

U.S. Department of Education

Staff Report  
to the  
Senior Department Official  
on  
Recognition Compliance Issues

**RECOMMENDATION PAGE**

1. **Agency:** Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (1970/2007)  
(The dates provided are the date of initial listing as a recognized agency and the date of the agency's last grant of recognition.)
2. **Action Item:** Interim Report
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation throughout the United States of graduate programs in healthcare management.
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** December, 2010
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Accept the report.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY**

The agency currently known as the Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) was originally founded in 1968 by several professional health-related organizations. The agency was originally known as the Accrediting Commission on Graduate Education for Hospital Administration (ACGEHA). To better reflect the broad range of opportunities existing within the health administration profession, the organization changed its name in 1976 to the Accrediting Commission on Education for Health Services Administration (ACEHSA). In October 2004, the current name was adopted. In addition, the wording of the agency's scope of recognition was revised early in 2007 from "health services administration" to "healthcare management" to reflect the name change.

CAHME accreditation enables the programs it accredits to establish eligibility to participate in non-HEA Federal programs, specifically the Graduate Healthcare Administration Training Program of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). As a result, graduate students in CAHME-accredited programs in healthcare management are eligible to participate in VA residency programs, and upon successful completion, are eligible for placement/employment in the VA system.

CAHME accredits approximately 72 master's degree programs in healthcare management education in universities located in over 30 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

#### **Recognition History**

CAHME was first recognized in 1970 and the agency's recognition has been periodically reviewed and continued recognition has been granted after each review.

When CAHME last came before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) for a full review in May 2007, the agency was subsequently granted continued recognition for a period of five years. The current interim report was also requested.

## **PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

### **§602.23 Operating procedures all agencies must have.**

**(a) The agency must maintain and make available to the public, upon request, written materials describing--**

**(1) Each type of accreditation and preaccreditation it grants;**

**(2) The procedures that institutions or programs must follow in applying for accreditation or preaccreditation;**

**(3) The standards and procedures it uses to determine whether to grant, reaffirm, reinstate, restrict, deny, revoke, terminate, or take any other action related to each type of accreditation and preaccreditation that the agency grants;**

**(4) The institutions and programs that the agency currently accredits or preaccredits and, for each institution and program, the year the agency will next review or reconsider it for accreditation or preaccreditation; and**

**(5) The names, academic and professional qualifications, and relevant employment and organizational affiliations of--**

**(i) The members of the agency's policy and decision-making bodies; and**

**(ii) The agency's principal administrative staff.**

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Previous Issue or Problem: Early in the last review, Department staff had noted that CAHME's publicly available information was problematic in some respects. Specifically, some statements about the agency's recognition by the Secretary could be misleading to potential students and other members of the public in three areas. The web statements failed to make it clear that the Secretary's recognition did not include CAHME's candidate and pre-accredited programs or any programs in Canada. In addition, the web section entitled "Candidacy Program: At a Glance" included the statement that "Once a program is advanced from Candidacy to Pre-Accreditation status, it is listed in the Official List of Accredited Programs..." Finally, the section entitled "Accredited Programs: Pre-Accredited Programs" did not make clear to the public the distinction between accredited and pre-accredited programs.

CAHME acted swiftly to amend its materials by clarifying that its recognition by the Secretary of Education did not extend to its candidate/pre-accredited categories or any of its programs in Canada, and the agency removed the list of pre-accredited programs from its web site. However, Department staff found that the following statement remained: "When a program is advanced from Candidacy Status to Pre-Accreditation Status, they will be listed in the Official List of Accredited Programs, and invoiced for the Annual Program fee for that fiscal period, the same as assessed accredited programs."

Furthermore, the separate section entitled "Accredited Programs: Background" still contained the following statement without any disclaimer: "The Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Management Education (CAHME) has been granted formal recognition by the U.S. Department of Education. CAHME is the only organization recognized to grant accreditation to individual academic programs offering a professional master's degree in healthcare management education in the United States and Canada." Since those statements had apparently been overlooked during the agency's efforts to clarify its web materials, the current interim/compliance report was requested.

Specifically, CAHME was asked to make it consistently clear on its web site, and in its publicly available materials, that the Secretary of Education does not recognize CAHME's unaccredited categories (candidate/pre-accredited), and that those unaccredited programs (and any programs in Canada) are not covered by the Secretary's recognition.

Agency Response and Discussion: The agency expeditiously adopted a new candidacy program that eliminated the "preaccreditation" category as a distinct step towards full CAHME accreditation. As a result, the CAHME "candidacy" category includes all programs that have applied for CAHME accreditation but have not yet been accredited.

Regarding the necessary clarifications, the agency's interim/compliance report notes that the publicly available materials regarding the agency are found primarily on its web site and in an informational

brochure. Those resources have been revised to include language that makes it clear that all programs in Canada and any candidate programs are not covered by CAHME's recognition by the Secretary of Education. A Department staff review of the agency's web site and informational brochure confirmed that the necessary clarifications were made and that the statements prone to misinterpretation were removed.

Staff Determination: The agency meets the requirements of this section of the Criteria.

**PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS**

The Department did not receive any written third-party comments regarding this agency.