



January 10, 2024

TO: All MHSRS '24 speakers and presenters

FROM: Megan Waltinger
Conference Manager

On behalf of the Postgraduate Institute for Medicine (PIM), thank you for agreeing to serve as a faculty member for the MHSRS 2024 accredited continuing education (referred to as CE in this letter) sessions, TENTATIVELY scheduled from 26-29 August 2024 at the Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center, Kissimmee, FL. We are pleased to confirm your participation and greatly appreciate you contributing to this educational offering.

It is our pleasure to be working in joint providership with MHSRS to produce this educational offering. Megan Waltinger will be your contact at the event subcontractor, The Bridge Group, and can be reached via email at speakers@mhsrs.net.

These CE activities are **targeted to military providers with deployment experience and research and academic scientists**. Please find below additional details of this activity that should be taken into consideration during the preparation of the educational materials.

Educational Objectives

The following educational objectives have been established for the activity and will be used as a benchmark for judging the success of the endeavor.

Upon completion of the activity, participants should be better able to:

- Understand the depth and quality of DoD sponsored medical research
- Understand the outcomes of DoD sponsored medical research in approximately 60 research categories
- Have worked to foster a better collaborative environment between military, academic and industry partners

Accreditation Standards for Integrity and Independence

As a jointly accredited provider, and in compliance with any other relevant accreditation criteria that may apply to this specific activity, PIM requires that faculty members comply with the **ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education** (Standards). We will be disclosing to participants that this activity is supported by an educational grant from the Department of Defense, and the Military Health Systems.

As a faculty member, you are required to disclose any personal financial interest or relationship that you have with companies whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients (ineligible companies) in the last 24 months. **Please note, the ACCME Standards were updated and went into effect on January 1, 2022. The one update that impacts faculty the most includes stock/equity interest in privately held companies. These individuals are now seen as owner/employees of the privately held company and must be excluded from participation with rare exceptions.**

Toward this end, we ask that you complete and sign the *Conflict of Interest Reporting Form* that accompanies this letter (if you have not done so already). Please kindly return the completed document by **June 7, 2024 via email to speakers@mhsrs.net.**

We will utilize this information to 1) determine if a conflict exists, 2) mitigate the conflict in accordance with PIM policies, generally by initiating a content validation process, and 3) advise learners of all relevant financial relationships. ***Please note that the ACCME Standards require accredited providers to disqualify planners, faculty, and others in control of educational content that do not supply this information.*** Also, please advise your PIM contact of any new or terminated financial relationships with ineligible companies that may occur between the time you complete this disclosure and your participation in the activity.

Content Standards

This educational activity must follow the standards for CE established by the Joint Accreditation Commission, AMA, FDA, and other relevant bodies. Accordingly, please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. CE activities are conducted for the education of the audience and, by extension, the benefit of their patients and the general public; they must not be designed to promote ineligible companies or products.
2. CE activities must be objective and balanced, including presentation of legitimate differences and contrasting views, and based upon the current best evidence available.
3. Use of generic names when referring to drugs is strongly encouraged. If trade names are used, those of several companies must be included. The use of ineligible company corporate logos is also not allowable.
4. Discussion of off-label and investigational usage of products is permissible but must be disclosed as such.
5. The educational content must address the learning objectives for the activity.

We encourage you to incorporate opportunities for the learners to actively participate in the teaching/learning process through problem-solving activities. Examples of techniques to accomplish this include but are not limited to: using a problem solving approach to frame the delivery of information/evidence; use of polling questions interlaced within the content with the appropriateness of each choice then discussed; use of case studies; or panel discussions and

audience questions for evidence or strategies that are controversial or undecided. Please work with MHSRS, your sessions leads and PIM during the development of your content to determine which strategies for active learning and learner-self assessment might be appropriate for your presentation and this activity.

Participant Evaluations

It is the policy of PIM to conduct post-activity evaluations. These evaluations ask participants to evaluate: 1) the appropriateness of the educational content to their clinical practice; 2) whether the educational content satisfied the stated objectives; 3) whether they intend to make any changes in practice; and 4) whether there was any evidence of commercial bias. The results of these evaluations are shared with the faculty and are used to plan future educational activities.

Honorarium and Expense Reimbursement

We appreciate your time and professional commitment to this activity. As agreed, you will not be receiving an honorarium nor will any of your out-of-pocket expenses incurred for your role as a faculty member in this CE activity be reimbursed, to include standard coach airfare, transportation to and from the airport and to the activity site, meals on the day of the activity, and standard hotel accommodations for your time of participation.

As faculty, you may not accept any additional payment or assistance for your work in this activity from any ineligible company.

Physician Payment Sunshine Act (“Sunshine Act”)

Under the terms of the Open Payments provisions of the Affordable Care Act and the accompanying regulations from the Centers for Medicare/Medicaid Services (CMS), applicable manufacturers are required to report certain transfers of value provided to physicians (currently defined in the law as an MD, DO, Dentist, Dental Surgeon, Optometrist, Chiropractor, or Podiatrist).

According to CMS guidance, when an applicable manufacturer “provides funding to a continuing education provider but does not either select or pay the covered recipient speaker directly, or provide the continuing education provider with a distinct, identifiable set of covered recipients to be considered as speakers for the continuing education program, CMS will consider those payments **to be excluded from reporting** under § 403.904(i)(1)” (emphasis added).

CMS clarified and reiterated that when an “applicable manufacturer conveys ‘full discretion’ to the continuing education provider, **“those payments are outside the scope of the rule”** (emphasis added). As you’re likely aware, the ACCME Standards mandates that commercial supporters convey full discretion to CE providers to ensure that all decisions regarding the content, faculty, speakers, and attendees are made free from the control of a commercial supporter. Consistent with these standards, PIM strictly prohibits commercial supporters from having any direct or indirect influence or control with respect to the content, faculty, speakers, or attendees of the activities it provides. Therefore, the payments you receive for your role as faculty for this activity are considered to be excluded from reporting requirements by the CMS.

However, reporting requirements are interpreted in various ways by manufacturers; therefore, if a commercial supporter for this activity asks for information they believe is needed to comply with the Sunshine Act, PIM will provide this information and the fact that you served as a faculty member or planner for this particular CE activity.

Thank you for your contributions in developing this educational offering.

Sincerely,

Megan Waltinger
Conference Manager for MHSRS
The Bridge Group