

The Clinical Education Special Interest Group

Voluntary Uniform Mailing Date

The Clinical Education Special Interest Group (CESIG) of the Education Section of the APTA serves the interests of individuals from academic programs and clinical facilities. The CESIG conducts meetings at the APTA national conferences in February and June.

The voluntary uniform mail-out date was implemented in 1999.

Background

At the February 1998 CESIG meeting, both the Department of Education and the CESIG presented data from surveys of ACCEs and CCCEs. There was a discussion regarding the condition of clinical education and ways of easing the load for the CCCE. A motion was made to consider the concept of a voluntary uniform mailing date for requesting clinical slots. The motion included mailing dates of January 1 through January 15, the preferred dates noted in a poll conducted by the APTA Division of Education. Discussion indicated some schools might have difficulty with those dates, as many schools are not in session during that time and a window of dates could not be agreed to. The motion containing the January dates was defeated. A second motion was made "that we voluntarily agree to a date for a national mailing request for sites by PT and PTA programs". That motion was deferred until the Scientific Meeting and Exposition in June 1998. Clinical educators in the room were encouraged to return to their consortia, clinical facilities and academic program and discuss the motion. The group recognized the impact of establishing a set of voluntary mailing dates and understood that significant compromises would be necessary in order for all programs to eventually accept the dates.

During the June 1998 CESIG business meeting in Orlando, clinical education representatives from across the country reported widespread acceptance of the concept of a uniform mailing date. The motion deferred from the February meeting "that we voluntarily agree to a date for a national mailing request for sites by PT and PTA programs" was passed unanimously.

In 2009, results of a similar survey of clinical educators indicated a strong preference to continue with the March Uniform Mailing Date between March 1 and 15 with a requested return date of April 30. The requests for slots should be for the following calendar year only.

Recent discussions among CESIG members indicate CCCEs are receiving requests and awarding placements when a clinical education course extends into the subsequent year. This is associated with longer terminal internship periods during the academic calendar that typically spans two calendar years.

In 2015, outcomes of another similar survey of clinical educators verified continued preference for the uniform March mailing date and for the requests to be for the following calendar year as noted above.

Another outcome of the survey was a strong preference for a common form for programs to use when sending out their requests. A task force developed a common form based upon sample forms received and this was unveiled at the CESIG Business meeting at CSM in 2016. A handful of programs did use this form for their March 1st mailing requesting slots for 2017. Follow-up at ELC 2016 was positive concerning use of the form.

Updated January 2017