

U.S. Department of Education

Staff Report
to the
Senior Department Official
on
Recognition Compliance Issues

RECOMMENDATION PAGE

1. **Agency:** Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (2003/2005)
(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:** Petition for Continued Recognition
3. **Current Scope of Recognition:** The accreditation and pre-accreditation throughout the United States of graduate-level, four-year naturopathic medical education programs leading to the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (N.M.D.) or Doctor of Naturopathy (N.D.)
4. **Requested Scope of Recognition:** Same as above.
5. **Date of Advisory Committee Meeting:** December, 2010
6. **Staff Recommendation:** Renew the agency's recognition for a period of five years.
7. **Issues or Problems:** None.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE AGENCY

The Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME) is a programmatic accrediting agency. CNME's current scope of recognition is the accreditation and preaccreditation throughout the United States of graduate level, four-year naturopathic medical education programs leading to the Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine (N.M.D.) or Doctor of Naturopathy (N.D.).

Currently, CNME accredits four naturopathic medical education programs and preaccredits one program. These five programs are located in institutions of higher education that are accredited by the appropriate recognized regional accrediting agencies.

Accreditation by CNME is not a required element for participation in Title IV, Higher Education Act (HEA) programs. Therefore, the agency does not have to meet the separate and independent criteria. However, the agency's accreditation or preaccreditation is a required element in enabling students and graduates of the programs it accredits or preaccredits to participate in certain Federal non-HEA programs. Specifically, CNME accreditation or preaccreditation is linked to two Federal non-HEA programs within the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

The first Federal link is the Academic Research Enhancement Award (AREA), offered through NIH's National Center for Complementary Alternative Medicine. The AREA grant requires eligible applicants to hold a degree (MD, DDS, MPT, DC, ND or equivalent degree) from a program accredited by a body recognized by the Secretary of Education.

The second Federal link, also an NIH program, is the Extramural Loan Repayment Program (LRP) authorized by the Public Health Assistance Act. Eligible applicants must have an equivalent doctoral degree (including a specific reference to the N.D.) from an accredited institution. According to the Public Health Service Code these schools must be accredited by a body recognized for accreditation purposes by the Secretary of Education.

As part of its evaluation of CNME, Department staff reviewed the agency's petition and supporting documentation, and observed a decision-making meeting in Portland, OR on August 8-9, 2010.

Recognition History

The Secretary granted initial recognition to CNME in 2003 as a programmatic accreditor for a period of two years, the maximum period of time granted for initial recognition.

The Secretary last granted CNME a three-year period of recognition in 2005, and required the agency to submit an interim report demonstrating compliance with issues identified in the staff analysis. The agency's interim report was accepted by the Secretary after the December 2006 meeting of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI).

Department staff and the NACIQI reviewed the agency's petition for renewal of recognition in Spring 2008. Both the Department and the NACIQI recommended that the agency's recognition be renewed for a period of five years. The Secretary had not made a final recognition decision prior to passage of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which contained a number of provisions related to accrediting agency recognition that were effective upon enactment. Subsequently, new regulations were developed, effective July 1, 2010. As a consequence, the agency was required to submit an updated petition for review by staff and NACIQI. That submission is the subject of this analysis.

PART II: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The agency meets the requirements of the Secretary's Criteria for Recognition.

PART III: THIRD PARTY COMMENTS

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