



Council on Optometric Practitioner Education

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COPE and the DEA Training Requirements

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released information in early 2023 related to the new Medication Access and Training Expansion (MATE) Act. The Act requires new or renewing DEA licensees to have completed a total of at least eight hours of training on opioid or other substance use disorders and the appropriate treatment of pain. Beginning on June 27, 2023, all DEA-registered and new practitioners are required to attest to completion of the training when renewing or completing an initial registration.

The DEA released a list of accredited organizations that may provide training to meet the new 8-hour requirement. However, none of the groups on the list currently provide continuing education for optometrists. COPE contacted the DEA and requested inclusion in the list of groups that may provide training, but the DEA responded that they were not able to add to the list due to time constraints. However, the DEA did note that the organizations that can provide the training are not limited to only those specifically listed, and the statute allows for any other organization accredited or approved by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide the training.

The COPE Governing Committee has reviewed the information provided by the DEA regarding the MATE Act and has concluded that COPE accredited CE does meet the DEA requirement for the following reasons:

- COPE's accreditation program has been deemed by the ACCME to be substantially equivalent to ACCME's accreditation program.
- COPE accreditation follows the same Accreditation Criteria as the ACCME.
- COPE has adopted and continues to follow the ACCME Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education.
- COPE requires that accredited educational activities be designed for, and measure changes in optometrists' competence (i.e. applied knowledge, strategies), and/or optometrists' performance (i.e. can demonstrate a change in practice or processes), and/or patient health (i.e. how patients respond to a change).

COPE accredited courses will apply if the content of the course is related to the prevention, recognition, and care of people with substance use disorders including those with concurrent pain and/or psychiatric and medical co-morbidities. Recommended core curricular training elements could include the categories of substance use disorders, effective treatment planning, and pain management and substance misuse.

COPE is not planning to provide a list of accredited CE courses that optometrists can take to meet the requirement. It is up to the CE provider and the optometrist learner to determine if the content of a COPE accredited CE course qualifies to meet the DEA requirement.

More information can be found at: https://www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/pubs/docs/MATE_training.html