

AAIM ACCREDITATION PROGRAM



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Leadership, commitment, and the active involvement of management are essential tools for developing and maintaining an effective and efficient quality-management system to achieve benefits associated with accreditation. The American Association of Integrative Medicine (AAIM) Accreditation Commission understands that importance and provides a structure for improvement activities that are significant to Joint Commission and customer service goals related with continual improvement. To ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the improvement process, the AAIM Accreditation Commission evaluates the realization and support processes in terms of:

- Effectiveness (such as outputs meeting requirements)
- Efficiency (such as resources per unit in terms of time and money)
- External effects (such as statutory and regulatory change)
- Potential weakness (such as lack of capability and consistency)
- The opportunity to employ better methods, control of planned and unplanned change, and measurement of planned benefits

The AAIM Accreditation Commission process for continual improvement should be used as a tool for improving an organization's internal effectiveness and efficiency, as well as to improve the satisfaction of customers and other interested parties.



Member Success Story!

GET ACCREDITED, BUILD YOUR PRACTICE

Dr. Robert McCarthy, whose integrative medicine clinic was accredited in July as part of the AAIM Accreditation Pilot Program, is already reaping the benefits. "We sent out cards about the accreditation, and that has already resulted in an increase in referrals, specifically for many of the medical conditions that we treat," McCarthy said.

The clinic—McCarthy Counseling Associates, PA, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina—integrates mental health counseling with non-pharmaceutical clinical services for a variety of physiological conditions, typically using biofeedback, neurofeedback, computerized cognitive training, qEEG and sLORETA, and cranial electrical stimulation.

The clinic has five full-time counselors, a full-time practice manager, and two full-time administrative staff.

McCarthy's interest in holistic health care dates back to his days as an undergraduate student at Fairleigh-Dickinson University. While studying with Dr. Clara Torda, he was introduced to the politics that occur in the medical field after Torda's research found that weekly group counseling could be as effective as medication for treating seizure disorders.

"No journal would publish her findings. I became aware of the influence and resistance from the pharmaceutical industry," he said. McCarthy, who has been a mental health practitioner since 1972, learned various techniques over the years, such as biofeedback, Alpha-Stim, and qEEG, to enhance the care he offers his patients.

In addition to serving clients in the Myrtle Beach area, the clinic offers distance treatment through remote technology.

An inside look at the accreditation process

So why did McCarthy decide to apply for his clinic to be accredited by AAIM? "The biggest thing

was that it was a further validation of the scientific legitimacy of what we do. It's still an uphill battle politically to get integrative medicine procedures recognized by medical peers," he said.

McCarthy said the accreditation process went smoothly, in part because of the feedback he received from the AAIM Accreditation Commission. He added, "There is a significant amount of preparation of written materials on the front end that allows solidification of the organizational processes. The process helped us refine and get policies on paper...we wound up with a lot more breadth and depth. It made us take everything off the back burner and put it in the forefront."

Accordingly, he advises future candidates for AAIM accreditation to make sure the written information they provide is detailed and comprehensive.

The process culminated with a site visit on July 14, conducted by Dr. Kenneth Miller, chairman of the accreditation commission, and Jessica Campbell, chief association officer of AAIM. Campbell said of the visit, "The site visit with McCarthy Counseling Associates was an excellent experience and awarded the AAIM audit team with the opportunity to observe a professional, high-quality integrative health care facility. Through the completion of a site visit, AAIM was able to ensure that the practice maintains high standards and credibility."

From McCarthy's perspective, the site visit was "very positive, very thorough, comprehensive, and to the point. It allowed us to get direct feedback and input on what we do and how it compares to what is being done in the rest of the country."

For details on enrolling in the AAIM Accreditation Pilot Program, contact Chief Association Officer Jessica Campbell at 877-718-3053 or e-mail Jessica@aaime.com.

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