

**2009-2010 Constituent Organization Award of Achievement  
(Specialty Organization Category)**

Attachment 2.

Project 2, FREE On-Line CME Program

**Project:** 2. Increased use of American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) resources by coordinating FREE on-line CME Program with American Academy of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) and AAPA.

**Introduction:** Marie Gilbert, SPAO-HNS Liaison to AAO-HNS, spearheaded joint CME effort as part of liaison activities. She contacted the Education Staff at AAO-HNSF about coordinating PA CME. She then spoke with Dr. David Nielsen, Executive Vice President and CEO of the AAO-HNS, already a strong PA supporter, who agreed to partner with SPAO. He then directed AAO staff to try to offer CME opportunities to PAs.

Participants may earn up to 8.5 Category I CME credits with these activities developed by leaders in the field of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery specifically for the non-otolaryngologist. Currently there are 25 different case scenarios available covering a wide range of commonly seen ENT complaints.

PAs and PA students learn to identify and evaluate a variety of ENT conditions. They examine visual and audio test results to select the best treatment options. Program is available anytime, and is free of charge! This new interactive case based CME activities from AAO-HNS and AAPA are just the beginning.

**Timeline:** Mrs. Gilbert coordinated with Bill Ostrum AAO-HNS Education Program Manager in October 2008. She put him in contact with Sharon Kulesz, AAPA Director, Alliance and Education, that helped work out the details and by January 2009, the site had links from AAPA and SPAO websites. In February 2009, Dr. Nielsen reported that *“the site had a 4000% increase in hits”*. As of November 5, 2009, there have been 1457 credit claims for 479 Category I CME credits (most modules are worth 0.5 hrs of CME). Even after the initial surge, AAO reports they are consistently getting 100-140 completed PA post-tests each month.

Both AAO and AAPA are pleased with level of participation and look forward to continuing collaboration. Mr. Ostrum, states *“This has been a big success”* and Ms. Kulsz added, *“In comparison to other on-line programs, this has been well received”*.

**Description:** CME modules are written and peer reviewed by some of the most important figures in otolaryngology, *COOL Cases* are interactive patient scenarios that make use of the latest e-learning technology to prepare the learner for a variety of common ENT situations. *COOL* is an engaging learning experience for primary care clinicians, physician assistants, medical students, and other health professional who encounters otolaryngologic symptoms.

**Instructions:**

**2009-2010 Constituent Organization Award of Achievement  
(Specialty Organization Category)**

1. AAPA Members login in to AAO-HNS website (<http://www.entnet.org/EducationAndResearch/COOL.cfm>) either from AAPA's *Featured CME* Web page (<http://www.aapa.org/education-and-certification/continuing-medical-education/featured-programms>) or SPAO-HNS' website, [www.entpa.org](http://www.entpa.org).
2. At the completion of interactive CME program, participants complete a survey and post-test for AAPA category 1 CME credit (most modules are worth 0.5 hrs of CME). They can also log in to AAPA website to view certificates of courses completed.

**Pearls/Challenges:** The dialogue initiated by Marie Gilbert, our Specialty Organization Liaison paved the way for further CME collaboration. She met February 2009 with AAO leaders to begin planning for a joint AAPA –AAO CME activity. She was also instrumental in gaining access for PAs to utilize the *Academy U* and receive a discounted rate for the Home Study Course; all of these category 1 CME activities were previously not available to PAs at any price. AAO also asked AAPA to allow their members access to AAPA info on utilizing PAs in Otolaryngology, and AAPA staff had it ready and posted on the Academy U website within a month. Other constituent organizations may coordinate either through their liaisons or directly with their parent specialty organization to set up a similar project. AAPA staff now has a model to work off of for future on-line CME collaborations.

**Reproducibility:** This collaboration between SPAO-HNS and AAO-HNS can be reproduced by other specialty organizations (SO). SO Liaisons or designated leaders may contact their parent specialty organization to tap into already existing on-line CME programs. Liaisons can contact parent specialty organization education managers or appropriate staff to coordinate with AAPA using the framework developed by SPAO-HNS.

This is mutually beneficial because it increases parent specialty organization awareness and thereby increases PA membership in that organization. It also provides specialty specific CME for participants. It also opens the door to further collaborative efforts.

**Cost:** AAO-HNSF does not charge AAPA for the access to COOL, and AAPA does not charge PAs for the CME logging.