

IN THE KNOW

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Special points of interest:

- Hospital Administrators Scrutinize Educational Budgets for Savings
- Keeping Content Current

Hospital Administrators Scrutinize Educational Budgets for Savings

Librarians, education coordinators and department managers have been looking at alternatives to reduce expenditures on education while assuring physicians and nurses that the clinical content selected is authoritative, evidence-based and represents the highest quality available.

Because it is inherently cost efficient as well as a powerful and proven education tool, "Distance Learning" has become a viable alternative. With Distance Learning, physicians and nurses no longer need to travel to as many off-campus seminars as they have in the past. Distance Learning has become an accepted form of continuing medical education and frequently is used to supplement Grand Rounds programs, which have been reduced nationwide due to the loss of pharmaceutical company support. And, its cost structure is so compelling that hospital administrators and education professionals routinely compare its effectiveness against more traditional approaches.

Recent studies by Pri-med report physicians have increased their usage of the Internet by 83% since 2003.

Drilling down a bit deeper, researchers found:

- Half of physicians responding indicated they can obtain equivalent CME via the Internet
- 50% attributed loss of productivity and income while traveling to education conferences
- 65% reported that cost played an important role in choosing among the various education alternatives
- 42.9% of doctors have reduced their frequency of travel to CME conferences

Distance Learning clearly is playing an important role in physician, nurse and healthcare professional education. Convenience, cost and content quality appear to be winning many converts.

From the GEF Desk



Welcome to the first edition of *In The Know!* We've developed a newsletter for CMElectures.org and CEUlectures.org users that we are proud to introduce to you for the first

time this summer. Through the newsletter, we will bring you up to date information on the state of continuing education for physicians, nurses and other healthcare professionals as well as other useful information about CMElectures.org and CEUlectures.org.

We look forward to hearing your feedback about the newsletter and welcome any comments and suggestions. Please feel free to get in touch with us at 877-263-5400 or by email at info@gefcm.org.

Keeping Content Current



Graduate Education Foundation (GEF) recognizes the importance of maintaining accurate and current material to preserve and enhance their knowledge base for users. GEF accomplishes this by using a three pronged approach:

- Every lecture is reviewed by the author(s) and GEF's staff on a routine basis to ensure that the lecture material is accurate and up-to-date. Outdated material is either removed or replaced. For instance, lectures that contain prevalence information are revised to include the most recent published statistics. At the time of the update, authors also provide a case presentation. These clinical vignettes offer a glimpse at the patient, symptoms and diagnostic studies. They also provide a final diagnosis and appropriate management. These cases give users an opportunity to test their understanding of a particular disease process, either as a means to reinforce their current understanding or to supplement their knowledge base.
- The second tool in GEF's arsenal is the User Satisfaction Survey, completed after successful passage of the examination at the end of each lecture. On a quarterly basis, the Planning Committee of GEF sets a threshold for the number of completed surveys to ensure that the sample is large enough to have statistical meaning. Participant responses are summarized for those lectures meeting the threshold and the results are evaluated and forwarded to the author(s). This provides the authors with insight into important aspects of their lecture; authors then can incorporate comments into their lectures through the update process. For example, in a recent review, the surveys revealed that participants felt the examination questions for one lecture were confusing and poorly worded. During the update process, while the number of changes to the actual lecture material was small, the author used the opportunity to re-word several of the exam questions.
- Finally, on an ongoing basis, the GEF staff monitors news stories, journals and other media to identify breakthroughs, potential problems with pharmaceuticals, medical products and other changes in practice which might affect the content of the online library. Examples include: developments surrounding the use of COX-2 drugs in arthritis and the potential cardiac side effects; introduction of inhaled insulin for the treatment of diabetes; and the change in recommendations for prophylactic antibodies in cardiac valve prolapse patients.

GEF is committed to providing up-to-date, relevant material to its users. By employing multiple tested processes, GEF will continue to provide users with the best possible online educational experience.

Quality CE. Online. On your time and terms.

Check out our new website design; our site is now more user-friendly. Visit our homepage at CMElectures.org or CEUlectures.org to view the updates.

You asked, we listened! New promotional materials are now available in the form of posters that can be customized with your hospital's URL and access points. Contact Michelle Cassidy or Kim Nave at 877-263-5400 or mcassidy@gefcm.org for information.