



Update on CM Points Approvals Program for Category 4 Education Events (12-8-11)

On November 29th, ABIH began the effort to decommission the CM point approval process for Category 4, Educational Events. Many Diplomates have reacted very favorably to the change but for some, we did not provide enough information to gain their support. The decision to eliminate the approvals program is intended to maintain our certification as the 'gold standard' for occupational hygiene.

- **ABIH Resources** – The current program consumes the equivalent of one Staff-person's time per year as we process almost 7000 requests. In 2010, more than 99% of the requests were approved, many without any changes. We prefer that Staff resources be re-directed towards more meaningful activities.
- **Diplomate Resources** – Diplomates also currently spend a large amount of time using the approvals process and database. In many cases, the ABIH role was simply to confirm what the Diplomate already knew before the submission. The change will result in a paperwork reduction for Diplomates (and event Providers as well).
- **Increased Education Events:** The quality and availability of educational events is significantly greater now than when the approvals program was first initiated. Since we currently approve >99% of the requests, ABIH's experience is that Diplomates choose their continuing education events wisely, thus reducing the need for ABIH oversight.
- **World Class Certification** - To our knowledge, ABIH is one of the only accredited certification programs that provided a Board-resourced approval process for continuing education events. We believe that the ABIH approvals program does not reflect industry best practice. We must employ modern certification techniques if we are to remain competitive with other certification programs.
- **Timing** - We have reached a critical moment in ABIH's history. Soon, our online tools will undergo a significant upgrade. A CM approvals process would require costly customization and delay the start up. So now is the opportune time to make the change.

Going Forward

- We are committed to maintaining the high standards and integrity of the ABIH CM program.
- All Diplomates will be equipped to successfully and confidently calculate their CM points.
- ABIH will provide the necessary level of ongoing support, just differently than we do today.
- ABIH is placing a higher level of trust with our Diplomates, allowing them to choose events without need for input from ABIH. We think that is good for the individual and the profession.

We understand that there are many questions and even some anxiety about the changes. There will be some uncertainty for the next few months but please be patient as we work through all the impacts. While this is a big change, it is not a complex change. In the meantime, we are glad to answer questions and take your suggestions for improvements. Please contact Tracy Parsons (tparsons@abih.org or 517-321-2638).