OFFICE FOR FACULTY AFFAIRS AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Continuing Medical Education (CME) Strategic Plan
2024–2029
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A Five-Year Roadmap For CME

The Continuing Medical Education (CME) Unit within the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (COM) is a mission-aligned program. The COM mission is: “To serve Washington and beyond through collaboration and problem-solving in education, research, and health care with a focus on rural communities, Tribal Nations, and people who have been historically marginalized.”

The CME Unit’s four strategic objectives, outlined in this plan, translate the COM mission into actionable ways we can support physicians and other health professionals with their lifelong learning and evolution.

In the next five years we intend to:

1. Prioritize CME programming and partnerships that support health professionals in rural and underserved communities in Washington State.
2. Achieve Full ACCME Accredited Provider Status, with Commendation, the criteria for which require creativity and innovation in CME program design and delivery.
3. Be known among collaborators and stakeholders for providing exemplary service, as measured by ongoing feedback collection, and with a focus on continuous quality improvement (CQI).
4. Make measurable progress toward achieving cost-neutral and self-sustaining operations, which will be achieved by offering high-quality, grant-funded, fee-for-service and tuition-based CME programs.

The CME Unit’s strategic plan provides specifics around each of these key objectives and offers a framework for how we will evaluate our progress over time.

As we look toward the future, we will work collaboratively and iteratively to design, accredit, and deliver meaningful learning opportunities for those we serve. The CME Unit will live by the COM’s values and how we understand them in a CME context.

The WSU (Washington State University) CME Unit is committed to understanding and addressing unique and evolving learning needs, and to achieving the WSU College of Medicine’s vision of “a healthy, equitable Washington for all.”
Vision

Clinicians in Washington engage in meaningful, mission-aligned, and transformative Continuing Medical Education (CME) offered by the WSU College of Medicine and our collaborators.

Mission

To design, deliver, and accredit continuing professional development opportunities that meet the current and future learning needs of Washington’s clinicians, with a strong focus on the evolving healthcare needs of rural and other historically underserved communities.
Our Values

The core values of the WSU CME program align with the values articulated in the WSU College of Medicine’s Strategic Plan. They are listed below, with additions that are specific to the way our CME staff and faculty understand and live by these values in our work.

**Integrity**
We uphold the highest standards of honest and ethical conduct in all our endeavors, ensuring transparency and accountability, in developing and delivering high quality continuing education to healthcare professionals.

**Equity**
We promote equity as it refers to fairness and justice and seek to remove barriers, unintentional or otherwise, arising from bias or structural root causes with the understanding that all people do not start from the same place and may face uneven power distribution. We prioritize and center content that addresses health disparities and inequities throughout our region.

**Inclusion**
We foster a working culture and environment where individuals experience a sense of belonging and feel valued, respected, and supported for their unique qualities, particularly as it relates to the multi-faceted partnerships required to develop and implement continuing professional development programs.

**Collaborative Relationships**
We work across departments, units, and organizations to produce continuing professional development and achieve collective success. We recognize the impacts of our actions on each other and on our individual and communities’ health and well-being.

**Diversity**
We nurture diversity by recognizing the identities we carry and the differences between people, acknowledging that these differences are valued and striving for equitable representation in our faculty, speakers, and learning participants.

**Continuous Improvement**
We embrace a culture of innovation where we grow and develop our people, teams, and processes, learning from successes and failures and innovating from existing best practices in the realm of continuing professional development and accreditation.

**Work-Life Synthesis**
We honor, respect, and actively support one another in integrating the commitment to and complexity of our self, family, community, and work. We are committed to supporting learners as they work to synthesize these facets of their lives and design our programs with this in mind.
Our Strategic Objectives

Our four strategic objectives are designed to be inspiring and actionable. They will guide our growth and help us to hone our focus over the next five years as we build the CME Unit. The subgoals under each are a baseline and may be updated and evolved over the five years. Also included under each objective is a logic model, which provides a basic framework for what we expect to achieve if we are successful. Each December, we develop our CME Unit Annual Plan with specific tasks and milestones for the year ahead. As part of developing the Annual Plan, we will also take inventory of our strategic objectives to measure the extent to which we have been successful and determine where we need to invest more resources.

#1 - Prioritize CME programming and partnerships that support health professionals in rural and underserved communities in Washington State.

- On a biannual basis (Q2 and Q4), audit our activities and partnerships and ask if we are prioritizing/encouraging programs and partnerships that are mission-aligned.
- Develop a WSU CME Needs Assessment to assess the ongoing and emerging CME needs of learners in Washington’s rural and underserved communities.
- Develop customized and interprofessional programs that address the health disparities and inequities faced by Washington’s rural and underserved communities.
- Develop relationships with CE (Continuing Education) groups beyond medicine at WSU, including nursing, pharmacy, speech and hearing, and nutrition and exercise physiology.
- Explore offering different credit types in addition to AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™.
- Develop at least one partnership with a critical access hospital in the state to offer ongoing CME programming or joint providership.
- Maintain the CME team’s knowledge about learning needs by remaining connected with communities and learners and implementing ongoing needs assessments.
- Explore collaboration with relevant WSU COM researchers and evaluators to identify areas to grow and improve this facet of our work.
- Explore collaboration with statewide faculty to highlight local and regional expertise in CME programming.
## Logic model for strategic objective #1 (Mission-Aligned Programming & Partnerships)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources:</strong></td>
<td>• Creation of audit tool</td>
<td>• Continued movement toward programs and partnerships that support mission</td>
<td>• Annual increases in number of in-house CME programs developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Subject matter experts</td>
<td>• Needs assessment project plan and strategy</td>
<td>• CME programming is relevant to target audience</td>
<td>• Annual increases in number of accreditation applications received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trained and engaged staff and faculty</td>
<td>• Engage CE units across WSU health professions</td>
<td>• Joint providership in critical access hospital</td>
<td>• Improved programming offered by WSU COM departments and others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constraints:</strong></td>
<td>• Engagement of COM research leads</td>
<td></td>
<td>• More stakeholder coordination and engagement and less duplication / siloes</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Staff and faculty capacity</td>
<td>• Team training and professional development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Stakeholder availability</td>
<td>• CME Unit Evaluation plan</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Competition in landscape</td>
<td></td>
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<td>• Other systemic factors</td>
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#2 - Achieve the highest level of accreditation: Accreditation with Commendation, issued by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME).

- Establish an engaged group of CME Advisors and Key Informants by December 31, 2024.
- Implement processes for supporting learners with obtaining specialty Maintenance of Certification (MOC) credits by December 31, 2024; continue to identify and grow eligible MOC programming.
- Achieve full ACCME Accreditation by March 31, 2025.
- Develop WSU CME Action Plan for designing, accrediting, and delivering CME that addresses specific ACCME commendation criteria such as: engaging students and residents, interprofessional teams, addresses population health and health disparities, allows clinicians to develop individualized learning plans, demonstrable creativity and program evolution, improvements in clinical performance.
- Develop CME curriculum around emerging health care needs in Washington State, particularly in mandated areas such as Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) topics; develop and implement DEIA policy to support work in this area. Align this work with the WSU College of Medicine Strategic Diversity Action Plan and related policies.
- Align our work with the ACGME Clinician Educator Milestones.
- Achieve ACCME Accreditation with Commendation by March 31, 2029.

### Logic model for strategic objective #2 (ACCME Accreditation with Commendation)

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<th>Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
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</table>
| Resources:  
- Staff and Faculty Time  
- Collaborator contributions  
- Funding |
| Constraints:  
- Budgetary and staff/faculty time constraints  
- Stakeholder buy-in and time constraints |
| • Conduct audit; map programs and where they overlap with commendation criteria  
• Environmental scan of existing DEIA (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility) education, collaboration with DEIA stakeholders at WSU  
• Action plan for implementing ACGME milestones |
| • Improvements to Self-Study and Performance in Practice submissions, interviews with surveyors  
• Implementation of an action plan, longitudinal tracking, and growth of learners |
| • Higher quality, more relevant CME offerings  
• Improved performance and competency  
• Recognition and reputation of schools with commendation; brand enhancement |
#3 - Provide exemplary service.

- Administer a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) feedback assessment tool with each partner, applicant, and other collaborators to identify and make improvements to our services, processes, and communication. Track and compare results over time to see if we are improving.
- Implement a CME-specific Customer Relationship Management (CRM) solution to organize and streamline communication with learners, ensure learners are receiving relevant information, track engagement.
- Upgrade our CloudCME instance by March 31, 2025. Regularly audit CloudCME workflows and user interactions to ensure optimization.
- Adopt a Learning Management System and build online learning and instructional design capacity; build in-house capacity to develop enduring CME materials.
- Develop clear communications, workflows, and infographics to help demystify CME for clinicians, the accreditation application process for prospective applicants, and the review process for reviewers. Use these as communication tools and in place of FAQs.
- Ensure that paperwork and administrative burdens for applicants, learners, and collaborators are kept to a minimum.

### Logic model for strategic objective #3 (Exemplary Service)

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<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
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| Resources:  
- Staff time  
- Faculty engagement  
- MarComm support  
- Funding for IT systems  
- Hiring talent  

Constraints:  
- Cost of systems (e.g., CloudCME, LMS)  
- Staff capacity  
- Software limitations e.g., CloudCME, CRM  

| | - Create and implement CQI feedback tool, regular review of findings  
- Participate in development of CRM, develop CME-specific portal  
- Develop MarComm strategy for CME Unit | - Increased metrics and unit performance feedback  
- CRM that allows tailored and segmented marcomm for target audience | - Demonstrable improvements to our service; increases in satisfaction of partners, applicants, learners  
- Year over year increases in mailing list size and event registrations |
#4 – Sustainable and cost-neutral growth.

- Focus on generating revenue that allows us to move toward cost neutrality and is reinvested in high quality education programs, system improvement, and refinement.
- Establish the CME Unit as WSU Service Center before 2024-25 fiscal year.
- Introduce fee structure for Accreditation Review before 2024-25 fiscal year; review and update annually.
- Create operating procedures, templates, and workflows for new CME services including event management, instructional design capacity to develop enduring materials in-house, online registration services, CME-related research, and evaluation services.
- Identify and seek funding from diverse sources to support operations and new programming, in several key areas, including exhibit and advertising income, registration/tuition fees, government monetary grants, private/philanthropic monetary donations, accreditation review fees, online registration and event management fees.

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<th>Logic model for strategic objective #4 (Sustainable Growth)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Inputs</strong></td>
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</table>
| **Resources:** | - Service Center Establishment  
- Develop and implement fee structure  
- Audit current processes  
- Develop Funding/Partnership Proposal Template  
- Project plans for improved workflows | - More flexibility with bringing in and utilizing diverse revenue streams w/ Service Center  
- Annual increase in fees collected, offset staff time  
- Documented processes and workflows; less reliance on individual staff/faculty knowledge  
- Easier to train new staff and applicants | - No additional funding needed from COM regardless of growth; reduction in amount required for core funding  
- Accreditation staff and review paid by fee-for-service entirely |
| **Constraints:** | - Leadership & Project Management Skill  
- Business Services Team Support | - Staff and Faculty Capacity  
- Funding availability  
- HR/hiring limitations  
- Research/Eval infrastructure |
Alignment with WSU College of Medicine Priorities

A key component of the CME Strategic Plan, 2024–2029, and our efforts over the next five years will be to support the achievement of the continuing professional development goals (and other goals, as applicable) identified in the WSU College of Medicine Strategic Plan (2024–2029).

The COM Strategic Plan identifies specific pillars built upon the three foundational beliefs: belonging and development, social accountability, and sustainability. These pillars include Community Care, Education, Environment, and Research. Within these pillars, goals related to continuing professional development include:

**Education Pillar Goal 1B**
“Provide evidence-based, responsive educational programs that prepare learners for service in underserved communities.”
- Offer health professionals high-quality continuing professional development that supports unique practice contexts and lifelong learning needs.
- Address ongoing and emergent learning needs of community-based clinicians.
- Enhance community-based practice by offering relevant, supportive, and relational lifelong learning opportunities.

**Educational Pillar Goal 3C**
“Broaden the role of the undergraduate medical education faculty educational model to emphasize student learning beyond informational delivery to better support all learners.”
- Develop continuing education materials to empower all faculty and staff to engage in creating a climate of inclusion.

**Environment Pillar Goal 1A**
“Enhance and expand existing health equity curriculum in MD program to all College of Medicine degree and residency programs.”
- Connect health equity education leadership partners with the Office for Faculty Affairs and Continuing Professional Development to develop modules and increase the number of faculty prepared to teach equity and health equity in the curriculum and beyond.
About This Strategic Plan

The WSU College of Medicine’s CME Unit’s Strategic Plan (2024–2029) was developed by:

Radha Nandagopal, MD, FAAP, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs and Continuing Professional Development

Andrea Keesey, MA, Associate Director, Continuing Medical Education

Sharlynn Rima, Coordinator, Continuing Medical Education

Before starting work on the strategic plan, the CME Unit conducted an environmental scan of progress made by previous CME staff and faculty to ensure we captured relevant aspects of that work in the new strategic plan.

We relied on the wisdom, experience, and valuable input of many trusted advisors and key informants to develop this plan. We met with these key individuals either 1:1 or in small groups before, during, and after the plan was developed to ensure it aligned with the WSU College of Medicine’s mission and strategic plan.
CME Strategic Plan Advisors and Key Informants:

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Hailey Stewart, Faculty Development Program Specialist

Erin Van Antwerp, MHA, Associate Director, Faculty Development

Farion Williams, MD, Associate Dean of Clinical Education, Tri-Cities Campus
About the CME Unit

The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine (COM) is Washington’s community-based medical school. Established in 2015, the College was created to expand medical education and health care access in communities across the state.

The Continuing Medical Education (CME) Unit supports the lifelong learning needs of community-based health professionals across the state and in neighboring regions. The CME Unit is part of the COM’s Office for Faculty Affairs and Continuing Professional Development (OFACPD). This office is overseen by the Associate Dean, OFACPD, and reports to the WSU COM Dean of Medicine. The OFACPD consists of the Faculty Development Unit, the Faculty Affairs Unit, and the CME Unit.

The CME Unit’s first strategic plan prioritized foundational work including: achieving provisional accredited provider status (achieved in March 2023), developing a website and online accreditation platform called CloudCME, and hiring personnel. These goals were achieved, and the new strategic plan was created in 2024 to coincide and align with a renewed COM strategic plan.

When the CME Unit’s strategic plan was created, the CME Unit staff consisted of an Associate Director, CME, and a Coordinator, CME, and a part-time administrative assistant from the OFACPD. In 2023, its inaugural accreditation year, the CME team reviewed and approved 88 programs, including Regular Scheduled Series (RSS), for AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™.

For more information about the CME Unit, please contact us.

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c/o CME Unit
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