

Guidelines for Promoting Diverse Speakers, Panels, Planners, Facilitators, Moderators, and Others Involved in Accredited CME Activities

Our Activities and Our Team Shape Our Culture

Endeavor Health: Edward-Elmhurst Hospitals Accredited CME Program wants a fair representation of our hospitals, our community, and our nation by including a diverse group of experts speaking about and planning healthcare topics. Everyone has different life experiences and points of view they bring to the table and may approach challenges differently. These different experiences may not be shared by a variety of individuals who are not included or heard; issues may then go unseen.

The ACME department and the Program & Education Committee want planners of accredited CME activities to always consider whether the opportunity to speak, plan, or be heard is shared by all subject matter experts, patients, or people with experience/stories relative to a topic regardless of race, gender identity, ethnicity, background, education, etc. When diverse planners, speakers, and other contributors influence the direction of accredited CME activities the CME program becomes a richer experience, reaches a larger audience, and ultimately benefits the patients, the organization, and the healthcare team.

Why Does it Matter Who is at the Front of the Room Speaking?

The speakers, planners, and other contributors to accredited CME activities should represent the audience and the community we serve. A lack of diversity makes learners feel as if they are not represented and cannot identify with the individual providing information or education. It is important to include a diverse representation that includes those of all underrepresented groups. According to the National Research Group, 75% of all accredited CME participants say inclusive delivery and content is a key factor in participation and learning. On the following pages, the checklist and the DEI+J Terms can help planners to identify the speakers, panelists, contributors, patients, and others who can assist in planning and presenting accredited CME activities.

Checklist to Promote Diversity at Accredited CME Activities

- Ensure you have enough time to secure a speaker or panel
 - Seeking a diverse group takes time. Utilize as much time as possible to look outside of your general radius of contributors to an activity. Try to seek feedback from the target audience about whom they would like to see deliver the content.
- Look beyond the standard network of speakers; don't look for speakers or contributors by title.
 - Ask trusted colleagues for names of experts they may know whose voices are typically underrepresented or unheard in the topic area.
 - Look further than titles for someone with experience, stories, and community involvement.
 - Contact relevant professional associations (veterans, small business associations, black-owned businesses, community leaders, etc.)
- Set a goal and quantify the goals you hope to achieve
 - Aim for a panel that represents the demographic of the topic. Do not have "diverse" speakers only speak about diverse topics. Do not have the "diverse" members always plan diversity events.
 - Seeking out diverse representation of speakers only on diversity panels/topics is not inclusive. This shows a lack of recognition of an individual's range of knowledge and expertise in the field. Aim to have inclusive representation and involvement for all topics when planning any activity.
- Ensure you have enough diverse support and contributions

- Make sure there is sufficient help to find, invite, plan, and work with a diverse group of speakers. A diverse search committee or group of planners is the first recommendation, but not always possible. Make sure whomever is responsible for seeking speakers is committed to diversifying the speakers, panels, or others involved.
- Ensure that underrepresented individuals are invited
- Guarantee participation by ensuring all individuals know they are invited to attend. Send specific invitations to underrepresented groups. Be sure to have accessibility issues covered.
 - Let the speakers know they are speaking to an appropriate target audience; share the demographics of the audience invited.
 - Sometimes a lack of diversity at an event is the result of only meeting at a specific time and place convenient for a limited group of people. If you are not getting the results you want, experiment with changing the date/time of an activity or checking the accessibility of the activity.
- Consider broadening the topic(s)
- Think about your topic and the impact it has on communities and health equity. Consider prioritizing participation from that community and/or broadening your topic to encourage a wider scope and address factors of health population and inequities.
- Ensure resources are available to support the speaker(s), panel(s), and learners
- Support the panel or speaker with information on the event, logistics, how they can successfully participate, the expectations, technology details, etc.
- Organize a practice session with the speaker(s)
- Assist the speaker(s) with the format of the activity and offer a practice run so the speaker(s) are comfortable. Discuss the plan, target audience, etc.
 - Ask the presenter(s) to share their experiences if they are comfortable
 - Organize a taping session so the speaker(s) can review their presentation delivery
- Honorariums
- If payment is not an option, ask if there are other ways in which payment can be made to the “speakers”. Offer to support their business through marketing efforts, record the activity and provide the speakers with a copy for their use. Find out what they need/want and see how the activity can be mutually beneficial in support of the speaker(s).
- Write the “Call for Speakers” in a way that encourages a diverse range of applicants.
- Oftentimes, the speaker(s) we want do not see themselves as experts. In the call-out, specify that the speakers do not need to be an expert. Indicate that the interest is in a range of experiences and that everyone’s voice is valuable and interesting, encourage stories, include a code of conduct as a commitment to diversity, and encourage the use of photos. Participants appreciate seeing representation.
- Share limitations
- If you proceed with an event that is missing key voices, acknowledge those missing voices at the start of the event and indicate that you actively recruited for those missing voices but were unsuccessful. There may be resources that come from that announcement!