

CONTINUING MEDICAL EDUCATION IN ITALY

The Continuing Medical Education for General Practitioners, in Italy, it's regulated by the agreement between General Practitioners and National Health Services. It deals with a compulsory and voluntary updating.

The courses of compulsory updating are carried out by Local Health Services and are held by GPs suitably trained for the CME (CME trainers).

The above trainers use suitable didactic methods (doctors needs, learning by objectives, participation in small and medium groups, evaluation courses quality, training evaluation of participants). The issues of the compulsory training are yearly set by the Regions, in agreement with the Medical Orders, with the most representative medical trade unions and with the co-operation of the professional societies of GPs.

A certain importance has been placed on issues which are not wholly such as working organisations relations, doctor/patient relation, research in general medicine and computerisation in GP's surgeries.

The GP's must do at least 32 hours of updating per year. The courses must be in working hours and the doctor involved may be substituted. The 32 hours must be followed in two consecutive years, if not disciplinary procedures must be applied.

Nationally there is not an equal application of the rules concerning the CME. The Regions have carried out some compulsory updating courses regularly for years however others never been began.

The GP's for this reason and also because the compulsory 32 hours are not sufficient to meet their professional need, have supported the compulsory updating by voluntary courses. In Italy there are associations and national scientific societies that organise congresses study and work seminars, field research, trainer courses and GP tutors.

SIMG is one of the most important of this organisations carrying out an active role for GP's, providing the GP's with a voluntary continual updating.

This is the present situation in Italy, Recent Law (DL 229/99) has imposed new rules about CME for associated doctors or employees of the National Health Services (SSN). A National Commission for training has been planned to guide and program training, and for accreditation of scientific societies and training organisations.

Regionally a commission agreed on by medical Orders foresees carrying out national guidelines and to plan the training in its Region based on specific needs.

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