Guideline: Addressing Health Equity and Collaborative Learning in Continuing Medical Education (CME)

1. **PURPOSE:** To describe strategies for creating and sustaining a collaborative experience for all educators and learners participating in CME; to describe strategies for addressing health equity and minimizing bias in CME.

1. **PERSONS AFFECTED**: All planners, faculty, and others who may be in control of the educational content of an accredited CME activity.
2. **GUIDELINE STATEMENT:** Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine is committed to advancing health equity and supporting learners and educators from a wide variety of backgrounds and perspectives. Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of our community against any individual in educational activities. The Office of CME and the CME Application Review Committee review each CME application with attention to quality and the educational needs of our learners and the broader community. All learners should feel welcome at CME activities regardless of their specialty, profession, or any category protected by the law. The University believes different perspectives, experiences, and backgrounds are critical to building a dynamic community of learners, and as such encourages all learners to join.
3. **Helpful Strategies for Addressing Health Equity and Collaborative Learning in CME:**

**Activity Planning:** Fostering a collaborative learning environment begins with the activity planning process.

CME activity planners can ask the following questions during the planning process:

* 1. Have I included planners and faculty who are representative of the target audience and patient population of my activity?
     1. Have I included those from different backgrounds, specialties, or professions as planners and faculty for the activity?
     2. Are the planners and faculty of my activity representative of those in my specialty and the target audience?
     3. Have I unintentionally excluded anyone from the planning or delivery of this activity who could improve the quality, impact, or reach of the education?
  2. Do the topics selected for presentation reflect the needs of the target audience and patient population?
  3. Does the educational content address health disparities and advocate for health equity?
  4. Are honoraria equitably distributed?
  5. Do panels include speakers who represent different perspectives in my field?
  6. Are there opportunities to include patients, students, trainees, or other interprofessional colleagues in the planning or delivery of the activity?

**Educational Content Development:** CME activity planners are also responsible for overseeing the educational content delivered to the learners by their selected faculty. When creating educational content for CME activities, the Office of CME recommends faculty review their content to ensure it is inclusive and bias-free. Faculty are encouraged to reflect on how race, gender, and other sociodemographic factors are represented in educational content.

One strategy to ensure inclusive and bias-free content from CME faculty is for activity planners to share their expectations during the activity planning process. The email template available [here](https://northwestern.cloud-cme.com/about/resources?p=1200) and titled, “Email Template for Faculty: Collaborative Learning and Bias-Free Content,” may be modified and shared with faculty.

**Activity Evaluation:** A post-activity evaluation is a requirement of accredited CME. Two questions (response optional) are included in the evaluation to assess the planner/faculty success in achieving a collaborative and bias-free learning environment.

Question 1: “Describe any biased content and/or lack of inclusion that you experienced or witnessed as a participant in this activity.”

Question 2: “Are you satisfied with the diversity of speakers and content of this educational activity? If no, please explain.”

All responses will be reviewed by the Office of CME and shared with the activity planners. Activity planners may be asked to respond to some or all the evaluation feedback so that an appropriate action plan can be developed for future activities.

1. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:** All planners, faculty, and other who may be in control of the educational content of an accredited CME activity should review this guideline. The Office of CME and the CME Application Review Committee is responsible for monitoring the planning process and evaluation data.