

# SDMS Continuing Medical Education



## Policies and Procedures

Approved by SDMS Board of Directors  
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Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography,  
Plano, Texas



2745 Dallas Pkwy Ste 350, Plano, TX 75093-8730  
214-473-8057 • 214-473-8563 FAX • [www.sdms.org](http://www.sdms.org)

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# Introduction



The SDMS appreciates your interest in providing continuing medical education (CME) to members of the sonography profession. Please let us know if you have any suggestions or need further assistance. This publication is available on the SDMS website at: <http://www.sdms.org/cme>

## SDMS CME Credit

SDMS CME credit is accepted by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS), American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT), Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Ultrasound Professionals (CARDUP), and Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI) toward their continuing education requirements. For information on certification and continuing education requirements, please contact the respective organizations at:

### American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonographers (ARDMS)

51 Monroe Street  
Plaza East 1  
Rockville, Maryland 20850-2400  
301-738-8401 / 800-541-9754  
301-738-0312 FAX  
<http://www.ardms.org>

### The American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT)

1255 Northland Drive  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55120-1155  
Phone 651-687-0048  
<http://www.arrt.org>

### Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Ultrasound Professionals (CARDUP)

PO Box 119  
Kemptville, Ontario, Canada  
K0G-1J0  
877-488-0788  
613-258-0899 FAX  
<http://www.cardup.org/>

### Cardiovascular Credentialing International (CCI)

1500 Sunday Drive, Suite 102  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27607-5151  
919-861-4539 / 800-326-0268  
919-787-4916 FAX  
<http://www.cci-online.org>

## Note:

- SDMS CME credit may be issued in increments of 15 minutes or 0.25 SDMS CME credit. While ARDMS, CARDUP, and CCI will accept 0.25 SDMS CME credits toward continuing education requirements, ARRT does not currently accept less than 0.50 CME credits for an educational activity.
- ARRT will only accept up to 8 credit hours of Applications Training credit per biennium. The 8 credits are only capped on training held at your facility. If training is held offsite, no cap is applied.
- In addition, ARRT will not accept SDMS CME credit issued for clinical instructorship and may also not accept some SDMS CME credit for self-instructional CME activities.

Contact ARRT for additional information on their continuing education requirements and their acceptance of SDMS credit.

## CME Mission Statement

The CME mission of the SDMS is to promote quality patient care by providing educational activities that are planned and administered to maintain, improve or enhance the knowledge, skills, and professional performance of the sonographer.

The content of educational activities is driven by the body of knowledge and skills recognized and accepted by the profession and directly related to the professional responsibilities of the sonographer. Educational activities encompass the following sonography specialty/content areas: adult, pediatric, and fetal cardiac sonography, abdomen, breast, neurosonography, obstetrics and gynecologic, vascular, and sonography principles and instrumentation.

## CME Activity Eligibility

The SDMS CME approval process is open to CME activities held anywhere in the world. Every CME activity must be planned and administered to maintain, develop, improve or enhance the knowledge, skills, and professional performance of the sonographer. The content of the CME activities includes the body of knowledge and skills recognized and accepted by the profession.

To be eligible for consideration, the CME activity must be directly related to the sonographer's professional responsibilities. They include activities related to clinical practice, patient care and education, and practice management. Alcohol should not be served or offered during a time frame when CME credits are issued or awarded.

## Application Process

The application process will vary depending on the type of CME activity. Applications for SDMS CME credit are completed through an online process. Depending on the type of CME activity and your method of payment, you may have to submit some required documentation, and payment via mail (faxes are not accepted). In most cases, the application process is completed entirely online.

### CME Providers

CME providers seek approval to provide SDMS CME credit to participants of their CME activities. This includes activities such as study groups, seminars/conferences, applications training/system optimization, and self-instructional programs.

### Educational Program Directors

Program Directors affiliated with a CAAHEP-accredited sonography education program can request up to six (6) CME credits per calendar year for clinical instructors providing student instruction.

**Note:** *ARRT will not accept clinical instructorship credits.*

### Individuals

There is a separate application process for individuals applying for SDMS CME credits for completion of applicable college credit or their role as an author or editor of a sonography article or textbook. See page 22 for more information.

## System Requirements:

To use the online SDMS CME application system, you will need access to the following:

- Personal computer (PC-compatible\*, Apple Mac, Linux)
- Compatible web browser (Internet Explorer 7.x\*, Netscape 7.x, Firefox 1.x or later)
- Adobe Reader 8.x or later (free download available at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com))
- Printer
- Valid email address
- Internet connection (high-speed recommended)

\* *Recommended*

Because much of the communication between SDMS and CME providers will be via email, all applicants for SDMS CME credit are required to have a valid email address on file. You should plan to check email at least once a week to ensure you do not miss timely or important email messages about CME applications or issues related to SDMS CME credit.

Because spam filters sometimes block legitimate email, you should be sure to configure your email software to accept email from SDMS (for more information on how to 'whitelist' SDMS, visit [www.sdms.org/members/whitelist.asp](http://www.sdms.org/members/whitelist.asp)).

## Record Retention

All records relating to a SDMS-approved CME activity must be retained for a minimum of four (4) years and must be made available to SDMS upon request.

## Commercial Bias

CME activities must be fair and balanced and without commercial bias. An activity that merely mentions a commercial product is not necessarily considered biased. A commercial entity that provides funding for a CME activity should not be allowed to direct or influence the educational content. Speakers who are paid or compensated by a commercial entity should ensure that their presentations are not biased and wherever possible, offer alternatives. Sales presentations (including discussion of pricing, terms and conditions of sale, options, services, etc.) and product orientations will not be approved for CME credit. No more than ten percent (10%) of a CME activity may be equipment or commercial entity specific. Conflict of interest or commercial sponsorships should be disclosed to participants.

## Applications Training/System Optimization Activities

Applications Training or System Optimization activities may be approved for SDMS CME credit. Applications Training/System Optimization activities which will be approved should focus on the educational aspects of sonography, not sales of equipment. The session should be presented by an appropriately educated sonography professional or commercial/corporate representative. These sessions will be permitted to contain machine specific information for purposes of training sonographers in proper machine usage and to achieve optimal diagnostic ultrasound images. The activity may be conducted on-site or at an off-site location. The commercial bias restriction will be waived in these sessions. No pricing or discussion of sales terms may be conducted at any time during the session. No alcoholic beverages may be served or available during the CME session. Commercial relationships and/or employment of the presenter by a commercial manufacturer must be disclosed to participants before the session begins. Hands-on training during the session will be approved at half credit (2 hours equals 1 SDMS CME credit). Didactic/Lecture time will be approved at full credit (1 hour equals 1 SDMS CME credit). *ARRT may cap the number of Applications Training/System Optimization credits approved at 8 if the session is*

*conducted at your facility. Contact ARRT directly for more information.*

## Copyrighted Materials

When submitting a CME activity for SDMS approval, the CME provider is warranting that the material used in the CME activity is original or adheres to copyright laws and/or the CME activity will be conducted in compliance with copyright laws. Copyright entitles the copyright holder to exclusive rights to the reproduction or distribution of his/her work. If any part of an original work (e.g., text, graphics, tables, images, etc.) is used, the CME provider and/or presenter must obtain reprint permission from the copyright holder (i.e., author, publisher). The SDMS does not evaluate whether the educational material is original work and SDMS is held harmless (not responsible) for any copyright infringements by the CME provider.

## Privacy

The SDMS will only use the information provided by CME providers including CME participant rosters for purposes related to SDMS CME Tracker, CME activities, or CME verification or auditing. The SDMS will not disclose CME provider or CME activity participant information except as provided by the SDMS Privacy Policy (available at [www.sdms.org/privacy.asp](http://www.sdms.org/privacy.asp)).

CME providers who conduct SDMS-approved CME activities are expected to take all steps necessary to protect the privacy of participant information. In some cases, CME providers may have access to additional confidential information such as a credit card number. The CME provider should ensure that their policies and procedures adequately protect such information. Under no circumstance is SDMS responsible for the failure of the CME provider to protect such information.

### **For more information about SDMS continuing medical education, contact:**

Society of Diagnostic Medical Sonography  
2745 N Dallas Pkwy Ste 350  
Plano, TX 75093-8730  
Phone: (214) 473-8057  
Fax: (214) 473-8563  
Email: [cmdept@sdms.org](mailto:cmdept@sdms.org)  
Website: [www.sdms.org](http://www.sdms.org)

# CME Providers

## Schedule of Fees for CME Providers

The following tables identify the required non-refundable processing fees for applications for SDMS CME credit. For certain CME activities, a CME provider may apply for a multi-year approval but must maintain current SDMS membership throughout the approval period (see Table 2).

Multi-year discounts are not available to non-members.

**Note:** An annual meeting such as the SDMS Annual Conference is considered a single-offering conference because the program content changes from year to year.

**Table 1. Single Offering Approval**

Type of Activity	Member	Non-Member
Single offering Seminar/Conference	\$150 plus \$5/credit*	\$300 plus \$5/credit*
Single offering Applications Training/System Optimization	\$150 plus \$5/credit*	\$300 plus \$5/credit*

**Table 2. Multiple Offering/Multi-Year Approval**

Type of Activity	Member			Non-Member
	1 year	2 years	3 years	1 year
Clinical Instructorship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200
Study Groups (Level 1) (up to 12 CME credits/year)	\$100	\$175	\$250	\$300
Study Groups (Level 2) (up to 24 CME credits/year)	\$200	\$350	\$500	\$600
Multi-offering Seminar/Conference (same program repeated several times each year)	\$300 plus \$5/credit*	\$550 plus \$5/credit*	\$825 plus \$5/credit*	\$900 plus \$5/credit*
Multi-offering Applications Training/System Optimization	\$300 plus \$5/credit*	\$550 plus \$5/credit*	\$825 plus \$5/credit*	\$900 plus \$5/credit*
Self-instructional (webinar, computer-based, video, CD, DVD, audio, etc.)	\$150 plus \$5/credit*	\$275 plus \$5/credit*	\$400 plus \$5/credit*	\$450 plus \$5/credit*

\* \$5 per CME credit requested; application may be approved for less than request (no refund)

## Payment

SDMS accepts checks or credit cards (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa) as payment for SDMS CME applications. SDMS also accepts company purchase orders (Net 30 days). A copy of the purchase order must be provided (P.O. number is not sufficient). Payments for CME application processing fees are non-refundable.

Payment must be submitted with the application. It is the CME provider's responsibility to ensure that the payment accompanies the application. Applications without payment enclosed will be returned. If payment is by check, the assigned 'application tracking number' must appear on the check. Note that the application number is NOT a CME approval number and may not be used for any other purpose other than to identify the application.

## CME Activity Director Responsibilities

The CME Activity Director is the authorized representative of the CME provider (e.g., institution, organization, company, etc.) for the CME activity. This individual serves as the contact person for any questions or requests for additional information about the activity. The CME Activity Director is also considered the Super Admin User by the *SDMS CME Management System*. The Super Admin user has the ability to create other users (Admin users or General users), as well as designate their registration types (Activity Director, Clinical Instructorship Program Director, Study Group Director).

**Note:** To receive the member discount on the CME application processing fees, the CME provider submitting the application must be a current SDMS Corporate, Business, Institution (CBI) member OR the designated CME Activity Director must be a current SDMS member. All others must pay non-member processing fees.

The CME Activity Director responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

### A. Plan and/or Coordinate the CME Activity

An educational activity submitted for SDMS

CME credit approval should be planned, implemented, and evaluated with specific objectives in mind. Objectives identify what the participants should know or be able to do as a result of completing the activity. See Appendix A for additional information on how to write objectives.

Planning activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. identifying the target audience
2. developing the objectives of the activity
3. electing faculty and appropriate educational methods and materials
4. developing a means of evaluating the activity and/or faculty

### B. Submit the Application for SDMS CME Credit Approval

1. Select the appropriate category of the CME activity (see page 14)
2. Read the applicable application and documentation policies and procedures
3. Complete any required training on using the online application system
4. Complete the online application
5. Prepare the required documentation (this varies depending on the category of the CME activity)
6. Submit the application, required documentation (if applicable), and applicable processing fee a minimum of fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the scheduled live CME activity or forty-five (45) calendar days prior to the anticipated release date of a self-instructional activity to allow adequate time for the SDMS external review process.
7. No retroactive SDMS CME credit will be provided for educational activities.

### C. Implement and Evaluate the CME Activity

1. Facilitate and/or monitor the CME activity. If implementation is assigned to another individual, the CME Activity Director must communicate the responsibilities to that individual.

2. Ensure that a participant roster is available and completed by all participants (if applicable).
3. Ensure evaluations are provided for the participants to complete at the conclusion of the CME activity.
4. Provide participants with proof of completion of the CME activity. Use the online *SDMS CME Management System* to facilitate submission of your participant roster and issuance of CME certificates.

#### D. Submit CME Activity Participant Rosters

Submit the participant roster for each SDMS-approved CME activity using the online tools available from SDMS. The SDMS will accept several electronic formats (web service transfer and roster upload); however, it is the CME provider's responsibility to ensure their CME participant roster is in an acceptable format. *Please see Appendix B for more information about online tools including web service and roster upload.*

**Note:** Rosters must be submitted online and will not be accepted in any other format. Rosters must be submitted no later than 30 days after your activity. You will be locked out and unable to enter any further participant information after 30 days.

#### E. Record Maintenance

Maintain records of the CME activity (participant roster, evaluation summaries, etc.) for four (4) years. Retention of the participant roster is extremely important in the event a participant loses his/her proof of attendance and needs another one reissued or if verification of an individual's attendance is requested by a registry, accrediting organization, governmental agency or SDMS.

#### F. Cancellation

Please notify SDMS immediately if your activity is cancelled or postponed.

If the CME Activity Director becomes aware that an individual falsely requests or claims credit for participation in a CME activity, the CME Activity

Director should immediately notify the SDMS and the appropriate registry (e.g., ARDMS, CCI, ARRT).

## Determining How Many CME Credits to Request

When applying for SDMS CME credits, please consider the following:

1. The number of credit hours applied for must be based on the number of hours (contact hours) required to complete the CME activity.
2. CME activities must be a minimum of 15 minutes in length. Multiple lectures/presentations within a program may be added together for cumulative credit(s). Note: ARRT will not accept an activity of less than 30 minutes. If your activity is less than 30 minutes, you must notify participants that they may not be able to use some/all of the CME credit with the ARRT.
3. Only educational portions of an activity are eligible for credit. For example, business portions of study group meetings; time spent during welcoming remarks, breaks, or meals must be deducted from the total number of contact hours.
4. Time to complete pre- and post-tests may be included in your calculations for total number of contact hours only if they are linked to the educational activity rather than simply verifying participation. An example of this linkage could be in the form of interactive embedded questions/answer and review that is completed within the CME activity or a post-test that provides detailed feedback or review. Recommended time is one minute per question.
5. Time to complete an activity evaluation form cannot be included in your calculations for total number of contact hours.

Time spent attending/completing a seminar is easily quantified because there is a "timed" agenda. The number of CME credits to be requested for a CME activity without a fixed time, such as self-instructional programs, is more difficult to determine. SDMS CME providers may use one of following three methods of determining the number of CME credits to request.

Table 3. Calculation of SDMS CME Credits

Program Type	Program Length	SDMS CME Credits
Didactic (lecture including question/answer)	Less than 15 minutes	0.00
	15 – 19 minutes	0.25
	20 – 34 minutes	0.50
	35 – 49 minutes	0.75
	50 – 64 minutes	1.00
	65 – 79 minutes	1.25
	80 – 94 minutes	1.50
	95 – 109 minutes	1.75
	110 – 124 minutes	2.00
Hands on Scanning (2 to 1 ratio)	2 hours of participation	1.00
	1 hour of participation	0.50
	Less than 1 hour	0.00
<p><b>Note:</b> Hands on scanning CME credit calculations must be based on the time the individual participant spends doing hands on scanning (not as a group). In addition, the CME Activity Director must ensure there is sufficient equipment/staff to complete the hands on scanning.</p>		
<p><b>Note:</b> Based on actual time spent by the participant, the CME Activity Director has the responsibility to reduce the number of CME credit(s) awarded lower than the approved credits. Under no circumstances may a participant be awarded more CME credits than approved for the activity.</p>		

## Timed Agenda

For live CME activities such as seminars/conferences and applications training/system optimization, the timed agenda is used to determine the number of CME credits. Meals, breaks, business meetings, etc. cannot be used in the calculation of the CME credits. It is permissible to include time for brief introduction of speakers as well as question and answer sessions. A brochure for the CME activity with session times may be used in lieu of a timed agenda. Refer to Table 3 for information on how to calculate CME credits for ‘hands-on’ scanning sessions.

## Field Testing

To quantify CME credit hours awarded for self-instructional activities, the CME provider may field-test the CME activity prior to submission for SDMS CME credit approval. The CME Activity Director should have individuals (who are representative of the target audience) complete the CME activity. It is recommended that these individuals include sonographers with extensive, moderate, and entry-level experience in the content area. Each individual participating in the field test would record the amount of time it took to complete the activity and submit that information to the CME Activity Director. The CME Activity Director averages the reported completion times to determine the number of minutes to complete the activity.

## Word Count/Readability/Reading Level

To determine the number of CME credits awarded for certain self-instructional activities, the total number of contact minutes must be determined. To determine the total number of contact minutes, estimate the time required to read the CME materials. Time answering post-test questions can be included. Estimate one (1) minute per question. The time required to complete the activity evaluation should not be included. The following formula can be used to help calculate the total number of contact minutes:

1. Determine the word count\* (number of words in the CME activity).
2. Divide word count by 200 wpm (words per minute). This will determine the approximate amount of time it would take the average sonographer to read the article for “test-taking” purposes.

The number of contact minutes for an activity may also be affected by the numbers of charts, tables, drawings, images, etc. as well as the complexity of the content. The CME activity’s readability index and reading level should also be taken into consideration.

\* **Tip:** If your CME activity content is in a Microsoft Word 2003 format, you can easily determine the number of words/readability/reading level by selecting Tools, Word Count from the menu. In Microsoft Word 2007, the word count is displayed in the status bar at the bottom of the screen.

**Example:** An online CME article is submitted for SDMS CME credit approval. The word count is **10,000 words**.

1. 10,000 divided by 200 = 50 minutes
2. Total minutes = 50 minutes = 1.0 CME credit (see Table 3)

## Issuing Continuing Medical Education Credits

CME providers are required to use the SDMS CME certificate for their approved activities. The *SDMS CME Management System* creates SDMS CME certificates that meet all requirements and can be emailed to participants. By using the *SDMS CME Management System*, the CME credits are also automatically reported to *SDMS CME Tracker*.

## CME Approval Numbers

CME approval numbers are assigned to each approved activity by SDMS. The CME approval number may not be re-used unless the activity is an approved multi-offering CME activity. CME approval numbers must appear only on the CME certificate (or a CME transcript) and cannot be displayed on any promotional materials. CME approval numbers cannot be renewed – a new application and processing fee is required. Keep this in mind when designing self-instructional CME activities – it is best to not encode the CME approval number into the CME activity materials (i.e., CD/DVD) but rather provide a hyperlink to a web-site where the correct CME approval number can be determined.

## Modules

Some CME activities (particularly self-instructional) may be completed in sections or modules. CME providers may issue a portion of the total approved CME credits to participants who have completed an activity module. For each module completed, the CME certificate should list the same CME approval number with a different module number (i.e., **[01]**, **[02]**,...**[11]**, **[12]**).

The correct format to be used is: CME Approval Number + [2-digit module number]

**EXAMPLE:** 35610[00]

If a participant completes the entire CME activity at one time, use a module number of [00].

If a participant completes several modules but not the entire CME activity, you must award a certificate for each module completed (each with the correct module number and applicable CME credits awarded).

## Expiration Dates

Single offering CME activities are issued an expiration date the same as the last day of the event. Multi-offering CME activities are issued approval periods of one, two, or three years (depending on membership status and period requested on the application). It is recommended that you request an approval period equal to the expected life of the CME activity before major revision will be required. No CME credits may be issued for completion of an activity prior to approval date or after the expiration date of an approved CME activity.

## Repeating CME Activities

Whenever possible, the CME Activity Director should ensure that participants do not repeat CME activities. Sonography registries typically will not allow the use of the same CME activity for credit more than once per certification period. This becomes particularly difficult to monitor when CME activities are re-purposed into other formats. CME Activity Directors are encouraged to remind participants that it is their responsibility to ensure they have completed an adequate number of acceptable CME credits for their applicable registry.

## Specialty/Content Areas

Applications for CME credit request CME providers to break down the CME activity into specialty/content areas including:

- AB** Abdominal Sonography
- AE** Adult Echocardiography (Adult Cardiac Sonography)
- BR** Breast Sonography
- FE** Fetal Echocardiography (Fetal Cardiac Sonography)
- NE** Neurosonography
- OB** Obstetric/Gynecologic Sonography
- PE** Pediatric Echocardiography (Pediatric Cardiac Sonography)
- VT** Vascular Technology (Vascular Sonography)
- SPI** Sonography Principles and Instrumentation
- OT** Other sonography-related topics including management, reimbursement, etc.

CME providers must break down the CME credits awarded to each participant on the CME certificate. While not necessarily required by sonography registries, the ability for a sonographer to show evidence of completion of CME credits in a particular specialty area can be very important for lab accreditation, etc.

## Accuracy of CME Credits Issued

CME providers are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the CME credits issued to each participant. For example, if someone leaves early, the number of CME credits issued should be reduced. In situations where it is not practical to monitor individual participant attendance, the CME provider should require the participant to attest or certify that they attended the CME activity by signing a statement attesting to the number of CME credits completed.

## Issuing Certificates

### SDMS CME Participant Rosters and SDMS CME Certificates

The SDMS CME online roster is used to both submit the required participant information and issue CME certificates. Following completion of a CME activity, the CME Activity Director (or authorized designee) uses the secure SDMS *CME Management System* to enter the CME activity participant information. The CME Activity Director or authorized designee can choose whether to print and mail/distribute the certificates or have the certificates automatically emailed to participants.

\* See Appendix B for online tools available.

### SDMS CME Tracker Web Service



The SDMS CME Tracker Web Service allows CME providers who provide web-based (and certain computer-based) CME activities to automatically submit CME activity completion information to SDMS. The CME

activity then automatically appears in the *SDMS CME Tracker System* (available FREE as a benefit of membership in SDMS). Your credits will be automatically sent to the ARDMS daily.

**Advantages:** Easy to integrate into any web site regardless of programming language used; instant reporting to SDMS of CME activity completion; instant display of certificate in *SDMS CME Tracker System*; easy generation of digital signatures.

**Disadvantages:** Requires programmer with knowledge of web services to integrate the web service into the CME provider's website.

## Reporting CME Credits

All CME providers who award SDMS CME credits must submit their participant rosters to the *SDMS CME Management System* within 30 days of the participant completing the activity. After 30 days you will be locked out and unable to enter additional information to the roster. Several mechanisms are available to assist CME providers in submitting their participant rosters including:

1. Submission of electronic files (must use approved format – refer to <http://www.sdms.org/cme/> for additional information)
2. SDMS CME Tracker web service

For more information about submission of CME participant rosters, please see page 16.

CME providers must use the online system to submit participant rosters and issue SDMS CME certificates for their approved activities. The online system will create CME certificates that meet all requirements and the information is automatically reported to the *SDMS CME Tracker System*.

Participant rosters may NOT be submitted via mail or fax. CME providers who submit via mail or fax will be considered in non-compliance and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## CME Credit for Speakers

In recognition of the speaker's efforts to prepare and present a CME activity, speakers at SDMS-approved CME activities may be awarded additional CME credits beyond the CME activity's

approved number of CME credits. The CME Activity Director is responsible for determining and awarding/reporting CME credits for each speaker at a SDMS-approved CME activity. You may add the speaker to your roster in the *SDMS CME Management System* to issue their credits.

- SDMS CME credits can be issued to a speaker only once for a SDMS-approved CME activity (see *example #1*).
- If one speaker presents during a CME activity, a maximum of 3 times the approved number of SDMS CME credits for the CME activity may be awarded to the speaker (see *example #2*).
- If more than one speaker participates in a presentation, the maximum number of credits awarded to each speaker must be reduced. The total number of SDMS CME credits issued to all speakers combined may not exceed 3 times the approved number of SDMS CME credits for the CME activity (see *example #3*).
- If more than 3 speakers participate in a presentation, the speakers should only be awarded SDMS CME credit for their actual attendance at the CME activity (see *example #4*).

**Example #1:** A speaker prepares and presents a CME activity on five different dates during the CME activity's three-year approval period. The CME Activity Director may award SDMS CME credits to the speaker only once (not five times).

**Example #2:** A speaker prepares and presents a single-offering CME activity (which has been approved for 1 SDMS CME credit). While participants in the CME activity are awarded 1 SDMS CME credits, the speaker may be awarded 3 SDMS CME credits (2 SDMS CME credits for preparing the presentation and 1 SDMS CME credits for presenting the CME activity).

**Example #3:** A three-person panel presents during a CME activity that has been approved for 1.5 SDMS CME credits. Each member of the panel should be awarded a minimum of 1.5 SDMS CME credits (for their attendance). Additional SDMS CME credits may be allocated to the speakers based on their respective role in the development/preparation in the CME activity. However, a **maximum** of 4.5 SDMS CME credits (3 x 1.5) may

be allocated among the three speakers.

**Example #4:** A five-person panel presents during a CME activity that has been approved for 2 SDMS CME credits. Each member of the panel should be awarded 2 CME credits (for their attendance). No additional SDMS CME credits may be allocated to individual speakers.

## Types of CME Activities

SDMS recognizes the following types of CME activities which CME Activity Directors may apply for SDMS CME credits:

### Single Offering

- Seminar/Conference
- Applications Training/System Optimization

### Multiple Offering

- Seminar/Conference
- Applications Training/System Optimization
- Study Groups
- Self Instructional
- Clinical Instructorship\*

\* *available only to CAAHEP-accredited sonography educational programs, not accepted by ARRT.*

If a CME activity will be presented in multiple formats, the CME provider must apply for CME approval for each format. An example of this is recording/archiving a live webinar – separate CME applications must be submitted for the live event and the replay of the recording. Any additional

offering must meet requirements for CME credit (i.e., post-test, etc.).

If a CME activity is re-purposed into another format, a disclaimer must be provided to all participants of the re-purposed CME activity cautioning them that they cannot use the same CME activity toward their registry requirements (live event and recorded).

Certain types of CME activities may be approved for multiple years (see Table 2). Multi-year applications receive a discount (SDMS members only), but must meet all the same requirements of single year applications.

Multiple offering (such as a repeatable seminars/conferences, applications training/system optimization, and self-instructional CME activities are issued an approval period (approval date through expiration date).

## Annual Review of CME Activity with Multi-Year Approval

If a CME activity receives approval for multiple years, the CME provider must conduct an annual review of the activity to ensure the content is still accurate and appropriate. If significant changes are needed prior to the activity expiration date, the CME provider should update the program and reapply. Note that there is no ‘renewal’ process – if a CME activity is resubmitted, upon approval, it will be issued a new CME approval number.

## SDMS CME Applications

**Table 4. Required Components of Each Application Type**

Required Component of Application	CME Activity Director				Educational Program Director
	Study Groups	Seminar/Conference	Applications Training/System Optimization	Self-Instructional	Clinical Instructorship
Target Audience	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Overall goal of activity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Timed Agenda or total length/running (if applicable)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Date(s) of CME Activity	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Objectives for each presentation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Course Syllabi	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Evaluation methodology (how will passing be determined)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Bibliography/References	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Required textbooks or readings	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Recommended textbooks or readings	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Faculty name, title, affiliations, and credentials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Activity/Faculty Evaluation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
CME Credits Requested (by specialty/content area)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Promotional Materials (web and/or print, if applicable)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Instructions	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
System Requirements (if applicable)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Contact information	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Program content	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Post-test or embedded assessment	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Post-test or embedded assessment answer key	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Anticipated Release Date	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Username/Password/Web URL (if applicable)	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗

✗ = Not required      ✓ = Required

Table 5. Required Action Prior To CME Activity				
Study Group Sessions	Seminar/Conference	Applications Training/System Optimization	Self-Instructional	Clinical Instructorship
15 calendar days prior to CME activity	15 calendar days prior to CME activity	15 calendar days prior to CME activity	45 calendar days prior to CME activity	Within calendar year

Table 6. Required Action Following CME Activity					
Required Action Following CME Activity	Study Groups	Seminar/Conference	Applications Training/System Optimization	Self-Instructional	Clinical Instructorship
Submit participant roster within 30 calendar days	✓	✓	✓	✓	Not applicable

✗ = Not required    ✓ = Required

**Additional information on each requirement is provided below.**

### Target Audience

Who is the intended audience of the CME activity? Examples: A CME activity might target a smaller, specialized group (i.e., high risk OB sonographers) or a wider audience (all sonographers). CME providers are encouraged to use proper terminology when describing target audience. With the exception of vascular technologist, the use of the words “tech,” “technologist” and “technician” should never be used when referring to a registered sonographer. Preferred terminology also includes ‘sonographer’, ‘cardiac sonographer’ and ‘vascular sonographer’.

### Overall Goal of the CME Activity

What is the overall purpose of the CME activity? Examples: A CME activity may be designed specifically as preparation for a registry examination or it may be designed to update sonographer skills or knowledge.

### Timed Agenda

A detailed timed agenda (where applicable) should be provided. All activities longer than

2 hours must include a timed agenda. If applicable, provide the total length or running time for the CME activity. In the case of seminars/conferences, etc., this should be the total number of hours and/or minutes (see Table 3).

### Date(s) of CME Activity

In the case of single-offering seminars/conferences and applications training/system optimization, the beginning and ending dates should be provided. For study groups, self-instructional, and multiple-offering seminar/conferences and applications training/system optimization, the length of requested approval should be listed.

### Objectives for Each Presentation

All SDMS-approved CME activities must have specific learning objectives. Typically, these objectives are communicated to participants via one or more of the following methods:

- Course promotional materials
- Course syllabus materials
- Presentation introduction
- Evaluation (confirming that objectives were met)

## Course Syllabi

For self-instructional CME activities, submit course syllabi for the entire program.

## Post-Test or Embedded Assessment

Post-tests are not required for live CME activities (such as seminars/conferences, study groups, live webinars, etc.). However, if a live activity is recorded (video, audio, web, etc.) and re-purposed, it becomes classified as a self-instructional CME activity, and therefore must include a post-test or embedded assessment. A separate CME application must be submitted for the self-instructional CME activity (refer to the Self-Instructional section for more information).

## Post-Test or Embedded Assessment Answer Key

1. To assist in a timely external review process, post-test and embedded assessment answer keys must include:
  - a. The correct answer
  - b. Rationale for correct answer
  - c. Page number or other reference to where answer is located in the self-instructional CME activity materials
  - d. The specific CME activity objective

## Evaluation Methodology

What is the minimum requirement to pass the CME activity? All CME post-test self-instructional activities must require at least 70% to pass. If embedded assessments are used, the participant must be able to demonstrate understanding or no CME credit may be issued. Requirements for successful completion of other types of activities will vary and should be determined by the CME Activity Director and communicated to each CME activity participant.

## Bibliography/References

What sources did the CME activity's author/presenter use for development of the CME activity? Required references should be as current as possible.

## Required Textbook or Readings

What required textbooks or readings should the CME activity participant review to be able to complete the CME activity? Required textbooks and readings should be as current as possible.

## Recommended Textbook or Readings

What recommended textbooks or readings should the CME activity participant review to assist in their understanding of the subject matter? Suggested readings may be included with bibliography/references but must be identified as suggested or recommended (i.e., References and Suggested Readings). Recommended textbooks and readings should be as current as possible.

## Faculty Name, Title, Affiliations, and Credentials

Provide the faculty names, titles, affiliations, and credentials. If this information changes, you must contact the SDMS CME department.

## Activity/Faculty Evaluation

CME providers are required to provide participants with the opportunity to evaluate the CME activity and use this information as a tool for continuous quality improvement of the activity. In addition, CME providers are encouraged to integrate the evaluation process into their CME activity (i.e., discuss the evaluation mechanism at the start of the CME activity and remind participants to submit their evaluation at the end of the CME activity). A copy of the form(s) that will be used to evaluate the overall CME activity and/or the faculty members must be provided with the application. You may use the *SDMS CME Evaluation Form Wizard* to customize an evaluation form for your activity.

The CME Activity Director is responsible for maintaining the evaluation summary. The CME Activity Director is not required to submit the evaluation summary to SDMS. However, the SDMS reserves the right to request the evaluation summary in the event questions arise about any activity approved for SDMS CME credits. Participants are to contact the CME Activity Director, not the SDMS, regarding perceived

problems of content and/or commercial bias and certificate processing.

At the completion of the CME activity, the CME Activity Director is responsible for providing the participants with an evaluation form. The evaluation data should be reviewed by the CME Activity Director and/or others involved in the planning process to judge the quality of the program. The data can be used to: 1) determine whether the objectives were met; 2) rate the effectiveness of the CME activity and/or faculty; 3) identify deficiencies so that improvements can be made when planning future activities. Evaluation data should be shared with the appropriate faculty/speakers.

## Promotional Materials

Promotional materials (printed or electronic) must not advertise that the CME activity has been approved for SDMS CME credit until the applicant has received written approval notification from the SDMS. The approval notification will include an assigned SDMS approval number, approved number of CME credits and the beginning date and expiration date of SDMS CME credit approval (if applicable).

**Note:** The SDMS approval number assigned to a CME activity must not appear on any promotional materials. If an application for SDMS CME credit has been submitted, but approval is pending, the CME credit statement on all promotional material should read:

*“Application has been made to the SDMS for CME credit.” or “SDMS CME credit approval is pending.”*

**Note:** If the CME Activity Director has NOT applied for SDMS CME credit approval prior to distribution of promotional material, reference to SDMS CME credit application and/or approval must not appear in the materials. It is the CME provider’s responsibility to notify participants before holding the CME activity if the activity has not been approved for SDMS CME credits.

A copy of any promotional materials that will be used must be provided with the application. While

timelines may not permit ‘final’ versions, the version submitted must be consistent with the expected final version. Do NOT assume your CME activity will be approved!

With the exception of vascular technologist, the use of the words “tech,” “technologist” and “technician” are prohibited when referring to a registered sonographer. SDMS reserves the right to withhold CME approval until the promotional materials are corrected.

Promotional materials for CME activities which have been approved for SDMS must indicate that the CME participant roster will be reported by the CME provider to the *SDMS CME Tracker System*. CME providers may either use the “SDMS CME Tracker” logo or the text “This activity is tracked by *SDMS CME Tracker*.”



The logo is available in the downloads section of the *SDMS CME Management System* - permission to use the logo is granted for any SDMS approved CME activity. The logo may not be altered other than in size.

## Instructions

For self-instruction CME activities, provide the participant with detailed instructions on how to complete the CME activity.

## System Requirements

For CME activities that require the use of a computer or other equipment, the CME provider must provide a complete list of system requirements. This includes access options such as dial-up, broadband (cable/DSL), software add-ins (Adobe Reader, Adobe Flash Player, etc.), web browsers, printers, email or Internet access, etc.

## Contact Information

If the CME activity requires use of a computer or other equipment, the CME provider must provide a telephone number and/or email address where the participant in the CME activity can reach technical support. For other CME activities, the

CME provider should provide contact information where participants can obtain additional information or provide post-activity comments. SDMS does not provide technical support for CME activities.

## Program Content

Two complete printed or electronic copies of the program content for self-instructional activities must be included with the application. It must include all text, illustrations, graphics, etc. Depending on size, you may be able to attach the program content in electronic format to your online application.

## Anticipated Release Date

Provide the date the self-instructional CME activity is expected to be released or available for sale or use. The date must be at least 45 days after the date the application is received by SDMS. A penalty may apply if the application is received less than 45 days to expected release or availability date.

## Username, Password, URL

If a self-instructional CME activity requires a username or password, a unique username and password (not requiring reviewer registration) must be provided with the application so an anonymous reviewer can login and complete the entire activity.

## Participant Roster

Participants in SDMS-approved CME activities appreciate your rapid submission of participant rosters to SDMS so that their *SDMS CME Tracker* transcript reflects all of their CME credits. All CME participant rosters must be submitted electronically within 30 days of completion of the CME activity. The CME provider is responsible for ensuring the rosters are in an acceptable format. SDMS provides several tools to assist the CME provider in preparing and submitting the required participant roster. Once submitted, the CME credits appear in the SDMS member's *SDMS CME Tracker* transcript.

CME providers are encouraged to take advantage of the online tools available from SDMS to aid submission of participant rosters. CME providers who have webinars (and some computer-based) CME activities can take advantage of the *SDMS CME Tracker* Web Service, a tool that allows

participant information to be instantly transmitted to the SDMS where it will appear automatically in the *SDMS CME Tracker* transcript (see Appendix B).

The following information must be included for each participant added to the CME activity participant roster:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Email\*
- SDMS Member Number (6 digit with leading zeros)\*\*
- ARDMS Registry Number\*\*
- CARDUP Registry Number\*\*
- CCI Registry Number\*\*
- ARRT Registry Number\*\*
- Date of Birth\*\*
- Date CME activity was completed
- CME Approval Number
- Module Number
- CME credits awarded in each specialty/content area

\* Required if email confirmation of certificate issuance is to be provided by SDMS

\*\* At least one of these items is required but include all that are available (to ensure record match – SDMS # preferred)

**Note:** A CME provider may report participation in a CME activity (such as self-instructional) individually or in a batch.

**Note:** Because of privacy concerns, a CME provider must **not** request or store the full Social Security number of a participant in an SDMS-approved CME activity.

## Study Groups

A study group is an organization or group comprised of individuals from a single or multiple institutions and/or multiple geographic areas (e.g., hospital, medical/imaging center, clinic or physician's office, urgent care center, etc., or satellite facilities owned by the provider and in the same geographic area) whose purpose is to a) provide planned continuing education programs and b) encourage active participation in the profession through dissemination of information on important professional issues to those who are directly involved in the practice of sonography. This includes local or regional societies.

## What is Eligible?

- Sonography-related CME programs up to 2 hours per day (2 CME credits)

## What is NOT Eligible?

- Meetings specific to the policies and procedures of an employer or institution
- Routine department or staff meetings
- Educational programs not relevant to the sonographer's professional responsibilities
- Educational programs over 2 hours (2 CME credits) – any educational program greater than 2 SDMS CME credit hours is considered a conference/seminar and requires a separate application and application fee.

Each study group must have a designated CME Activity Director. The CME Activity Director is responsible for ensuring all study group CME activities comply with these policies and procedures. If the CME Activity Director responsibilities are transferred to someone else, the study group must notify the SDMS within thirty (30) calendar days or approval as a study group may be withdrawn by SDMS.

Study group educational programs (sessions) must be reported to SDMS (using the online system) at least fifteen (15) calendar days **PRIOR** to conducting the CME activity. The activity is then issued a unique CME Approval Number which are used on certificates for study group participants. CME participant rosters must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days of the study group's approved CME activity.

A unique CME approval number is required for each CME activity conducted by the study group. Study groups may not re-use CME approval numbers on other activities.

A study group may choose two levels of activity: Level 1 (1 to 12 CME credits per year) or Level 2 (13 to 24 CME credits per year) – a different fee applies to each level. If a study group chooses Level 1, they can later 'upgrade' to the Level 2 by paying the additional processing fee. Study groups may not move from Level 2 to Level 1 and processing fees are non-refundable.

If the SDMS determines that a study group's application or educational activity does not comply with SDMS policies and procedures, the CME Activity Director will be notified and corrective action must be taken. If a study group has three (3) violations in one year, the study group approval will be withdrawn and the study group will not be allowed to submit CME credit applications until such time as the Study Group can provide adequate assurance (as determined by SDMS) that all *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures* will be met in the future.

## Revocation of CME Provider Status

A study group's status as a CME provider may be revoked for:

1. Issuing more SDMS CME credits than approved during the approval period.
2. Failure to submit participant rosters within thirty (30) calendar days.
3. Failure to comply with *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures*.

## Seminars/Conferences

Seminars and conferences are educational activities consisting of one or more lectures or presentations. The terms seminar, conference, meeting, and program are generally used interchangeably.

### Single Offering Seminar/Conference

Single offering seminars/conferences are offered a single time. These activities are live (not recorded) presentations. Live webinars would also be included in this category.

### Multiple Offering Seminar/Conference

Multiple offering seminars/conferences are the same educational program offered on multiple occasions in the same or different locations within the SDMS CME credit approval period. The speaker may change but the content of the program remains unchanged. These activities are live (not recorded) presentations.

## Guidelines for Seminars/Conferences

1. Submit the application, required documentation (if applicable), and applicable processing fee a minimum of fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the scheduled CME activity.
2. Deduct the time spent on registration, faculty introductions, meals, and breaks from the calculation of contact hours/CME credits requested.
3. Time spent on hands-on scanning is calculated as follows: two (2) contact hours equals one (1) CME credit. See page 8 for additional information on determining the number of CME credits.
4. If the content or length of the seminar changes, submit a new SDMS CME application for the revised course, appropriate processing fee, and documentation (if applicable) to the SDMS.
5. The sequence in which the content of a seminar is presented can be altered/revised as long as the content and the length of the seminar remains the same.
6. If there is a change/replacement in faculty, contact the SDMS CME department.
7. Webinars or conferences must have mechanisms to verify participation (such as individual login or call-in/verbal confirmation, or attestation).

**Note:** The dates and/or locations of a seminar offered multiple times may be undetermined at the time of application. This information can be omitted on the application, but must be included on the participant roster submitted to the SDMS after each seminar.

A timed-agenda/schedule must be submitted with the application if the seminar is more than 2 hours in length. The schedule must be consistent with the number of CME credits requested.

## Applications Training/ System Optimization

Applications Training or System Optimization activities may be approved for SDMS CME credit. Applications Training/System Optimization activities which will be approved should focus on the educational aspects of sonography, not sales of equipment. The session should be presented by an appropriately educated sonography professional or commercial/corporate representative. These sessions will be permitted to contain machine specific information for purposes of training sonographers in proper machine usage and to achieve optimal diagnostic ultrasound images. The activity may be conducted on-site or at an off-site location. The commercial bias restriction will be waived in these sessions. No pricing or discussion of sales terms may be conducted at any time during the session. No alcoholic beverages may be served or available during the CME session. Commercial relationships and/or employment of the presenter by a commercial manufacturer must be disclosed to participants before the session begins. Hands-on training during the session will be approved at half credit (2 hours equals 1 SDMS CME credit). Didactic/Lecture time will be approved at full credit (1 hour equals 1 SDMS CME credit).

## Single Offering Applications Training/ System Optimization

Single offering Applications Training/System Optimization activities are offered a single time. These activities are live (in person or webinar) presentations. If the live webinar is recorded and archived/re-purposed it should be applied for as a separate self instructional activity and meet the self instructional requirements (post-test included).

## Multiple Offering Applications Training/System Optimization

Multiple offering Applications Training/System Optimization activities are the same educational program offered on multiple occasions in the same or different locations within the SDMS CME approval period. The speaker may change but once approved the activity content must

remain unchanged. These activities may be held online, recorded and replayed but credit can only be issued to a participant one time for the same activity.

### **Guidelines for Applications Training/System Optimization**

1. Submit the application, required documentation (if applicable), and application processing fee a minimum of fifteen (15) calendar days prior to the scheduled CME activity.
2. Deduct the time spent on registration, faculty, introductions, meals and breaks from the calculation of contact hours/CME credit requested.
3. Time spent on hands-on scanning is calculated as follows: two (2) contact hours equals one (1) CME credit. See page 8 for additional information on determining the number of CME credits.
4. If the content or length of the activity changes, a new SDMS CME application for the revised course, appropriate processing fee, and documentation (if applicable) must be submitted to the SDMS.
5. The sequence in which the content of an activity is presented can be altered/revised as long as the content and length of the activity remains the same.
6. If there is a change/replacement in faculty, contact the SDMS CME department.
7. Live web broadcasts must have mechanisms to verify participation (such as individual login or call-in/verbal confirmation).

**Note:** The dates and/or locations of an activity offered multiple times may be undetermined at the time of application. This information can be omitted on the application, but must be included on the participant roster submitted to the SDMS after each activity.

A timed-agenda/schedule must be submitted with the application if the activity is more than 2 hours in length. The schedule must be consistent with the number of CME credits requested.

## **Self-Instructional**

Self-instructional activities include, but are not limited to: computer-based programs, written home study programs, videotapes, audiotapes, CD's, DVD's, recorded webinars, etc.

### **Guidelines for Self-Instructional CME Activities**

1. The number of CME credits requested must be consistent with the length of time it takes to complete the self-instructional program and post-test. See page 7 for CME credit calculation for an educational activity without a timed-agenda/schedule.
2. CME post-tests or embedded assessments are required for all self-instructional CME activities.
3. The CME post-test or embedded assessment answers cannot be published in or with the self-instructional program.
4. The CME post-test or embedded assessment questions must be consistent with the learning objectives of the program. The objectives and corresponding number of CME test questions must be consistent with the scope of the activity's content.
5. There should be at least 10 CME post-test or embedded assessment questions per 1 CME credit. You may count time spent taking the post-test for CME credit. Post-tests should be calculated at one (1) minute per question.
6. CME post-tests or embedded assessments should provide no more than 3 attempts to successfully complete the CME activity. Correct answers should be provided only after the participant has successfully completed the CME activity or unsuccessfully completed all permitted attempts.
7. Participants must receive a minimum score of 70% to receive CME credit. However, the CME Activity Director may set a higher minimum score.
8. The CME Activity Director/CME provider is responsible for grading the post-tests. The SDMS is not responsible for grading post-tests.
9. The CME provider must review the content of the educational activity each year to ensure accuracy and validity. If the content changes

significantly within the approval period, the CME provider must revise the content and submit a new CME application along with the applicable processing fee.

10. Providers may request an approval period of up to three (3) years for a self-instructional activity. Application processing fees will be based upon:
  - a. CME Activity Director/CME Provider's SDMS membership status,
  - b. Length of approval period requested for the educational activity, and
  - c. Number of CME credits requested.
11. CME credits shall not be awarded if the participant fails to meet the minimum performance standard.
12. No CME credits may be awarded for completion of the activity prior to notification of approval by SDMS.
13. All self-instructional CME activities must have mechanisms in place to prevent issuance of CME credits after the CME activity's expiration date.
14. All self-instructional CME activities should be designed to ensure participants complete the entire CME activity (e.g., cannot 'jump to the end').
15. Simple test bank activities with a question and answer only will not be approved. An in-depth explanation of the correct or incorrect answer choice must be included.

### Word Count/Readability/Reading Level

To determine the number of CME credits awarded for certain self-instructional activities, the total number of contact minutes must be determined. To determine the total number of contact minutes, estimate the time required to read the CME materials. You may include time spent taking the post-test. Time should be calculated at one (1) minute per question. The time required to complete the activity evaluation should not be included. The following formula can be used to help calculate the total number of contact minutes:

1. Determine the word count\* (number of words in the CME activity).
2. Divide word count by 200 wpm (words per minute). This will determine the approximate amount of time it would take the average sonographer to read the article for "test-taking" purposes.

The number of contact minutes for an activity may also be affected by the numbers of charts, tables, drawings, images, etc. as well as the complexity of the content. The CME activity's readability index and reading level should also be taken into consideration. You may also include time spent to complete a post-test. Time should be calculated at one (1) minute per question.

**Example:** An online CME article is submitted for SDMS CME credit approval. The word count is **10,000 words**.

1. 10,000 divided by 200 = 50 minutes
2. Total minutes = 50 minutes = 1.0 CME credit (see Table 3)

**Note:** Depending on the length and complexity of the self-instructional activity, it may take more than 45 calendar days to complete the review. CME Activity Directors are encouraged to submit their application for SDMS CME credit approval as early as possible to ensure review is completed prior to the planned release date of the activity.

# Clinical Instructorship



Clinical instructors affiliated with a CAAHEP-accredited sonography education program can receive up to six (6) CME credits per calendar year for providing student instruction. One (1) SDMS CME credit may be awarded for two (2) hours of clinical instruction. Student instruction includes:

1. Observing the student perform the examination or part of the examination and offering technical tips and protocol suggestions.
2. Reviewing the images with the student after the examination and discussing pathology, pathophysiology, anatomy, differential diagnosis, expected clinical manifestations, technique or laboratory values of certain conditions.

**Note:** Time spent “in the room” with the student and not providing instruction is not considered educational and is not eligible for CME credit.

The Program Director must maintain documentation of the clinical instructor’s time spent providing student instruction. This should include date and time as well as the instructor and student’s signatures. A sample clinical instructor log is available from SDMS, however, all clinical instructors logs should be submitted to the Program Director, not to the SDMS.

The Program Director of the sonography educational program must register and use the online system to award SDMS CME credits for clinical instructorship. The Program Director may give written permission (email or mail) to someone else to enter information into the *SDMS CME Management System*. The Program Director may apply and be approved for up to three years. However, the sonography educational program must remain accredited.

The Program Director of a sonography educational program must submit the CME credits for clinical instructorship within one year and must maintain documentation of the clinical instructor’s work for four years.

**Note: ARRT does not currently accept CME credits for clinical instructorship. The Program Director must disclose this limitation to clinical instructors to whom SDMS CME credits are awarded.**

The individual system can be found at: <http://www.sdms.org/cme/default.asp>

# Individuals

Individuals may request SDMS CME credit for their role as an author or editor of a sonography article or textbook, or for college credit. No one else may apply on behalf of the individual.

CME credits will be awarded in applicable specialty/content areas when possible. Otherwise, the credits will be awarded in the “Other” category.

The individual credit system can be found at: <https://cme.sdms.org/individuals/>

Table 7. Schedule of CME Fees for Individual Applicants		
Type of Activity	Member	Non-Member
Author/Editor	\$0	\$125
College Credit	\$0	\$125

## Payment

SDMS accepts checks or credit cards (American Express, Discover, MasterCard, Visa) as payment for SDMS CME applications. SDMS also accepts company purchase orders (Net 30 days).

**Payments for CME application processing fees are non-refundable.**

Payment must be submitted with the application. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the payment accompanies the application. Applications without payment enclosed will be returned. If payment is by check, the assigned ‘tracking number’ must appear on the check. Note that the tracking number is NOT a CME approval number and may not be used for any other purpose other than to identify the application.

## Individuals: Author/Editor

Individuals may request SDMS CME credit for their role as an author or editor of a sonography article or textbook. No one else may apply on behalf of the individual. Individuals must request CME credits within one (1) year of the publication of the sonography article or textbook.

Table 8. CME Credits for Authors/Editors		
Categories	Credits	Required Documentation
Author: Published article in peer-reviewed journal	10 per article	Copy of article (must include journal title, volume/issue, and page number)
Author: Chapter in a peer-reviewed textbook	10 per chapter	Copy of title page, table of contents and chapter
Author: Chapter <b>revision</b> in a peer-reviewed textbook	10 per chapter	Copy of title page, table of contents and chapter
Author: Self-instructional activity approved for SDMS CME credit activity	10 per activity	Copy of self-instructional material or adequate documentation of involvement
Editor: Peer-reviewed textbook	20 per textbook	Copy of title page and table of contents
Editor: <b>Revised</b> , peer-reviewed textbook (new edition)	20 per textbook	Copy of title page, table of contents and documentation of the extent of the revision (i.e., percentage of content revision)
<p><b>Multiple author/editor:</b> When there are multiple authors or editors, divide the total number of eligible credits by the number of authors or editors. For example, if there are two co-editors for a sonography textbook, each editor could receive 10 CME credits each (20 max ÷ 2 = 10).</p>		
<p><b>Revised submissions:</b> The interval between submission of revised, peer-reviewed chapter(s) or textbook(s) must be a minimum of three (3) years.</p>		

## Individuals: College Course Credit

SDMS CME credits may be awarded by SDMS for a sonography course offered by an accredited college-based medical sonography program or an educational activity (formal course of study) offered by an regionally accredited post-secondary educational institution leading to a medically-related degree in such fields as biologic or physical sciences, medical sonography, health and medical sciences, and allied health sciences. Courses that are not medically or professionally related are not eligible for SDMS CME credit approval.

### Courses Eligible for CME Credit

Courses which are eligible for CME credits include those sonography or general education courses that will broaden the sonographer’s technical/scientific knowledge base. Eligible courses would include, but are not limited to:

- Anatomy
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Embryology
- Genetics
- Health Care Issues
- Medical/Legal Issues
- Pathology
- Pathophysiology
- Physics
- Physiology
- Zoology

Required documentation includes course description and transcript. SDMS may require submission of additional documentation.

Medically or professionally unrelated courses are not eligible for CME credit (e.g., art appreciation, history, physical education). If unsure about whether a course will qualify for SDMS CME credit, please contact SDMS.

Application for SDMS CME credit must be made within one (1) year of successfully completing the college course.

Table 9. CME Credits for College Credits	
Credit Hours	SDMS Credits Awarded
1 semester credit hour	5.0
1 quarter credit hour	4.0

**Important Note:** DO NOT request CME credits for author/editor, or college credit from more than one organization. Registries will not accept CME credits for the same activity.

# Compliance

## Denial, Revocation, and Appeal Process

### Denial of SDMS CME Credit Approval

If a CME activity is not approved for credit or is not approved for the requested number of CME credits, written notification will be sent to the applicant. The notification will include the basis for the decision and feedback on the deficiencies that must be addressed for the activity to be re-evaluated. The applicant will have one (1) opportunity to correct the specified deficiencies.

If the CME activity is not approved after the second review, any further submission will be treated as an original submission that must be accompanied by a new application for CME credit and the appropriate processing fee. Application processing fees are non-refundable.

### Revocation of SDMS CME Credit Approval

The SDMS reserves the right to withdraw or deny CME credit approval for any CME activity where the individual, CME Activity Director or CME provider:

1. Does not accurately represent the information submitted in the application.
2. Does not accurately represent the advertised information about the CME activity.
3. Misleads or makes false representations to the SDMS or the CME activity participants.
4. Issues proof of completion that does not contain the information required by the SDMS or falsifies the information on the proof of completion.
5. Issues or advertises SDMS CME credit for a CME activity that has not been approved.
6. Fails to comply with the *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures*.

### Appeal Process for Denial or Revocation of SDMS CME Credit Approval

If a CME activity is not approved for credit or is not approved for the requested number of CME credits after the second review, the applicant will be sent written notification that will include the basis for the decision and feedback on the deficiencies. If the applicant disagrees with the decision, he/she can initiate the appeal process. To initiate the appeal process, the applicant must submit to SDMS via mail or delivery service (with delivery signature required) the following:

1. Copy of the SDMS letter denying CME credit
2. Letter of appeal stating the reasons for the appeal
3. Any documentation to support the appeal

**Note:** If the applicant does not appeal within 30 calendar days of written notification, the decision will be considered final. The appeal process may not be used until the applicant has exhausted the application process (including the one opportunity to correct the deficiencies).

Upon receipt of an appeal, the SDMS CME Review Committee Chair will appoint Committee member(s) to re-evaluate the CME activity and review the letter of appeal and supporting documentation. The Chair will notify the applicant within 30 calendar days of receipt of the appeal of the final decision.

### Disciplinary Action

The SDMS may take disciplinary action, including denial, probation or revocation, against a provider of SDMS-approved CME activities who fails to meet the *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures* (including all amendments adopted by the SDMS).

The SDMS will notify the CME Activity Director in writing (via mail, return receipt requested) of

the disciplinary action against a CME provider. The term/length of the disciplinary action will be specified in the notification. The CME provider may appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of written notification.

If the applicant does not appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of written notification, the decision will be considered final.

Upon receipt of an appeal, the SDMS President will appoint a 3-person appeal panel to review the disciplinary action, the letter of appeal and any supporting documentation. The President will notify the applicant within sixty (60) calendar days of receipt of the appeal of the final decision.

### Penalties for Fraudulently Issuing SDMS-Approved CME Certificates

A CME provider that intentionally or unintentionally fraudulently issues SDMS-approved CME certificates may be subject to the following penalties:

1. Completion of CME application for any such activity
2. Payment of CME application processing fees for any such activity (see Table 1 or Table 2)
3. Payment of penalty of \$500 per activity (per occurrence)
4. Payment of penalty of \$10 per CME certificate issued (whether credits were issued electronically or in print form)
5. Notification of all affected participants within thirty (30) days using the notification text provided by SDMS

The CME provider will not be permitted to apply for SDMS-approved CME credit until such time as they have provided adequate assurances (as determined solely by SDMS) of the CME provider's compliance with *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures*.

### Legal Jurisdiction

The *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures* and all related matters shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas. All applicants for SDMS CME credit

consent to, and waive any objection to Dallas, Texas as the proper and exclusive venue for any disputes relating to SDMS CME credits or SDMS membership.

## Audits/Investigations

SDMS reserves the right to conduct audits or investigations at any time. SDMS will periodically conduct audits of approved CME activities to ensure compliance with these policies and procedures. SDMS may also contact participants in the CME activity to ensure the program was conducted in compliance with these policies and procedures. Failure to respond or cooperate fully with an internal audit or investigation could result in the revocation of approved CME activities and/or denial of the CME provider's future applications for SDMS CME credit. Certificates issued for an activity that fails an audit or investigation may be revoked.

### Internal Audit

SDMS periodically conducts internal audits. This includes examination of submitted materials, required participant rosters and other information in the CME application. This may include requiring the CME provider to submit additional documentation related to one or more SDMS-approved CME activities (such as evaluation summaries, etc.).

### Onsite Audit

SDMS may conduct an onsite audit at any time. This may involve SDMS staff or other appropriate SDMS members acting on behalf of the SDMS. The CME provider must provide access to all records relating to SDMS-approved (or pending) CME activities. The onsite audit may also include monitoring an actual SDMS-approved (or pending) CME activity.

**Note:** Failure to respond or provide requested information for an audit request will result in revocation of CME activity approval and the CME provider will be prohibited from applying for SDMS CME credits until the CME provider is in compliance with all *SDMS CME Policies and Procedures*.

# Appendix A: How to Write Objectives for CME Activities

## Objectives (learning outcomes)

Identifying and properly stating the objectives (learning outcomes) is arguably the **most important step** in the planning of the educational activity. Objectives convey the content of the educational activity and are written in specific statements of **what the participant is expected to be able to do at the end of instruction**. Statements describing what the instructor or presenter plans to do or accomplish are not instructional objectives. A clear objective will communicate its intent so effectively that there will be no question about the expected learning outcome of the instruction.

Most behavioral objectives begin with the phrase “The participant will be able to...” Note that the focus is on the learner not the instructor.

## Components of an Objective

1. Observable/measurable action (What is to be done)
2. Conditions under which the objective is measured (How it is done)
3. Measurable criteria (How well it is done)

However, for most continuing education activities, conditions and measurable criteria can be omitted. They should only be included if needed to improve the clarity of the stated objective.

## Writing an Objective

Behavioral verbs are the heart of the objective. Since the participant’s action/performance should be observable and measurable, objectives should be written using verbs that describe an observable performance (action) that can be accepted as evidence that the desired learning has occurred. Begin each objective with an “action verb” such as:

- list
- describe
- write
- explain
- apply
- formulate
- demonstrate
- interpret
- evaluate
- identify
- define

Although commonly used, verbs such as “know” or “understand” or “learn” do not describe an observable behavior; they describe events that take place inside the learner and are not observable or measurable.

**Examples:** Upon completion of this educational activity, the participant will be able to:

Incorrect	Correct
understand the uses of contrast media	list the uses of contrast media
learn the appropriate indications for sonohysterography	describe the appropriate indications for sonohysterography
learn the proper administration of contrast media	demonstrate the proper administration of contrast media

A properly written objective will identify **who**, **what action**, and **result of the action**. For example:

The **participant will demonstrate** the *who* *what* **proper administration of contrast media.** *result*

# Appendix B: Online Tools for CME Providers

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SDMS provides various online tools to assist CME providers in completing CME applications and reporting/issuing CME certificates.

Visit <http://cme.sdms.org> for more information.

## Web Service

The *SDMS CME Tracker* web service is an online tool that can be integrated into computer programs or web sites to automatically generate a unique digital signature for SDMS CME certificates. The web service allows CME providers who provide web or computer-based CME activities to automatically submit CME completion information to SDMS. The participant will immediately receive their certificate, and their credits will be available in the *SDMS CME Tracker*. Programming knowledge is required. Please email [webmaster@sdms.org](mailto:webmaster@sdms.org) for more information.

## Roster Upload

The *SDMS CME Management System* has a roster upload system. You will find the import roster file tool on the left hand menu of your *SDMS CME Management System* home page. The roster must be a comma-separated values file, extension **.csv** or **.txt**. Each value is enclosed in double quotes (“”) and separated by a comma. The file must include a header record. Knowledge of programming is preferred to complete this process. For more detailed information go to “import file roster” on your *SDMS CME Management System* home page, or email [webmaster@sdms.org](mailto:webmaster@sdms.org).

# Appendix C: Glossary

**AACEEMS:** Organizations that have met the **ARDMS Accept Continuing Education Evaluation Model System** (AACEEMS) may provide continuing medical education that will be accepted by the American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonography (ARDMS). SDMS CME credit is accepted by the ARDMS.

**Admin User:** An Admin User can create activities, view and edit rosters, and create General Users.

**Approval Number:** The CME approval number is assigned by SDMS when a CME activity is approved. The CME approval number must appear on all certificates for the CME activity. The CME approval number must not appear on any promotional material or be provided to participants until they have successfully completed the CME activity.

**Applications Training/System Optimization:** Applications Training or System Optimization activities may be approved for SDMS CME credit. Applications Training/System Optimization activities which will be approved should focus on the educational aspects of sonography, not sales of equipment. The session should be presented by an appropriately educated sonography professional or commercial/corporate representative. These sessions will be permitted to contain machine specific information for purposes of training sonographers in proper machine usage and to achieve optimal diagnostic ultrasound images. The activity may be conducted on-site or at an off-site location. The commercial bias restriction will be waived in these sessions. No pricing or discussion of sales terms may be conducted at any time during the session. No alcoholic beverages may be served or available during the CME session. Commercial relationships and/or employment of the presenter by a commercial manufacturer must be disclosed to participants before the session begins. Hands-on training during the session will be approved at half credit (2 hours equals 1 SDMS CME credit).

Didactic/Lecture time will be approved at full credit (1 hour equals 1 SDMS CME credit). *ARRT may cap the number of Applications Training/System Optimization credits approved at 8 if the session is conducted at your facility. Contact ARRT directly for more information.*

**ARDMS:** The **American Registry of Diagnostic Medical Sonography** (ARDMS) is a credentialing organization that administers certification examinations and awards credentials in diagnostic medical sonography, diagnostic cardiac sonography and vascular sonography. Registrants must earn a specific number of continuing education credits on a triennium basis. Website: [www.ardms.org](http://www.ardms.org).

**ARRT:** The **American Registry of Radiologic Technologists** is a credentialing organization that administers certification examinations and awards credentials in diagnostic medical sonography and radiologic imaging. Registrants must earn a specific number of continuing education credits. Website: [www.arrt.org](http://www.arrt.org).

**Author:** Individuals are eligible for SDMS CME credit in the following categories: Published article in peer-reviewed journal; Chapter in a peer-reviewed textbook; Self-instructional activity approved for SDMS CME credit; Editor of a peer-reviewed textbook; Chapter revision in a peer-reviewed textbook; Editor of a revised, peer-reviewed textbook (new edition).

**Biennium:** A two-year period in which 24 continuing medical education (CME) credits must be earned in order to maintain certification by ARRT.

**CAAHEP:** **Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs** is the largest programmatic/specialized accreditor in the health sciences field. In collaboration with the Joint Review Committee – Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS), CAAHEP reviews and accredits sonography educational programs across the United States and Canada.

**CARDUP:** Canadian Association of Registered Diagnostic Ultrasound Professionals is a registry of diagnostic ultrasound professionals in Canada who meet national competency standards. Website: <http://www.cardup.org/>.

**CCI:** Cardiovascular Credentialing International is a not-for-profit corporation established for the purpose of administering credentialing examinations for cardiovascular professionals as an independent credentialing agency. Website: [www.cci-online.org/](http://www.cci-online.org/).

**Certification:** Certification is often used interchangeably with credentialing or registration.

**Clinical Instructorship:** An educational activity in which clinical instructors affiliated with a CAAHEP-accredited program can receive credit for providing student instruction.

**CME Credits:** Continuing Medical Education (CME) credits must be accrued by registered sonographers on an ongoing basis to meet the continuing competency requirements established by various credentialing organizations (ARDMS, ARRT, CCI) to maintain active status.

**College Courses:** A sonography course offered by a CAAHEP-accredited college-based medical sonography program or an educational activity (formal course of study) offered by a regionally accredited post-secondary educational institution leading to a medically-related degree in such fields as biologic or physical sciences, medical sonography, health and medical sciences, and allied health sciences. Courses that are not medically or professionally related are not eligible for SDMS CME credit approval.

**Contact Hour:** The time spent participating in an educational activity. Fifty (50) to sixty (60) minutes equals one (1) contact hour. Each contact hour is equal to 1 SDMS CME credit. In the case of hands-on training and clinical instruction, CME credits are awarded on a two (2) hour to one (1) CME credit basis.

**CME Activity:** This term refers to the types of programs and educational/instructional products that are eligible for SDMS CME credit approval.

**CME Provider:** An institution, university, hospital, organization, clinic or physician's office, corporate entity, etc., that is approved by the SDMS to award SDMS CME credit(s) to participants in a CME activity.

**CME Activity Director:** The authorized representative of the continuing medical education provider.

**CME Credit:** Credit earned for completing an educational activity.

**Credential:** A designation issued to a sonographer by a national sonography registry upon application, compliance with all registry requirements, and completion of registry examination(s).

**Editor:** Individuals are eligible for SDMS CME credit in the following categories: Published article in peer-reviewed journal; Chapter in a peer-reviewed textbook; Self-instructional activity approved for SDMS CME credit; Editor of a peer-reviewed textbook; Chapter revision in a peer-reviewed textbook; Editor of a revised, peer-reviewed textbook (new edition)

**Embedded Assessment:** An embedded assessment can be used in lieu of or in conjunction with a CME post-test in activities such as computer-based or online CME activities. Embedded assessments may include problem solving exercises, simulations, or instructional games. The purpose of an embedded assessment during an CME activity is to 1) ensure the participant has completed the section or module, 2) ensure the participant understands the information presented, and 3) provide feedback to the participant to aid in further learning or understanding. Typically, an embedded assessment would be distributed throughout an online CME activity and would take the participant to additional information or to the location where the participant can review the information originally provided.

**General User:** General Users have the ability to view and edit rosters. They are not allowed to create new activities or create other users.

**Goal:** The overall purpose of a continuing education activity.

**Hands On Scanning:** One-on-one training using sonography-related equipment where the participant can gain experience on the equipment.

**Licensure:** Official or legal permission to do or own a specific thing. Proof of permission granted, usually in the form of a document, card, plate or tag. The purpose of licensure is to ensure safe and effective service to the public by providing accountability through a state licensing board. Licensure is sought as means of demonstrating a minimum competency in a given area of expertise, therefore increasing recognition and legitimacy.

**Multiple Offering CME Activity:** A CME activity that is repeated more than once each year.

**Objective:** A statement expressed in behavioral terms specifying what a participant should know or be able to do at the completion of the educational activity (learning outcome).

**Outline:** A list of the major topics and key points in a lecture or presentation in an educational activity such as a seminar.

**Participant:** An individual who attends/completes/participates in an educational activity. The terms attendee, participant, and registrant are used interchangeably.

**RCEEM:** A **R**ecognized **C**ontinuing **E**ducation **E**valuation **M**echanism as designated by the CCI and ARRT. The SDMS is a RCEEM and as such, reviews and evaluates the content and quality of continuing education activities for credit approval. SDMS CME credits are accepted by the ARDMS, CCI, and the ARRT.

**Readability Index:** The readability index is a tool for estimating the reading comprehension level necessary to understand a written document. SDMS will use the Flesch readability index in its review of CME applications. For a given document, the Flesch readability index is an integer indicating how difficult the document is to understand, with lower numbers indicating greater difficulty.

**Registrant:** A person who is registered by a national sonography registry.

**Registration:** The process of becoming registered by a national sonography registry.

**SDMS:** The **S**ociety of **D**iagnostic **M**edical **S**onography (SDMS) was founded in 1970 and promotes quality patient care through the advancement of sonography and the practice of diagnostic medical sonography.

**Self-Instructional Program:** Educational activities that include, but is not limited to: web-based programs, computer-based programs, written home study programs, videotapes, audiotapes, CDs, and DVDs.

**Seminar/Conference:** An educational activity consisting of one or more lectures or presentations. The terms seminar, conference, meeting, and program are used interchangeably.

**Single Offering CME Activity:** A CME activity that is conducted only once. An annual conference would be considered a single offering CME activity because the educational content changes each year and requires a separate application each year.

**Speaker:** Individuals who present papers or lectures at an educational activity approved by SDMS for CME credit. Presentations/lectures required in the performance of an individual's job are not eligible for credit. This includes, but is not limited to: faculty lecturing; corporate/commercial representatives who provide educational in-services; and/or faculty in educational programs who present courses as part of their job.

**Study Group:** A study group is an organization or group comprised of individuals from single or multiple institutions and/or multiple geographic areas (e.g., hospital, medical/imaging center, clinic or physician's office, urgent care center, etc., or satellite facilities owned by the provider and in the same geographic area) whose purpose is to a) provide planned continuing education programs and b) encourage active participation in the profession through dissemination of information on important professional issues to those who are directly involved in the practice of sonography. This would include local or regional societies.

**Super Admin User:** This person is the main contact for the organization. The Super Admin

user has the ability to create other users, as well as designate their registration types (Activity Director, Clinical Instructorship Program Director, Study Group Director).

**System Optimization (Applications Training/System Optimization):** Applications Training or System Optimization activities may be approved for SDMS CME credit. Applications Training/System Optimization activities which will be approved should focus on the educational aspects of sonography, not sales of equipment. The session should be presented by an appropriately educated sonography professional or commercial/corporate representative. These sessions will be permitted to contain machine specific information for purposes of training sonographers in proper machine usage and to achieve optimal diagnostic ultrasound images. The activity may be conducted on-site or at an off-site location. The commercial bias restriction will be waived in these sessions. No pricing or discussion of sales terms may be conducted at any time during the session. No alcoholic beverages may be served or available during the CME session. Commercial relationships and/or employment of the presenter by a commercial

manufacturer must be disclosed to participants before the session begins. Hands-on training during the session will be approved at half credit (2 hours equals 1 SDMS CME credit). Didactic/Lecture time will be approved at full credit (1 hour equals 1 SDMS CME credit). *ARRT may cap the number of Applications Training/System Optimization credits approved at 8 if the session is conducted at your facility. Contact ARRT directly for more information.*

**Tracking Number:** A unique tracking number is assigned to each application created using the online system. This tracking number must appear on checks or purchase orders submitted with the application. The tracking number is **not** the same as a CME approval number and may not appear on any promotional materials, certificates, etc.

**Triennium:** A three-year period in which 30 continuing medical education (CME) credits must be earned in order to maintain certification by ARDMS.

**Triennial Cycle:** A three-year period in which 16 continuing education units (CEU's) related to cardiovascular technology or patient care must be earned in order to maintain certification by CCI.