



## COPE Reaffirms Substantive Equivalency with Medicine

The Council on Optometric Practitioner Education (COPE®) is pleased to announce that the COPE Continuing Education Accreditation system has reaffirmed Substantive Equivalency to the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®) CME accreditation system, a status that COPE has proudly held since 2017.

### Why this is important for Optometrists and Optometry:

- COPE accredited CE is designed to support relevant, evidence-based, and independent learning free from commercial influence.
- COPE accreditation means the education received is deemed equivalent to colleagues in medicine.
- COPE accredited CE is designed around the identified educational needs of optometrists, providing them the tools needed to expand skills and enhance patient care.

### Why this is important for CE Providers:

- COPE's Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited CE (SII) create a clear, compliant framework for industry support, helping CE Providers secure educational grants for CE activities.
  - Adopted from the ACCME and aligned with other health professions, COPE's SII provide consistency and credibility across the health care landscape.
- COPE accredited CE expands the network of potential learners:
  - COPE's rigorous standards ensure integrity and freedom from commercial influence.
  - COPE Accredited CE is universally accepted by licensing agencies in the U.S. and Canada.

### Why this is important for ARBO's Member Licensing Agencies:

- COPE accreditation guarantees consistent, high-quality continuing education across all delivery formats and providers.
- COPE accredited CE provides confidence that licensees are meeting the highest standards of continuing competence for patient protection and improved health outcomes.
- COPE accreditation provides a quality foundation of continuing education for regulatory change as scope of optometric practice expands.

*For reference, CE/CME Accreditors may obtain Substantive Equivalency through the ACCME if they support CE/CME that:*

- *Enhances provider performance.*
- *Is based on data describing providers' educational needs.*
- *Has effectiveness assessed as it relates to provider performance or health status improvements, (measuring outcomes and determining if the educational objectives were met).*
- *Is developed independent of commercial influence.*

For more information about the COPE CE Accreditation program, please reach out to Sierra Powell, Manager of Accreditation Services, at [spowell@arbo.org](mailto:spowell@arbo.org) or 704-970-2771.