



Individual Activity Applicant FAQ

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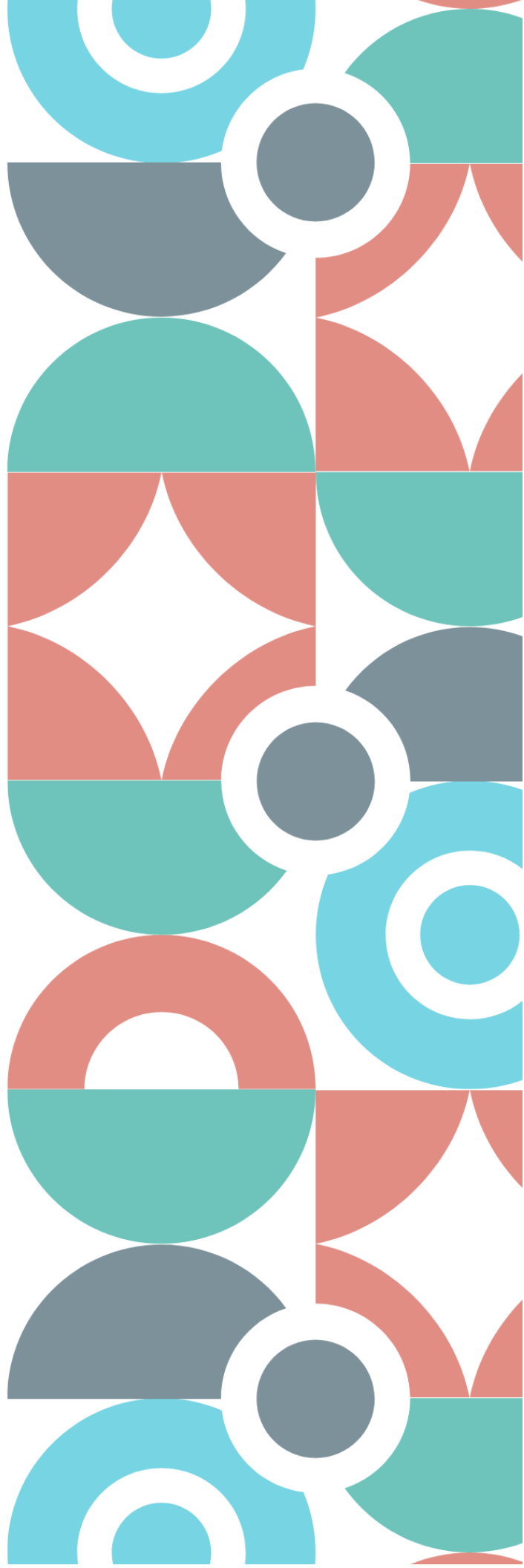


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Application Process

Available Resources

All resources and application materials are available [here](#).

Length of Activity Approval

Individual activities are approved for a period of two years. The approval period begins on the first day you plan to offer the activity and expires one day before that date two years later. Approval cannot extend beyond two years.

Activity Review Timeline

Our standard review processing timeline is eight (8) weeks. Applicants seeking approval within a shorter timeframe may request a rush review for an additional fee. The rush review fee is determined by the number of days remaining until the activity start date.

If the activity is less than 30 days away, please contact [VNA's AA-PD, Kate Hildreth](#), to determine if the peer review team can accommodate the review.

Fee Determination

The current fee schedule can be found [here](#). For activities exceeding 30 contact hours, an additional \$25 per contact hour will be applied. This additional fee applies to all processing timeframes.

When determining fees, contact hours must be rounded up to the next whole number. This rounding policy applies to payment amounts only. [Example: An activity totaling 3.25 contact hours will be changed at the rate of 4 contact hours.]

Record Maintenance

You must maintain secure and confidential records of this activity for a minimum of six (6) years from the date of delivery. These records must include:

- Individual Activity Application
- Record/Roster of all participants
- Amount of contact hours awarded

Planning an Educational Series

If you are planning a series that addresses one overarching gap, issue, or concern in practice, you may apply using a single application. This applies when the series is designed so that each session contributes to the same overarching measurable learning outcome and allows for evaluation of whether participants achieve that outcome.

Advertising an Activity Prior to Approval

You may advertise your activity prior to receiving approval. If you choose to advertise and would like to share you are applying for approval to award contact hours, please use the following statement:

This activity has been submitted to the Virginia Nurses Association for approval to award contact hours. The Virginia Nurses Association is accredited with distinction as an approver of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Repurposing a Live Activity as Enduring

If the planning team identifies that a live activity will be repurposed as an enduring/on-demand activity then one individual application can be submitted. The active learning strategies for both the live and enduring settings must be identified within the application. Additionally, the assessment method must effectively meet both settings. Two disclosures are required to be submitted, one for the live activity and one for the enduring/on-demand activity.

If the planning team identifies after final approval that a live activity will be repurposed as an enduring/on-demand activity, a new Individual Activity Application will need to be submitted for the enduring activity.

Change in Nurse Planner

Please contact [VNA's AA-PD, Kate Hildreth](#), if the Nurse Planner changes during the application process. VNA will require the name, credentials, and contact information for the newly identified Nurse Planner to assess for eligibility.

Changes after Receiving Approval

After final approval, if there is a change in presenters/faculty/authors AND the activity is clinical, we request that you submit a Financial Disclosure Form for the new individual(s) to VNA.

If changes are made to the desired learning outcomes, content, or timeframe of the activity, please contact [VNA's AA-PD, Kate Hildreth](#), to determine what documentation is required. If changes are significant, you may be required to submit a new application using current guidelines and materials for re-approval.

Renewing an Expired Activity

Individual activities cannot be renewed but can be re-approved. The re-approval process is the same as the initial approval process. We ask that you complete the most current application located on the VNA website and submit this with your fee. Your application will then go through our peer review process prior to approval. We ask that you submit your application for re-approval 8 weeks prior to the expiration of your activity. If there is a lapse in approval, you may not award contact hours until re-approved. Contact hours cannot be awarded retroactively.

Educational Design Process

Reviewing Educational Content

VNA does not need to review the content of the activity. You are required to provide a description of the educational content within the Individual Activity Application. If the activity is greater than 3 hours in length, you are required to provide an agenda/outline of the program.

Using Previously Developed Content

If using previously developed content in your activity, the Nurse Planner is responsible for the ensuring following:

- The content meets the definition of nursing continuing professional development.
- The previously developed content will address the practice gap/problem/issue identified for your target audience.
- Develop a measurable learning outcome specific to your audience that the previously developed content will assist learners in meeting.
- Provide evidence that the content is current, evidence-based, and meets current practice guidelines.
- Ensure that you have permission to use the previously developed content.
- Ensure the content is objective, unbiased, and excludes any commercial influence or promotion.

Professional Competencies

The goal of selecting competencies is to ensure that educational content is relevant and actionable. Competencies establish a clear purpose for educational activities and serve as a planning and instructional design framework. Competencies may include clinical skills related to patient care, and non-clinical skills, such as communication and leadership.

You are not developing your own competencies but rather identifying established competencies from professorial sources that align with the professional practice gap of your activity. It is not the expectation that each identified competency be validated, unless your planning team makes that decision.

You are encouraged to reference professional specialty organizations, State Practice Acts, and the ANA Scope and Standards of Practice. Many core competencies are available for purchase through professional organizations, and your organization may already have access to these competencies or standards to support and guide nursing practice. VNA has developed a library of professional organizations with established competencies and standards to help get you started. [You may access that library on our website.](#)

Active Learning Strategies

Active learning strategies go beyond engagement and help learners retain information longer and build a deeper understanding of the information being presented. They help to engage learners in the learning process, encouraging them to participate in the activity while acquiring knowledge, developing skills, and/or practicing competencies. Active learning strategies may include think-pair-share exercises, group discussion, reflective questions, simulation, gamification, interactive polling, and more. They must also align with the underlying educational need(s) of the activity.

The following are NOT active learning strategies and will not be accepted: Q&A, post-tests, PowerPoint presentations, videos, and evaluations.

Required Disclosures to Learners

The following information must be included in the educational disclosure to learners:

- Individual Activity Approval Statement: *“This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by Virginia Nurses Association, an accredited approver with distinction by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.”*
- Criteria for successful completion in order to receive contact hours
- Presence or absence of relevant financial relationships for all individuals in a position to control content
- Commercial support (if applicable)
- Joint Providership (if applicable)
- Expiration date (for enduring material only)

Desired Learning Outcomes

The desired learning outcome identifies what you want the learner to know, or be able to do, or apply to practice, after participating in the activity. The outcome must be measurable and must align with the underlying educational need(s) of the activity. A listing of objectives will not be accepted.

Examples:

- Participants will demonstrate knowledge of basic arrhythmia interpretation by passing a post-test with a score of 80% or higher.
- Learners will identify 1 piece of knowledge related to patient engagement that they will use to change or enhance their practice.
- 75% of participants will demonstrate skill with de-escalation through participation in a simulation.
- 100% of learners will demonstrate in practice the teach-back method during a patient discharge.

Criteria for Successful Completion

Your organization, as the provider of the activity, determines the criteria for successful completion.

Summative Evaluation

Following your program, we ask that you analyze the evaluation data and submit a summative evaluation within 30 days of the conclusion of your program [using our online portal](#). The summative evaluation should include an analysis of whether the learning outcome measure was met and a reflection on any implications for future programming gained from evaluation of this program. If your activity is enduring, please submit a summative evaluation annually by December 31st.

Joint Providership

Joint providership occurs when two or more organizations work together to plan, develop, and implement an educational activity. Joint providership is not permitted with an ineligible organization. When an activity is jointly provided, the organization completing the individual activity application is considered the provider, and the other organization is the joint provider. The provider is the organization approved to award nursing contact hours and is responsible for meeting all ANCC accreditation criteria.

All materials, including marketing, advertising, agendas, and certificates, must clearly identify the provider organization. Learners must also be informed that the activity is jointly provided. To ensure clarity about responsibility for contact hours, the certificate may only display the provider organization's name and logo.

Commercial Support

If receiving commercial support from an ineligible company for your activity, you must submit a signed agreement between the individual activity applicant and the company providing the support. If the company provides their own Letter of Agreement, you may submit this in lieu of the VNA Commercial Support Agreement. Many Letters of Agreement contain the same standards outlined in the Commercial Support Agreement. The Nurse Planner must review both agreements and compare. If they are similar, you may submit this for review, and we will let you know if an additional agreement is needed.

Companies purchasing an exhibitor or vendor table are not considered commercial supporters; therefore, a commercial support agreement is not required.

Responsible Use of AI

We do not have specific criteria regarding the use of AI, but we do offer guidelines for its responsible use in accredited continuing education. These guidelines were established by ACCME, ACPE, and ANCC under Joint Accreditation™ for Interprofessional Continuing Education and are rooted in the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education.

- **Encourage Responsible Innovation**
AI can support gap analysis, content development, assessment design, and evaluation while maintaining human oversight. AI should augment—not replace—professional judgment.
- **Safeguard Independence and Mitigate Bias**
AI-generated or assisted content must comply with the Standards for Integrity and Independence. Screen outputs for commercial bias and document steps taken to ensure independence.
- **Ensure Transparency**
Disclose AI use in educational content creation, including tool name, version, purpose, and human verification. Routine spelling or grammar tools do not require disclosure.
- **Maintain Human Oversight and Accountability**
Review AI-generated materials for accuracy, bias, and scientific validity before dissemination. Oversight by qualified individuals is essential for both static and dynamic AI outputs.
- **Protect Privacy and Sensitive Data**
Do not input PHI/PII into AI tools unless they meet organizational and legal requirements. Use only institution-approved platforms for proprietary or sensitive data.
- **Limit High-Risk Uses**
Avoid using AI for diagnostic recommendations, storing sensitive content in public platforms, or auto-generating assessment answers without rigorous oversight.
- **Establish Internal Governance**
Implement policies for oversight, approved tool lists, training, and periodic audits. Differentiate expectations for staff, faculty, and learners regarding AI use.

Awarding Credit to Learners

Credit Type

Once approved by VNA, you are awarding “contact hours.” This is the only form of credit approved by VNA. “Contact hour” is the official form of credit for nursing continuing professional development. You are not awarding “CEUs” and therefore should not use the term “CEU” when referring to credit approved by VNA.

Other acceptable terms include: NCPD contact hours, ANCC contact hours, nursing contact hours, CNE

Calculating Contact Hours

The number of contact hours awarded should be determined using a defensible method such as:

- An agenda/content outline for live presentations
- Complexity of content
- Historical data
- A pilot study
- Mergener Formula (used for manuscripts/articles)

You may also award contact hours for introduction sessions, closing sessions, and the time provided for a learner to complete an evaluation, post-test, or return demonstration.

Rounding Contact Hours

Contact hours may be awarded in the exact amount or rounded to the nearest quarter (i.e., 2.76 contact hours could be rounded down to 2.75 contact hours.) Please refer to the chart below for correct rounding practices.

Decimal	Round	Nearest Quarter	Examples
0.02-0.12	Down	0	2.10 rounds down to 2.0
0.13-0.24	Up	0.25	5.20 rounds up to 5.25
0.25	None	0.25	--
0.26-0.37	Down	0.25	3.28 rounds down to 3.25
0.38-0.49	Up	0.5	10.42 rounds up to 10.5
0.5	None	0.5	--
0.51-0.62	Down	0.5	1.57 rounds down to 1.5
0.63-0.74	Up	0.75	6.70 rounds up to 6.75
0.75	None	0.75	--
0.76-0.87	Down	0.75	20.80 rounds down to 20.75
0.88-0.98	Up	1	15.95 rounds up to 16.0
1	None	1	--

Awarding Contact Hours Retroactively

Contact hours may not be awarded retrospectively. If you complete a pilot study to determine the number of hours to award for a learner-paced activity, you may award pilot participants contact hours after approval based on the average time for completion of the pilot study.

Certificate of Contact Hours

Your organization is responsible for providing the certificate of contact hours to each participant specific to the amount of hours they participated in. The certificate provided must be the one approved during the activity approval process and must include the following information:

- Title and date of the educational activity
- Name and address of the provider of the educational activity (web address is acceptable)
- Space for participant's name
- Number of contact hours awarded
- Individual Activity Approval Statement: *"This nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by Virginia Nurses Association, an accredited approver with distinction by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation."*

Pharmacotherapeutic Contact Hours

If a planning team is developing content to meet the ANCC pharmacotherapeutic hour requirement, content must specifically address pharmacotherapeutics. Pharmacotherapeutic content does not need to be presented by a nurse for the hours to be eligible for re-certification however the presenter and/or author must have content expertise in pharmacology. When developing the content for an educational activity, the provider should identify the

number of pharmacotherapeutic contact hours on the certificate and demonstrate the content that will be pharmacotherapeutic on the agenda/content outline.

Existing continuing education courses/programs that include pharmacotherapeutic content may be reviewed to calculate the appropriate number of pharmacotherapeutic contact hours. When a speaker develops content for an educational activity, it would be advised that pharmacotherapeutic contact hours contained within the presentation be calculated at that time.

Pharmacotherapeutic content may include but is not limited to drug specific information, safe prescribing practices, safe medication administration, prescribing methodologies, new regulations or similar content.

Identifying, Mitigating, and Disclosing Financial Relationships

Definition of an Ineligible Company

Ineligible companies are those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients.

For further information regarding ineligible companies, please refer to the [Eligibility Rule of the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education](#).

Financial Disclosure Forms

If the content of the activity is clinical in nature (ex., pertains to patient care, diagnosis, treatment, etc.), financial disclosure forms are required for all individuals in a position to control content of the activity. This includes all planning team members, presenters, authors, and content reviewers. VNA recommends utilizing the VNA Activity Financial Disclosure Form to document financial relationship identification. If a non-VNA financial disclosure form is utilized, please ensure it contains the following information:

- Name of the individual in a position to control content
- Name of the ineligible company(ies), if any, with which the person has a financial relationship
- The nature of the financial relationship (ex., employee, researcher, consultant, advisor, speaker, etc.)

If the content of the activity is non-clinical (ex., leadership development, legislative advocacy, preceptor development, faculty instructional development, simulation facilitator training, etc.) and has no potential to discuss healthcare products/services used on or by patients, no form is required.

Relevant Financial Relationships

Financial relationships of any dollar amount are defined as relevant if the educational content is related to the business lines or products of the ineligible company. Many healthcare professionals have financial relationships with ineligible companies. These relationships must not be allowed to influence approved continuing education. The nurse planner is responsible for identifying relevant financial relationships between individuals in a position to control content and ineligible companies and managing these relationships to ensure they do not introduce commercial bias into the education. (ACCME, 2020).

Financial relationships are relevant if all the following three (3) conditions are met for the individual who will control content of the education:

- A financial relationship, in any amount, exists between the person in control of content and an ineligible company,
- The financial relationship existed during the past 24 months, and
- The content of the education is related to the products of an ineligible company with whom the person has a financial relationship

Mitigation of Relevant Financial Relationships

Review the information about financial relationships to determine which relationships are relevant. If there are no relevant financial relationships, mitigation is not required.

If there are relevant financial relationships, mitigation is required. Examples of mitigation strategies include:

- Divesting the financial relationship
- Recusal from controlling aspects of planning and content with which there is a financial relationship
- Peer review of planning decisions by persons without relevant financial relationships
- Peer review of content by persons without relevant financial relationships
- Attest that clinical recommendations are evidence-based and free of commercial bias (e.g., peer-reviewed literature, adhering to evidence-based practice guidelines)

Owners/employees from ineligible companies must be excluded from planning, presenting or any role that has control of content, unless one of these three exceptions is met:

- When the content of the activity is not related to the business lines or products of their employer/company.
- When the content of the approved activity is limited to basic science research, such as pre-clinical research and drug discovery, or the methodologies of research, and they do not make care recommendations.
- When they are participating as technicians to teach the safe and proper use of medical devices, and do not recommend whether or when a device is used.

An individual with an unmitigable financial relationship may still speak at an educational activity. The session must not occur in the educational space within 30 minutes before or after an approved educational activity. This requirement must be accurately demonstrated on the agenda/educational program. Activities that are a part of the event but are not approved for continuing education must be clearly labeled and communicated as such to learners.

Disclosure of Relevant Financial Relationships

Learners must receive disclosure information before engaging in approved education that is clinical in nature. Disclosure is not required for activities that are non-clinical.

For clinical activities where a relevant financial relationship exists, the disclosure to learners must include:

- Names of the individuals with relevant financial relationship(s) and their role in the activity
- Names of the ineligible companies with which they have a relevant financial relationship(s)
- Nature of the relevant financial relationship(s)
- A statement that all relevant financial relationships have been mitigated

Example: *“Dr. John Doe, speaker for this educational event, has received a research grant from ABC pharmaceuticals. The relevant financial relationship listed for this individual has been mitigated and there are no other relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies for those with the ability to control the content of this activity.”*

If there are no relevant financial relationships, the following disclose may be made to learners: *“There are no relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies for those with the ability to control the content of this activity.”*

Planning an Interprofessional Activity

If your organization is planning an interprofessional activity, please indicate this in your application. If you are planning this activity for nurses and physicians, you are not required to use the VNA Financial Disclosure Form and are permitted to use the CME Financial Disclosure Form to assess and document identification of financial relationships. Please ensure that the CME Financial Disclosure Form outlines the definition of an ineligible organization and assesses relationships in the past 24 months.

The Nurse Planner must review all CME Financial Disclosure Forms and complete the Identification, Mitigation, and Disclosure of Financial Relationships Documentation Table demonstrating the review of each CME Financial Disclosure Form.

References

Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME). Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education. Published 2020. <https://accme.org/resource/standards-for-integrity-and-independence-accredited-continuing-education-pdf/>

ANCC. (2025). *NCPD accredited approver policy and operations manual: Version 1.0 (2nd Ed.)*. American Nurses Enterprise.

Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education. (2025). *Guidance on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Accredited Continuing Education (CE)*.