

CONSULT

CME360.net: A Review of the Latest Tech Tool

IN OUR TRAVELS throughout the country, we have the opportunity to see almost all the new products developed for CME providers. In this article, we will review only one Web-based management system—CME360.net—because it appears to be head-and-shoulders above the rest in terms of being aligned with the new CME paradigm.

Developed by Homestead, Pa.–based CE-City (www.ceciv.com), CME360.net is the first application we know of that offers a complete CME activity management tool, enabling providers to meet new documentation requirements. It is an easy to use, Web-based application that allows providers and their partners to centrally plan activities, document needs assessment, write learning objectives, keep conflict of interest and faculty records, and evaluate outcomes measures.

Here's what we especially like about the system:

■ **Planning process.** By mapping critical steps in the planning process, CME360.net gives providers a project management tool that can be standardized for all activities or customized for special projects. Another aspect of the tool is a faculty and conflict of interest tracking database. It allows the provider to know at a glance if a faculty member has a conflict, when the disclosure information was last updated, with whom the conflict exists, activities where the conflict was an issue, and the mechanism to resolve it.

■ **Needs assessment.** You can develop needs assessment templates to assure consistency for quality and documentation across the organization. Topic experts can create "resource centers" for ongoing needs assessments that draw from third-party databases. Most importantly, program outcomes can be linked to new needs assessments to drive the learning cycle.

■ **Evaluation.** Providers can customize and standardize evaluation forms across projects.

The Web-based forms can be homegrown or shared between provider organizations. Participant data can be processed online or imported from different sources, allowing providers to use CME360.net as a standalone system or to integrate it with existing management systems.

■ **Outcomes measures.** Outcomes measures from one or more activities can be created, stored, and analyzed by the provider. The database aggregates results in real time so that at any given point, a report can be generated to indicate how participants have applied what they learned in their practice (if that is your measurement tool). Outcomes measures can be tied back to needs assessment data, thereby completing the linkage process.

■ **Security.** CME360.net allows the provider to limit access for both projects and data within their organization, as well as access to external stakeholders in the CME360.net community. These stakeholders also have security controls, assuring that access occurs appropriately as viewed by both organizations.

■ **Funding.** Pharmaceutical companies' grants offices are now directed by educators. CME360.net provides the tools necessary for you to demonstrate to the grantor that you can plan and evaluate an activity that will yield results, and it gives CME staff a way to plan and execute an activity (and document it) in an exemplary fashion. ■

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SP&A does not have a business relationship with CECity.com, although it will be recommending the CME360.net system to its clients.



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Judy M. Sweetnam, MEd