilitate programs that impact more than 2,000,000 physicians, nurses, and pharmacists annually. As you continue to work on this important legislative initiative, we look forward to working with you on ways to leverage the power of CME and ensure that today's physicians are equipped to adopt tomorrow's cures.

Sincerely,



Andrew Rosenberg, J.D.
Senior Adviser, CME Coalition