

21 NCAC 52 .0208 CONTINUING EDUCATION

(a) An additional requirement for issuance of the annual renewal certificate shall be certification to the Board of proof of compliance with the continuing education provisions of the General Statutes. The Board shall notify all podiatrists that 25 hours are required annually, including one hour of controlled substances prescribing practices and controlled substance prescribing for chronic pain management.

(b) General CME policy - 25 hours per year as follows:

- (1) Completion of 25 hours of Continuing Medical Education (CME) is required per year (July 1-June 30) for renewal of licensure. CME credits shall not be carried over from the previous licensure year.
- (2) It shall be the responsibility of the individual podiatrist to ascertain in advance that the courses he or she attends have received proper approval of the certifying organizations, and comply with the *Standards, Requirements, and Guidelines for Approval of Sponsors of Continuing Education in Podiatric Medicine* of the Council on Podiatric Medical Education (<http://www.cpme.org/education/content.cfm?ItemNumber=2440&navItemNumber0=2249>), including updates. The website may be accessed at no charge. The Board shall respond in writing within 45 days of receipt by the Board of all needed documentation with approval or denial to individuals requesting approval of CME courses and credit hours. Decisions by the Board are the final agency decision and may be appealed as set out in G.S. 150B-23.
- (3) Certificates of completion of courses other than those sponsored by the NC Foot and Ankle Society (NCF&AS) shall be submitted to the Board on a form provided by the Board with the podiatrist's annual license renewal documents. Completion certificates shall be typed and contain the following information:
 - (A) Podiatrist's name;
 - (B) Course name, location, and date;
 - (C) Number of hours CME completed;
 - (D) Signature of seminar chairperson; and
 - (E) Name of certifying or sponsoring agency.
- (4) A licensed podiatrist participating in the second or third year of a medical residency or fellowship may submit a letter signed by the podiatric residency or fellowship director stating the podiatrist's name and dates of residency. This shall substitute for the 25-credit hour requirement and CME certificate required by this Rule.
- (5) A podiatrist may submit his or her CME certificate(s) to the Board in facsimile, electronic, or hard copy format at any time during the renewal year.
- (6) The Board shall retain CME documentation with the individual podiatrist's license renewal information.

(c) Category 1: Minimum requirement 20 hours per year, as follows:

- (1) CME credit shall be granted for attendance at educational seminars offered by the NCF&AS. The number of qualifying hours of continuing education shall be determined and approved by the Board in advance based on the standards in 90-202.11. NCF&AS shall submit to the Board a listing of individuals attending its CME events and credits earned.
- (2) CME credit shall be granted for attendance at educational seminars offered by other national, state, and podiatric education providers, as certified by the Council on Podiatric Medical Education (CPME) of the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA). The number of qualifying hours of continuing education shall be determined and approved by the Board.
- (3) Lecturers shall be granted one hour of credit for each hour of CPME- or APMA- approved lectures given, but such credit shall be limited to one hour for each discrete topic. A brief summary of the content of each lecture shall be submitted to the Board for approval.
- (4) Category 1 is limited to live educational seminars either offered by NCF&AS or by sponsors pre-approved by CPME:
<http://www.cpme.org> (CPME 700: "Approved Sponsors of Continuing Education in Podiatry"). (APMA or CPME-approved online or journal courses are considered Category 2.)
- (5) Since CPME evaluates only CME conducted in the United States, North Carolina-licensed podiatrists practicing outside the United States or participating in a foreign fellowship or other short-term residency abroad may apply to the Board to have their continuing medical education credits from their country of practice considered and evaluated by the Board on an individual basis.

- (d) Category 2: A maximum of only 5 of the total 25 CME hours per year shall be allowed as follows:
- (1) CME credit shall be allowed for educational programs approved for Category 1 credit by the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) or their affiliated organizations.
 - (2) CME credit shall be allowed for courses approved by North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (AHEC).
 - (3) Online or medical journal courses approved by CPME are permitted.
 - (4) For courses not pre-approved by AHEC, AOA, or AMA, all requests for CME approval must contain a timeline and course description and be submitted to the Board for approval.
- (e) Waiver for Certified Illness, Medical Condition, Natural Disaster, or Undue Hardship. The Board may waive the continuing education requirement for license renewal in the following cases that preclude a licensed podiatrist from completing his or her CME requirement within the 18-month timeframe from July 1 of the year of the last license or renewal issuance through December 31 of the following year:
- (1) An unexpected illness or medical condition certified by a letter from a licensed physician, nurse practitioner (NP), or physician assistant (PA) regarding the licensee or the licensee's parents, spouse, children and other persons dependent upon the podiatrist for daily living supports; or
 - (2) An undue hardship (such as active military service or natural disaster).

In such cases, the Board shall issue a conditional license predicated on the licensee acquiring all of the required continuing education credits in a mutually-agreeable timeframe, but no later than 24 months after December 31 of the year following the latest year of license or renewal issuance. Requests for CME waiver shall be received by the Board before the end of the grace period deadline for license renewal. The Board may require additional information when necessary to confirm the need for exemption to support the licensee's claim. The Board shall notify the licensee of its decision in writing within 45 days of receipt by the Board of all needed documentation.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 90-202.4(g); 90-202.11; S.L. 2015-241, s. 12F.16(b) and (c);
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