CME: What Does It Really Mean?
Rob Adamson, MD

CME is an acronym that evokes different emotional responses depending on how you define it. Like AAA, your definition determines your response. For example, I feel differently about the American Automobile Association than an abdominal aortic aneurysm. CME stands for Continuing Medical Education but often feels like Costly (yet) Mandatory Education.

The practice of medicine is continually changing and without a formalized process of reinventing your skill set, gaining new knowledge and improving communication with other members of the multidisciplinary team, it would be easy to disenfranchise your patients, colleagues and our hospital system. But with the overburdened nature of health care workers today, CME often feels more like Can’t Manage Everything. As such, we have used a very different approach to CME that educates while strengthening the multidisciplinary team approach.

I estimate that half of the procedures I do today were not even thought of when I finished my cardiac fellowship: endovascular aneurysm repair (EVAR); thoracic endovascular aneurysm repair (TEVAR); and transcatheter aortic valve replacement (TAVR). Another example is the left ventricular assist device (LVAD) option. We are currently enrolling patients in the HeartMate 3™ trial. This is a new, magnetically levitated, centrifugal blood pump for patients with heart failure. Without defined educational commitment and a way to communicate this information to other members of the team, participation in this study would be impossible. It is easy to see how fast things are changing, and without CME, you might confuse EMR with DNR.

Our approach to CME has been targeted, multidisciplinary team conferences. For heart failure, we have combined our cardiac transplant team and our advanced mechanical support members into a comprehensive group of physicians, nurse coordinators, physical therapists, rehabilitation specialists, nutritionists, social workers, financial staff, immunologists and infectious disease specialists who meet weekly to discuss each patient we are treating. Everyone shares their expertise and we discuss new therapies and options. The same is true for the structural heart committee: Again, a multidisciplinary team meets weekly to review patients’ candidacy, decide upon which procedure is optimal, and review outcomes and adverse events. In sum, there are now 30 health care professionals acting with a single mind to provide optimal care. This interactive exchange of information and perspectives gives the patient a more balanced and considered approach to their care than any one individual can provide.

(continued)
CME is here to stay, and it is mandated. It can be done in a lecture or reading environment, or it can become a concerted exchange of individual team members’ expertise and experience into a unified treatment plan to maximize the patients’ health care. Both approaches have their place, but the latter is certainly more time-sensitive and patient-specific.

HRO at Sharp HealthCare

The High-Reliability Organization (HRO) initiative continues at Sharp HealthCare. At May’s Quarterly Leadership Development, leaders completed additional training in foundational concepts of HRO, implementing reliability huddles, and creating a culture of team work and mutual respect. The HRO training timeline has been announced and the rollout has begun (see graphic below). As a physician, your engagement in the HRO initiative is critical to its success. Physicians are key stakeholders in helping to create an environment of mutual respect and teamwork, and to encourage everyone to speak up for safety.

What’s New in CME

Inaugural Osteopathic Medicine Conference Scheduled

Gregg Garner, DO, committee chair, invites you to attend the Sharp Osteopathic Medicine Conference. This inaugural event is presented by Sharp’s Continuing Medical Education Department, in conjunction with the San Diego Osteopathic Medical Association (SDOMA), to bring current and relevant information to the practicing physician.

With an increasing emphasis on quality, prevention of disease, patient experience and improved cost of care, today’s physicians face many challenges.

Sharp HealthCare and SDOMA present this conference to share best practices that will help you combat the challenges at hand. Speakers will discuss a variety of topics, including increasing accountability, changes in payment methods, evidence-based outcomes, reimbursement strategies, legal challenges and appropriate advanced illness management. All physicians in practice — whether in private office settings or group practices — are welcome to attend.

SDOMA designates this program for a maximum of 7 AOA Category 1-A credits and will report CME and specialty credits commensurate with the extent of the physician’s participation in this activity. To register or learn more, visit www.sharp.com/osteopathiccme.

Physicians will be invited to participate in the HRO courses that will be offered to all employees beginning this fall. Regular communication regarding the educational sessions will continue via a variety of forums such as medical executive committees (MEC), medical group meetings and administrative updates.

For more information or questions regarding the HRO initiative, please visit the HRO page on SharpNET.
Pharmacy Spotlight

Pharmacist Self-Assessment Identifies Educational Opportunities

Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians across the system recently had the opportunity to provide their input on the type of continuing pharmacy education activities they would like to see at Sharp HealthCare. The survey focused on activity format and education delivery options as well as refining topics of interest.

Early results show significant interest in interactive lectures and case discussion presented in both live and online formats. Survey participants provided a wide range of suggestions and insights in response to questions regarding policies, procedures and protocols; high-risk medication management; disease states; advanced patient care practice models; and ways to improve the patient experience.

Several pharmacists have even agreed to volunteer their time to support continuing education opportunities for their colleagues.

The results of this survey will be used to determine the expected outcomes and learning objectives for the systemwide regularly scheduled series (RSS) that is currently under development and could lead to other educational opportunities.

Details on the coming RSS will be made available as soon as they are final. Be on the lookout for more information in the coming months.

Thank you to all those who participated and provided input. The CME Department continues to work to support your needs in order to help you Get Smart.

Physician Spotlight

Teaching Medicine to Children

“Why do we have eyebrows?” This question was asked by a 6-year-old to the visiting physician at her Connecticut grade school. Teaching medicine to children may seem like a challenge to some physicians, mostly because kids may seem afraid or even unsure of “doctor stuff.” Not so for Ali Banaie, MD, a gastroenterologist and incoming chief of staff at Sharp Grossmont Hospital.

Dr. Banaie has been teaching local kindergarteners about the wonderful world of gastroenterology. One class titled “What Happens to Food After You Eat It,” was a huge success for the kids. “Initially the children were somewhat reserved, yet curious. By using household objects, like plastic bags and tubing, along with iPad videos — which every kid loves — I was able to gain their full attention and demonstrate the basic understanding of how food is digested.”

As physicians like Dr. Banaie continue to teach medicine to a young audience, they become less fearful and more informed about “doctor stuff.” A win-win for both physicians and students.
Activity Spotlight: Looking Back

Isn’t That Someone Else’s Responsibility? Advanced Illness Management (AIM) Conversations in the Clinical Context

Advanced illness management (AIM) conversations in the clinical context are often challenging. Karl Steinberg, MD, Family Medicine, and chair of the Coalition for Compassionate Care of California, and John Tastad, program coordinator for Advance Care Planning at Sharp HealthCare, taught physicians and other health care providers practical tips and techniques to help them engage in more skillful conversations with patients and their families.

Attendees learned the most up-to-date information about their legal responsibilities for communication related to a terminal diagnosis; how to better understand the criteria and process for clinical documentation of advance care planning conversations; and how to more fittingly use the physician orders for life-sustaining treatment (POLST) form with appropriate patient populations in their practice.

Activity Spotlight: Looking Forward

Sharp HealthCare’s 2016 Primary Care Conference

Dec. 1 to 5, 2016
Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa, Kauai, Hawaii

Aloha! This year’s national conference will focus on the educational needs of primary care physicians, including family physicians, internists and any others interested in learning about the latest developments in the field of primary care medicine. Topics will include women’s health, heart failure, GI, concussions, end-of-life care, medical marijuana, attention deficit disorder (ADD) and travel medicine.

In its 13th year, the conference has established a reputation for attracting physicians from across North America. Faculty speakers are national experts and many attendees participate year after year. To learn more or register, visit www.sharp.com/aloha.
Access the CME Portal

The most current list of upcoming CME and CPE activities can be found on the CME Portal. You can also view your transcripts and certificates; complete evaluations; update your personal information; and sign up for other activities.

Remember, your CME Portal account username and password may not be the same as your Sharp login credentials.

If you need any assistance, please contact:
**CME Department:** 858-499-4560
**Technical Assistance Center:** 858-627-5000

To access the CME Portal:

Visit [www.sharp.com/cme](http://www.sharp.com/cme)

Select Log in now

Choose from the menu options listed:

- **Live Courses** — Upcoming conferences and live events
- **Online Courses** — Active online courses
- **Calendar** — Live courses and all current regularly scheduled series (RSS) such as grand rounds and tumor boards