

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GAP

Identification and Description for Educational Activity Planning Process

This discussion follows the directions of the ACCME Updated Accreditation Criteria:

- “2. The provider incorporates into CME activities the educational needs (knowledge, competence, or performance) that underlie the professional practice gaps of their own learners.*
- 3. The provider generates activities/educational interventions that are designed to change competence, performance or patient outcomes as described in its mission statement.”*

Educational needs identified by program assessments and participant suggestions are prioritized by event planners and the CME Executive Group. Some references that can be helpful in identifying professional practice gaps can be found below*. Priority program needs selected for activity design and implementation are framed in terms of **professional practice gaps**.

A gap in professional practice is defined as the difference between:

- current medical practice: observed health care processes or outcomes, and
- ideal medical practice potentially achievable – on the basis of current professional knowledge.

The citation of a PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE GAP in activity planning is accompanied by the description of the EDUCATIONAL NEEDS that will define learner objectives.

The educational needs will define learning objectives that will narrow the gap and encourage OUTCOMES of improved medical knowledge, competence, performance and/or patient care.

The gap description can be articulated with language such as:

- Incomplete or inadequate medical knowledge about . . .
- Lack of knowledge and performance in . . .
- Clinical performance data that defines. . .
- Need for clinical performance improvement in . . .
- Need for updated compliance with requisite clinical practice standards in . . .
- Requirement to qualify for specialty certification and/or institutional credentialing in . . .

***Gap Source References**

Possible sources include:

National data from peer-reviewed literature

- Authoritative weekly journals: JAMA, NEJM, Lancet
- Specialty journals
- www.clinicaltrials.gov

Institutional Sources

- Clinical Quality Assurance Department
- Medical Staff
- Section meetings

Reports from National Organizations

- Surgeon General
- Center for Disease Control

Local Public Health Data

- Health Departments

Consensus of established clinical experts

Maintenance of Certification requirements

Clinical Practice Management

Questions about gap description and/or the entire activity planning process can be directed to the CME Executive Group via the CME Coordinator.