



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS about the ISMA Commission on Medical Education

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## **How did the Commission of Medical Education become a part of the ISMA?**

The first gathering of what was to become the Indiana State Medical Association occurred in Indianapolis in 1849, and Livingston Dunlap, M.D., the third physician to arrive in Indiana, was appointed president. The 28 participants at that meeting agreed their mission would be to educate physicians about science and clinical developments in medicine.

Early in the 20th century, the ISMA began to publish a medical journal and in the ensuing decades, various committees studied medical education within Indiana and formed a permanent unit they called the Commission on Medical Education. Today, the commission serves as the ISMA's accrediting body for state institutions and organizations that develop continuing medical education programs for physicians.

## **How does the commission fit in with the mission of the ISMA today?**

The mission of the ISMA is to act as an indispensable adjunct to the practice of medicine in the state of Indiana and to satisfy member needs for growth and public approval through educational activities.

The ISMA's recognized accreditation program complements its mission by:

- Encouraging quality continuing medical education activities within the state
- Enabling physicians to maintain their competency and incorporate new knowledge
- Improving health outcomes for patients and communities

Additionally, the program serves as a self-regulatory system for accrediting and reaccrediting CME providers. A peer-review process is responsive to changes in medical education and in the health care delivery system.

## **How does an ISMA member join the ISMA Commission on Medical Education?**

The commission is comprised of physicians from various medical districts throughout Indiana, with each district having one representative for every 600 members. ISMA Trustees from each district recommend to the ISMA president members from their areas who have an interest in medical education. The president then makes the commission appointment for those interested physicians.

A subcommittee of the commission is the Expert Committee on Accreditation. This group represents a variety of specialties throughout the state.

### **Are there any requirements for members of the commission?**

Typically members are knowledgeable in some area of continuing medical education. However, all new members are trained by the existing staff.

Members include physicians who are:

- Directors of medical education
- Retired physicians and physicians currently not practicing
- Non-physicians who have experience in medical education
- Any physician who enjoys and wants to contribute to medical education

Thomas Huth, M.D., Vice President of Medical Affairs at Reid Hospital & Health Care Services, Richmond, is the current chair of the commission.

### **What are the responsibilities of a commission member?**

The ISMA Commission on Medical Education oversees 45 accredited providers all across the state. These providers include hospitals, specialty associations and public health groups.

Commission members complete surveys of these providers each year in the spring and fall. Commission members who are also surveyors generally perform two to three surveys a year. Two surveyors participate on each survey visit. The ISMA pays surveyor's travel expenses (mileage and meals) to complete this process.

At each site visit, the surveyor observes a live activity, reviews any reaccreditation restudy documents and discusses the status of the entity's CME process with CME staff, hospital directors of medical education and hospital CEOs/CFOs.

Following each survey, surveyors record and report their findings to the ISMA Commission on Medical Education.

### **What is a typical commission meeting like and how often do they occur?**

The purpose of the commission meeting is to review recent site surveys, discuss the surveyor's reports and findings, and make final decisions about every initial accreditation and reaccreditation. These meetings also provide opportunities for commission members to ask questions and to discuss new CME policies and guidelines.

Commission members generally meet twice annually on Sunday mornings over breakfast. Meetings are held at the ISMA headquarters office, 322 Canal Square in downtown Indianapolis. Conference call participation is allowed.

YOU can help your colleagues and give back to your profession

If you have further questions or are interested in becoming a commission member or site surveyor,

contact Shelly Symmes, ISMA CME coordinator

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