

DATE: May 1, 2013

TO: All Accredited Organizations

FROM: Kathy Chappell, MSN, RN

Director, Accreditation Program

RE: Commission on Accreditation Action

Annually, the Commission on Accreditation (COA) conducts an extensive analysis of the Primary Accreditation criteria and requirements for Providers and Approvers by evaluating evidence which may include but is not limited to: new or emerging evidence in the field of continuing education, feedback from stakeholder groups, environmental scanning, congruence with accrediting body colleagues, clarity of criteria, and quality performance indicators of accredited organizations.

The Commission on Accreditation is pleased to announce that the following changes may be implemented immediately for the following accreditation requirements:

Content eligible for awarding ANCC contact hours

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) will permit content that is provided through in-service and/or staff development activities to be eligible for awarding continuing nursing education (CNE) credit.

The current definition of continuing nursing education (CNE) activities has not been revised. The current definition of CNE states: "Those learning activities intended to build upon the educational and experiential bases of the professional RN for the enhancement of practice, education, administration, research, or theory development, to improve the health of the public and RNs' pursuit of their professional career goals" (2013 ANCC Primary Accreditation Application Manual for Providers and Approvers).

The COA believes there are significant learning opportunities for registered nurses that occur during in-service or staff development activities and therefore these should be eligible for awarding ANCC contact hours. To meet the educational needs of registered nurses and improve the care delivered to patients or clients, providers of CNE activities must have flexibility in choosing the format for education that meets the needs of diverse learners practicing in a variety of care settings. The COA believes that this change will permit providers to be better able to choose content that meets identified practice gaps based on needs assessment data for their target audiences.

Of note: Requirements for planning educational activities have not changed. Providers (Accredited Providers, Approved Providers and Individual Educational Activity Providers) must develop educational activities that are designed to address a gap in knowledge, skills and/or practices for a specific target audience. All educational design criteria for continuing nursing education activities must be followed.

Awarding ANCC contact hours for content in “repeat” courses (ACLS, PALS, NRP or similar)

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) will permit awarding of ANCC contact hours for all content in courses that are repeated on a regular basis for all learners.

The COA believes that learning is reinforced by repeat exposure to educational content, and repeat exposure may be more likely to result in behavioral change. Learners are accountable for choosing educational activities that meet their learning needs.

Awarding ANCC contact hours for Basic Life Support (BLS) courses

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) will permit awarding of ANCC contact hours for Basic Life Support (BLS) courses for all learners.

The COA believes that Basic Life Support is of critical importance for patient safety. This change is in congruence with our accreditor colleagues in medicine and pharmacy. In addition, the COA believes that learning is reinforced by repeat exposure to educational content, and repeat exposure may be more likely to result in behavioral change.

Requirement for non-endorsement disclosure statement

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) has eliminated the requirement for the non-endorsement disclosure statement.

The COA believes that the non-endorsement disclosure statement is no longer relevant. Providers must plan, implement and provide continuing nursing education (CNE) activities in an unbiased, non-promotional and balanced manner therefore this disclosure requirement was eliminated.

Use of the ANCC Accreditation statement (or applicable approval statement for Approved Providers and Individual Activity Applicants)

The Commission on Accreditation (COA) has revised the requirements for use of the ANCC Accreditation statement (or applicable approval statement for Approved Providers and Individual Activity Applicants).

The ANCC Accreditation statement (or applicable approval statement for Approved Providers and Individual Activity Applicants) must be provided to learners:

1. prior to the start of every educational activity, and
2. on each certificate of completion.

The ANCC Accreditation statement (or applicable approval statement for Approved Providers and Individual Activity Applicants) must begin and end on its own line of text.

The COA understands that with multiple methods of delivering information to learners, particularly through electronic media, it may be difficult to include the ANCC Accreditation statement (or applicable approval statement for Approved Providers and Individual Activity Applicants) on all communications and marketing materials. Therefore, the COA has revised the requirements to reflect a more flexible approach, while still ensuring that learners are provided with the information prior to choosing or participating in an educational activity.