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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Professional Licensure
BOARD OF REGISTRATION OF CHIROPRACTORS
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CHARLES BORSTEL
COMMISSIONER, DIVISION OF
PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

TO: Chiropractic Professionals and the General Public
FROM: Board of Registration of Chiropractors
DATE: January 22, 2018
RE: Public Comments on Policy Draft

The Board of Registration of Chiropractors (“Board”) recently began considering a new policy titled “Policy Guideline on Continuing Education Courses.” The proposed Policy may be viewed below.

The Board is now accepting public comments on the proposed Policy, which may be submitted to chiropractorsboard@state.ma.us. All comments must be received by March 22, 2018 to be considered by the Board.

Questions may be directed to the Board’s staff at 617-727-3067.



From: Massachusetts Board of Registration of Chiropractors

Re: Policy Guideline on Continuing Education Courses

Date: November 9, 2017

The Massachusetts Board of Registration of Chiropractors (the “Board”) has voted to adopt the following Policy Guideline. This policy guideline is intended as a recommended protocol for the profession to follow. The guideline set forth below does not have the force or effect of law, as would Massachusetts General Law or a Board rule or regulation. However, the Board utilizes this and other guidelines as an internal management tool in formulating decisions that relate to issues of chiropractic practice.

Purpose:

In February of 2017, the Board updated the Commonwealth’s chiropractic regulations to help simply our licensees’ ability to practice chiropractic. One of the updates was how the Board manages the annual continuing education (CE) requirement for license renewal. The purpose of this guideline is to clarify some of the terms and meanings contained in the state’s Continuing Education Requirements regulation 233 CMR 3.00.

Discussion:

A chiropractor’s ongoing professional education and development is a matter of public safety. Our understanding of human health is constantly evolving. Licensees across all health disciplines are expected to remain current to improved clinical techniques and procedures, and accepted standards of practice so the public is best assured that the care they seek or receive is safe, efficacious and appropriate.

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 112, Section 96 states “*[a] chiropractor shall furnish to the board satisfactory evidence that he has attended, in the twelve months preceding each renewal date, twelve hours of instruction in chiropractic related subjects as conducted by the Massachusetts Chiropractic Society or received instruction equivalent thereof as approved by the board. Satisfactory evidence of completion of post-graduate study of a type and character, at an educational session or institution, both as approved by the board, shall be considered said equivalent*”. Accordingly, the Board has the statutory responsibility to determine what constitutes “chiropractic related subjects”, including their “type and character”, relative to courses and programs applicable to the CE requirement for license renewal. The Board also has the responsibility to determine the form of documentation which constitutes “satisfactory evidence” that a licensee has completed an acceptable post-graduate CE credit course.

Regulation 233 CMR 3.03 identifies how the Board carries-out its statutory responsibility relative to the CE requirement. Essentially, there are two criteria licensees should look to when considering whether a particular course or program will be approved by the Board for CE credit. They are the course sponsor and its subject matter. To be eligible for CE credit in Massachusetts, both criteria must be met and approved by the Board.

Course Sponsor:

The following represent approved CE course sponsors.

(1) CCE-US accredited chiropractic institutions

- As of 2017, the CCE-US (www.cce-us.org) accredits fifteen (15) institutions in eighteen locations throughout the United States.
- The CCE-US does **not** currently have a reciprocal arrangement with CCE-Canada, CCE-Europe or CCE-Australasia. Consequently, courses offered by institutions accredited through those entities are not accepted for CE credit.

(2) State, regional or national professional chiropractic society or association

- The Massachusetts Chiropractic Society.
- The Congress of Chiropractic State Associations (www.cocsa.org) identifies fifty-two (52) professional chiropractic associations located within the United States as of 2017. The Board recognizes each of these state associations as an approved sponsor.
- The American Chiropractic Association and the International Chiropractic Association.
- The Federation of Chiropractic Licensing Boards (www.fclb.org) and its Providers of Approved Continuing Education – Chiropractic (PACE) program is recognized by the Board as a national authority in accrediting CE providers within the chiropractic profession. The Board recognizes each FCLB PACE provider as an approved sponsor.
- There is a multitude of groups that serve the various specialty boards and certification programs within chiropractic. Many of these specialty boards and certification programs do **not** have an accrediting authority or an accreditor that is known to the Board. Therefore, the Board would need to assess any such sponsor on a case-by-case basis. The course sponsor or licensee seeking credit for the course should write to the Board for a determination as to whether sponsor and course meet the requirements of 233 CMR 3.01.

(3) Institute of higher learning accredited by the US Department of Education

The US DOE (www.ed.gov/accreditation) accredits thousands of colleges and universities across the United States. A listing of institutions is available on their website.

Acceptable Course Subject Matter:

The following represent acceptable CE course topics.

(1) Matters of clinical proficiency

The physician-level services that chiropractors are clinically versed to perform are vast. Examples of acceptable courses in this category include: courses on providing or performing client or patient evaluations and examinations, clinical case management, patient care procedures, nutrition and toxicology, health counseling, recordkeeping and documentation, risk management, and public health and hygiene.

(2) Philosophy, ethics and Massachusetts jurisprudence

Examples of acceptable courses in this category include:

- philosophical courses on the innate function of the human body, its ability to self-heal, and the impediments to proper healing, including chiropractic subluxations;
- ethical courses on the doctor/patient relationship, altruism, patient protection, and healthcare fraud and abuse; and
- practice compliance courses that cover the laws and regulations which licenses must adhere to legally practice in Massachusetts are applicable.

(3) Human biological sciences

Examples of acceptable courses in this category include: courses devoted to understanding the anatomy, physiology, anomalies and pathologies associated with each body system.

Unacceptable Course Subject Matter:

The following courses are explicitly excluded from CE credit consideration.

(1) Courses devoted to the economic aspects of practice

Examples of courses excluded in this category are classes in practice building, non-clinical practice management, motivational, and self-improvement.

(2) Services outside the chiropractic scope of practice

Examples of courses excluded in this category are courses that provide clinical instruction in operative surgery, prescribing drugs or medicine, obstetric procedures, treating infectious diseases, and performing internal gynecological examinations.

(3) Another state's Jurisprudence

Examples of courses excluded in this category are courses about laws and regulations which do **not** pertain to practicing chiropractic in Massachusetts are **not** allowed.

(voted for public posting 11-9-17)