Approver Unit
Manual & Guidelines
Application Packet for Individual Educational Activities

Thank you for your interest in obtaining approval to award contact hours for your individual educational activity through Oregon Continuing Education Activities for Nurses (OCEAN), a program of the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA). ONA is an accredited approver of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) and, as such, maintains the ANCC standards for supporting and approving educational activities. The information that you provide via the application process will facilitate the approval process. Be sure to complete all forms accurately as the information will be used in determining CE eligibility for educational activities.

In this application packet you will find the following materials:

- Instructions for Individual Educational Activity Approval
- Applicant Eligibility Verification Form*
- Applicant Eligibility Commercial Interest Addendum*
- Individual Educational Activity Application
- Biographical & Conflict of Interest Form
- Educational Planning Table
- Commercial Support Agreement Form
- Sponsorship Agreement Form
- Joint Provider Agreement Form

*Applicant Eligibility Verification Form and Commercial Interest Addendum (if applicable) must be submitted, and eligibility granted, prior to completing and submitting the remainder of the application packet.

If you have questions, or need assistance, please contact us at OCEAN@oregonRN.org

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Oregon Nurses Association is accredited as an approver of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.
Part I: The Approval Process

Congratulations on your decision to seek approval to award contact hours for your continuing nursing education (CNE) activity! This process for educational design will help you develop an activity that will contribute to quality patient care and/or professional development for nurses. We encourage you to use these application materials as you plan your activity, rather than trying to fit an already planned activity into the forms. This will help to assure that you are meeting criteria as you progress in your planning process. Please contact us at any time for assistance.

Applicant Eligibility Criteria

1. Your organization may be a free standing continuing education (CE) provider (its only business is the provision of CE) or may be part of a multi-focused organization (the organization does more than CE; the CE function is part of a bigger system – a hospital or college of nursing, for example).

2. A registered nurse with a current, valid license and a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in nursing (BSN) must serve in the role of Nurse Planner for the activity.

3. The Nurse Planner must be involved in all aspects of planning, implementing, and evaluating the learning activity. See page 9 for a full description of the role of the Nurse Planner.

4. The Nurse Planner must have authority to implement and maintain all accreditation criteria as specified by OCEAN.

5. The Nurse Planner is accountable to the Nurse Peer Review Leader of OCEAN for all aspects of how the educational activity is planned, implemented, and evaluated.

6. Your organization must not be a commercial interest entity (an entity that produces, markets, resells, or distributes healthcare goods or services consumed by or used on patients or an entity that is owned or controlled by an entity that produces, markets, resells, or distributes healthcare goods or services consumed by or used on patients).

7. Your organization must disclose previous denials, suspensions, and/or revocations received from other ANCC Accredited Approver Units and/or other accrediting/approving organizations.

8. You must assure that the learning activity meets the definition of continuing nursing education – a planned learning activity 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. Personal development activities and those designed by a commercial entity are not acceptable.

9. Your complete activity application, supporting documents and application fee must be submitted to OCEAN in time for adequate review by our nurse peer reviewers. Ideal submission time is 6-8 weeks prior to your activity date. Applications submitted less than 30 days prior to the beginning of the scheduled activity will be charged an expedited review fee.
OCEAN reserves the right to refuse an application if there is not adequate time for peer review and applicant response to correct any deficiencies.

**Eligibility Verification**

1. Retrieve the *Applicant Eligibility Verification Form* from the OCEAN website [www.oregonRN.org](http://www.oregonRN.org)

2. Submit the completed form via email to OCEAN@oregonRN.org. If applicable, also include the *Applicant Eligibility Commercial Interest Addendum*.

3. You will receive email notice that the forms have been reviewed and if you are eligible to proceed, along with instructions to complete the application process. Application fees must accompany the completed OCEAN application. Please note that an application will not receive final approval until fees are paid in full. The fee schedule is found on page 8 of this document and is also posted on the OCEAN Approver Unit website. Note that the fee is for the application review process and does not guarantee approval of the activity to award contact hours. The application fee is nonrefundable once the peer review process has begun.

**OCEAN Application Forms**

1. Once eligibility has been granted, the following application materials will be emailed to you:
   a. *Individual Educational Activity Application*
   b. *Biographical & Conflict of Interest Form*
   c. *Educational Planning Table*
   d. If applicable, the following forms should be completed:
      i. *Commercial Support Agreement*
      ii. *Sponsorship Agreement*
      iii. *Joint Provider Agreement*

2. Include any other forms relevant to your activity. (Note: a number of forms are templates only and may be modified to meet your organization’s specific needs – agenda, sign-in sheet, evaluation form, CE certificate, marketing materials)

3. Read the entire application to be sure you understand what is required. If you have any questions, contact OCEAN@oregonRN.org.

4. Complete and submit each section of the application, including attachment of any supporting documentation necessary. The Nurse Planner should be the primary person accountable for this function. The Nurse Planner will be the contact person if OCEAN has questions about the application.

**Individual Educational Activity Application**

*(selected sections explained here; please contact OCEAN@oregonRN.org with any questions)*

1. Applicant’s Name: This is the name of the organization applying for approval. This same name must be used on marketing materials and on the certificate issued to learners.

2. Title of Activity: This is the name of the learning activity that will appear on your marketing materials and certificate.
3. Number of Contact Hours Requested
   a. For a “live” activity where learners are present:
      1) Include time spent in each part of the activity where learning takes place AND
         time spent in evaluation.
      2) Do not include breaks, lunch, viewing of vendor exhibits, or other non-
         learning components of the activity.
   b. For “enduring materials” (webinars that learners can access independently, written
      materials, videotapes, etc.): pilot testing is often the mechanism of choice to
      determine how long it takes a select group of learners representative of the target
      audience to complete the activity and evaluation. The average of those times is then
      used to determine the number of contact hours to be awarded to learners. Other
      methods of determining contact hours for enduring materials include use of
      evidence-based formulas related to word count and difficulty of material or historical
      data in publications. If needed, please contact OCEAN@oregonRN.org for additional
      information.
   c. One contact hour is 60 minutes of learning time.
   d. The unit of measure used in CNE is the contact hour, not the CEU. This is an
      important distinction, as the two terms do not mean the same thing. Please assure
      that “contact hour” is the term used on all of your materials.

4. Be sure the planning committee consists of at least two people – the Nurse Planner and one
   person with expertise in the content of the learning activity. Even if the Nurse Planner is also
   a content expert, there must be two people on the planning committee. Document
   information as required on the application itself, and then complete a Biographical & Conflict
   of Interest Form (Bio/COI) for each member of the planning committee.

5. Be sure that conflict of interest (COI) information for each planning committee member is
   completed both on the application itself and on the Bio/COI. Note that employees of
   commercial interest entities (as defined on page 2, item 6) may not serve as members of the
   planning committee for a CNE activity if the topic of the activity is related to the products of
   the commercial entity.

6. Follow the same steps for each presenter/faculty/author. Note that employees of commercial
   interest entities may not serve as speakers or authors for a CNE activity if the topic of the
   activity is related to the products of the commercial entity.

7. Description of the professional practice gap or opportunity for improvement: Describe the
   situation that led to your decision to offer this CNE activity.

8. Impact/Outcome: All CNE activities should be designed to improve either the professional
   practice of nursing or the quality of patient care. Identify the outcome you expect for this
   activity (e.g., the fall rate in our long-term care facility will decrease from 8% to 3% within 6
   months after learners complete this activity). The identified professional practice gap and
   outcome statement will help you plan the activity to achieve the desired result and measure
   your outcome to validate your success.

9. Determine the criteria for successful completion of the activity. This is an important step in
   the planning process and the established criteria must be provided to learners prior to the
   beginning of the activity. This helps to avoid on-the-spot dilemmas such as someone
   arriving 15 minutes late for a one-hour learning activity and asking if he/she can still get
   contact hours.

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by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.
10. Identify the method(s) for evaluating the learning activity. There is a sample evaluation tool on the OCEAN website that you can use if you wish. You are not required to use this form – please feel free to use any method that helps you collect data to validate the effectiveness of your learning activity. Questions related to learner satisfaction are strongly discouraged; please focus your questions on information relevant to the purpose and intended outcome of the activity. You will be required to attach a sample of your evaluation tool/process to the application.

11. Identify the type of advertising/marketing you plan to do for this activity. All learning activities have some sort of notification that goes to prospective learners.

12. If the educational activity has commercial support and/or sponsorship, complete the Commercial Support or Sponsorship Agreement form(s) and attach them to your application.

13. Disclosures: Indicate how required information will be provided to learners prior to the beginning of the learning activity. Attach supporting documentation to your application.

14. Certificate: Check to assure that all required items are included on your certificate. Attach a sample certificate to your application.

15. If this educational activity will be joint provided (i.e., there will be another organization working with you to plan and implement the learning activity) complete the Joint Provider Agreement form and attach it to your application.

16. Recordkeeping: Educational activity records are expected to be retained in a secure file (electronic or hard copy) for six (6) years. See page 14 for a list of all required records.

**Biographical & Conflict of Interest Form (Bio/COI)**

1. This form must be completed for each person involved with the learning activity.

2. Follow the directions on the form, and complete each appropriate section.

3. The Nurse Planner must verify that each person involved with the activity has the appropriate expertise related to his/her role and does not have a conflict of interest. If there is a conflict of interest, the Nurse Planner must document how that conflict was resolved in order for the person to participate in the activity planning or implementation. (Note: Another person knowledgeable about conflict of interest must validate the Nurse Planner’s information.)

**Educational Planning Table**

Complete the educational planning table for your activity. Each column should be filled in with information as noted in the headings. Generally, one measureable objective per hour is appropriate, with 3 to 4 specific content items for each objective. Content should list items that will be covered in helping the learner to achieve the objective, not be a restatement of the objective.
Teaching/learning strategies should be consistent with the objective – for example, if the verb in the objective is “demonstrate”, the teaching method should involve role play, case study, return demonstration, or some other way to show that the learner is able to achieve the objective. In order to provide clarity for the learner and ease of evaluation for the provider, there should only be one verb per objective. Your planning grid might look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Time Frame</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Teaching/Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Identify key issues in diabetes management. | 1. Definition  
2. Prevalence  
3. Manifestations  
4. Impact | 9-9:45  
45 min. | J. Doe | Lecture/Discussion  
AVs  
Handout |
| Discuss strategies to enhance diabetes treatment. | 1. Patient assessment  
2. Situational variables  
3. Treatment variables  
4. Teaching tools and resources  
5. Evaluating effectiveness | 9:45-10:20  
35 min. | T. Bone | Group activity  
Case study  
Sharing of findings  
Discussion of plans for implementation |
| Evaluation | 10:20-10:30  
10 min. | | |

Total time = 90 min ÷ 60 = 1.5 contact hours

Disclosures

Certain information MUST be provided to learners prior to the beginning of the learning activity. This information can be included on marketing materials, an agenda, an introductory slide, a webpage, or other appropriate location. Evidence of how these disclosures will be provided must be included with your application.

Required disclosures include:

1. The purpose and/or objectives for the activity
2. Criteria for successful completion
3. Absence or presence of conflict of interest (with presence, must identify name of person, name of commercial entity, and type of relationship – e.g., “Dr. Joseph Glenn is on the speakers’ bureau for ABC Pharmaceutical Company.”) If there is no conflict of interest, you may state “there is no conflict of interest for any planner or presenter involved with this learning activity”.
4. Statement indicating that the activity has received approval. This statement must appear on its own line(s) and be separate from any other language. The statement is:

    This continuing nursing education activity was approved by Oregon Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.
Supporting Documents

Submit supporting documents with your application. These include:

- Biographical & Conflict of Interest Forms for each person involved in the planning and presentation of the activity
- Educational planning table, as described above
- Agenda for the full activity, if the activity lasts longer than 3 hours
- Marketing/advertising or evidence of how learners are notified of the activity
- Evidence of disclosures provided to the learner prior to the beginning of the activity (this can be a separate document or can be included on marketing materials or an agenda)
- Evaluation form, post-test, or other tool that will be used to collect evaluation data
- Sample certificate that will be provided to learners
- Sample sign-in sheet or other documentation of participation that shows collection of the name, credentials, and unique identifier for each learner
- Commercial support agreement(s), if applicable
- Sponsor agreement(s), if applicable
- Joint provider agreement(s), if applicable

Submitting the Application

1. Submit the application and all attachments via email to OCEAN@oregonRN.org. Do not submit partial applications – be sure all components are included. Failure to submit a complete application will delay the review process and may result in the activity not being approved.

2. Pay the application fee. Final approval will not be awarded until the application fee is paid in full. Please note that this is an application fee, not an approval fee. Payment of the fee does not guarantee that approval will be received.

OCEAN Peer Review Steps

1. The application will be reviewed by OCEAN personnel to ensure that all required components of the application are present. Missing pieces will be requested as needed. Failure to submit additional required evidence within 5 working days of the request, or providing substantive evidence regarding need for additional time, will result in denial of the application. The application will not be sent for peer review until it is complete.

2. The application is sent to at least one Nurse Peer Reviewer, an RN with a minimum of a BSN who is competent in the peer review process, for a qualitative review.

3. OCEAN personnel will contact you as needed for clarification of application materials or if additional information is required on the basis of the qualitative review.

4. A final decision is rendered by OCEAN’s Nurse Peer Review Leader. Typically, activities are reviewed and approved within two to three weeks, depending on receipt of additional information that may be required.
5. Possible actions are:
   a. **Approval for up to 2 years** – evidence supports the quality and integrity of the educational design, and you are able to present the activity as often as desired during the 2-year period of approval, as applicable.
   
   b. **Denial** – evidence demonstrates that the application is not in adherence to criteria. An organization whose application has been denied has the right to appeal that decision. The appeal procedure is available from OCEAN’s Nurse Peer Review Leader upon request.

**Receiving your Approval Decision**

1. After a decision is made about the application, you will be notified via email within two business days by OCEAN personnel.

2. You will receive instructions for responding to OCEAN Approver Unit monitoring activities and submitting reports related to your activity.

**After Activity Responsibilities**

1. Following implementation of your activity, a report must be provided to OCEAN within 30 days. The report requirements will be provided to you with your approval notification. At a minimum, things that must be reported after the event include:
   1. Total number of contact hours offered upon activity completion
   2. Total number of activity participants
   3. Total dollar amount of commercial support received, if any
   4. Total dollar amount of sponsorship received, if any
   5. Name of joint provider organization, if any
   6. A copy of the summative evaluation
   7. Any other information as requested by OCEAN, particularly related to outcome data

2. Please note that, if your activity is to be repeated during the two year period of approval, a report must be submitted within 30 days EACH TIME the activity is offered. For enduring materials, reports must be provided on a quarterly basis during the period of approval.

**Application Fee Schedule (effective 1/1/2016)**

1. There is no fee for completing and submitting the “Eligibility Verification” form.

2. Application fee is based on the total number of contact hours requested:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Hours</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5 – 2.0</td>
<td>$65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 – 4.0</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 – 8.0</td>
<td>$225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 – 16.0</td>
<td>$325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.1 or more</td>
<td>$400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Fees must accompany the completed OCEAN application and approval to award contact hours will not be granted until all fees are paid in full.

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4. An additional expedited review fee will be charged for OCEAN applications submitted less than 30 days prior to the scheduled start of the learning activity as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Hours</th>
<th>Expedite Fee</th>
<th>TOTAL (application + expedite fee)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.5 – 2.0</td>
<td>$50</td>
<td>$115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 – 4.0</td>
<td>$75</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 – 8.0</td>
<td>$100</td>
<td>$325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.1 – 16.0</td>
<td>$125</td>
<td>$450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.1 or more</td>
<td>$150</td>
<td>$550</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Should there be situations where the peer reviewer has noted areas of deficiency in the application, and satisfactory response to correct the deficiency is lacking after the second request, an additional $50 fee for evidence review will be assessed.

6. If the Nurse Planner, faculty member, or content expert on the planning committee for the learning activity presents evidence of active membership in ONA, the initial application fee is eligible for a 50% discount. Late fees and additional evidence review fees are not eligible for discount.

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**Part II: Additional Information & Explanation**

1. Role of the Nurse Planner

The Nurse Planner is required to be a licensed registered nurse with a minimum of a baccalaureate degree in nursing (BSN). This person must be actively involved in all phases of planning, implementation, and evaluation of the learning activity, and is the person OCEAN will contact with any questions about the application. The Nurse Planner consults with the Nurse Peer Review Leader of OCEAN (the accredited approver unit) as needed for guidance or assistance.

The Nurse Planner is accountable for maintaining current knowledge of criteria and for ensuring implementation of criteria to meet the needs of adult learners in the target audience for the learning activity. The Nurse Planner is also required to notify OCEAN of scheduled repeats of approved learning activities during the 2-year approval period.

2. Conducting Needs Assessments

The mechanism for how and when to conduct a needs assessment is a decision made by each activity applicant. Needs assessment data provides important information in determining the relevance of a proposed learning activity. It is important to recognize that the data from a needs assessment must be evaluated in relation to the needs of the anticipated target audience for a learning activity. For example, the Nurse Planner may be aware that data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that over 80% of patients do not have adequate health literacy to understand and act on health information. Based on that data, a learning activity may be developed to improve health literacy by enabling nurses to assess a patient’s ability to read discharge planning instructions. However, that educational activity may fall short of achieving the purpose of improving health literacy if the issue with this population of patients is something other than ability to read. Some questions to consider in conducting a needs assessment might be:

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• What do nurses in the target audience want to learn about?
• What do nurses in the target audience need to learn about?
• What do nurses in the target audience need, but don’t know they need?
• What issues are we currently facing in our practice environment that could be improved by continuing education?
• How does generalized needs assessment data relate to our particular learners or our particular practice environment?
• With our prospective learners, what is the gap between where they are now in their knowledge, skill, or ability and where they need to be in order to provide quality care?

On the basis of solid needs assessment data, an educational plan can be developed to “fill the gap” between where learners are and where they need to be. Filling this gap then becomes the purpose of the activity. Ideally, an activity purpose is written as an outcome statement – “based on this learning experience, the learner will…” as opposed to a statement of provider purpose – “to provide information about…”. The outcome of the activity can then be determined based on whether the learner is able to implement the information learned. Your gap analysis data and activity purpose must be documented on your planning table.

3. Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Continuing Nursing Education Activities

Once the needs assessment has been conducted, the gap identified, and the outcome determined, planning of the learning activity can begin. Remember that the Nurse Planner must be actively involved in the entire process of planning, implementation, and evaluation. A planning committee is formed to guide the work of preparing the learning experience. A planning committee must consist of at least two people – the Nurse Planner and a person with content expertise. There can be as many people as desired on a planning committee, but the committee should be of a size to allow work to be conducted effectively and efficiently.

The Individual Educational Activity Application and additional forms on the OCEAN website provide all information needed to carry out and document the planning process. The educational planning table allows for delineation of objectives, content, time frames, faculty, and teaching/learning strategies. While it is acceptable for a speaker to complete a planning table related to his/her presentation, it is ultimately the accountability of the Nurse Planner to ensure that objectives are measurable, there is content to support each objective, and that teaching strategies are appropriate for achievement of each objective (for example, it is difficult to implement the objective of “demonstrate” or “analyze” if the teaching method is lecture or slide presentation).

A general rule of thumb is that one objective per hour of content is adequate. Content should be derived from best-available evidence and should not be presented in a biased manner. Content can be listed in narrative or outline form (outline generally is easiest and most logical) and must provide specific learning points that will be addressed in enabling the learner to achieve the objective. The content cannot be a restatement of the objective.

Time frames for each objective should be specified. For a short (1-2 hours) activity, generally it is adequate to identify the number of minutes to be spent on each objective. For a longer activity, it is important to identify time that will be spent on content delivery and activity evaluation separate from time devoted to introductions, breaks, and meals. This can either be included on the planning table or on an agenda or marketing piece. Please do
remember that evaluation is an important part of the learning experience and should be included in calculation of contact hours.

For **enduring materials** (e.g., web-based learning, podcasts, and independent studies) a plan should be established regarding the type of medium to be used, the ability of learners to access that medium, the appropriateness of the medium to the type of learning activity, and the ability of the learner to achieve the desired outcome through use of the medium selected. Additionally, there should be a mechanism in place to enable the learner to contact an appropriate resource person for either content-related questions or for technical issues related to using the enduring material. Publication of enduring material must be accompanied by a disclosure to the learner about the length of time the learning activity will be available for awarding of contact hours. The length of availability of the learning activity may not exceed the time of activity approval (2 years). A shorter length of time may be appropriate for some activities, such as an independent study on chemotherapeutic agents, where the content is likely to change more often.

Another important part of the planning process is determining criteria for **successful completion** of the learning activity. This is a process that is undertaken by the planning committee and must be decided in advance of the activity. It is not acceptable for a decision to be made at the time of the learning event (e.g., a person arrives 15 minutes late for a one-hour activity and the question arises as to whether or not he/she should receive contact hour credit). Criteria for successful completion are determined in advance and must be disclosed to the learner prior to the learner’s engagement in that experience. If there is a post-test or return demonstration, for example, the learner needs to know that a passing score of xx% or successful demonstration of a skill will be required in order to receive contact hours.

The Nurse Planner is accountable for recordkeeping. Planning documents and post-activity records should be retained in the file (electronic or hard copy) for a minimum of six (6) years. File access should be protected to ensure the confidentiality of learner-sensitive information.

At the conclusion of the learning activity, the Nurse Planner must **summarize evaluation data**. This evaluation summary is used to reflect on the strengths and possible areas of concern with the learning activity, to determine whether the activity might be offered again, and to assess possible changes that may need to be made in planning subsequent learning activities. The summative document must be retained in the file. (You are not required to keep individual learner evaluation forms.)

4. **Awarding Contact Hours**

**Contact hours** are awarded to learners based on time. For “live” activities, 60 minutes is equal to one contact hour. Evaluation time should be included in calculation of contact hours. Other teaching/learning strategies, such as case studies and post-tests, should also be included in the calculation of contact hours. Learning time **does not** include housekeeping-type introductions, breaks, meals, and viewing vendor displays. For enduring materials, you must have a logical and defensible method for determining the number of contact hours to be awarded. For many activity providers, a pilot study is the mechanism of choice to determine how long it takes a select group of learners representative of the target audience to complete the activity and evaluation. The average of those times is then used to determine the number of contact hours to be awarded. Please note that those who participate in the pilot study may earn contact hours for their participation, once the number of hours to be awarded has been determined and the activity approved by OCEAN. Other methods of determining contact hours for enduring materials include use of evidence-based
The unit of measure used in continuing nursing education is the contact hour, not the CEU. This is an important distinction, as the two terms do not mean the same thing. Please be sure that all of your marketing pieces, learner materials, and certificates correctly reference the contact hour.

Certificates are awarded to learners when they have successfully completed the learning activity, based on criteria noted above. The certificate is MUST include:

a. Space for the name of the learner
b. Title and date of the educational activity (for a multi-day session, the date should reflect when the learning activity was completed)
c. Name and address of the provider of the learning activity
d. Number of contact hours awarded
e. Your activity approval statement (free-standing, not on a line with any other text):

   This continuing nursing education activity was approved by Oregon Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

If your activity is announced prior to receipt of approval to award contact hours, the following statement can be used:

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

5. Addressing Specific Issues

a. **Conflict of interest** – see separate document on the OCEAN website (ANCC Content Integrity Standards, 2014) related to assessing and resolving actual or potential conflicts of interest for planners and faculty/authors.

b. **Bias** – refers to the tendency to influence learners by showing partiality or favoritism for a particular product, service, or point of view. Learning activities are to be planned and implemented based on best available evidence and should avoid bias. Planners take steps in addressing bias through assessing for possible conflict of interest and by assessing and monitoring content integrity. Steps to ensure that bias does not occur might be reviewing speakers’ slides, asking for balance in references and resources used in the presentation, having the speaker sign an agreement to present information fairly and impartially, or monitoring the presentation to validate that content integrity is being maintained.

c. **Commercial support** – see separate document on the OCEAN website (ANCC Content Integrity Standards, 2014) related to content integrity in the presence of commercial support or sponsorship. Commercial support is defined as a financial or in-kind contribution for a learning activity given by a commercial interest (an entity that produces, markets, resells, or distributes goods or services consumed by or used on patients or an entity that is owned or controlled by a company that does those things). For example, a pharmaceutical company or a manufacturer of wound dressing products would be considered a commercial entity. Commercial entity employees are not permitted to serve on planning committees or as planners.
speakers/authors for CNE activities if the topic is related to the work of the commercial entity.

d. **Sponsorship** – see separate document on the OCEAN website *(ANCC Content Integrity Standards, 2014)* related to content integrity in the presence of commercial support or sponsorship. Sponsorship is defined as a financial or in-kind contribution for a learning activity given by a non-commercial entity. A sponsor, for example, might be a nursing home that hosts a seminar or a printing company that produces your brochures at no cost.

e. **Joint Providers** – relates to two or more organizations *working together* to plan, implement, and evaluate CNE activities. The applicant organization’s Nurse Planner is actively involved in all phases of the educational design process, and the provider is required to be accountable for:
   i. Determining the educational objectives and content
   ii. Selecting planners, presenters, authors, and content reviewers
   iii. Awarding contact hours
   iv. Recordkeeping procedures
   v. Developing evaluation methods
   vi. Managing commercial support and/or sponsorship

A representative from the joint provider organization must serve on the activity planning committee. A signed agreement is negotiated between/among the provider and joint providers, specifying terms as noted above and any other agreements between the parties. The signed agreement must be submitted with the application and retained in the activity file. Marketing materials for the learning activity must prominently indicate the name of the provider, not the co-provider.

f. **Vendors** – people or organizations who pay for exhibit space at learning activities. This is different than commercial support or sponsorship, although a vendor might be an organization that has also provided commercial support or sponsorship. There are no specific requirements about agreements with vendors, though any time money changes hands, it is good business practice to have written agreements.

   From the perspective of education, the Nurse Planner is accountable for assuring that the integrity of the learning experience is not compromised. Vendor tables, therefore, should be separate from the learning activity, and vendor goods or services should not be required to be viewed/used by learners. Promotional materials are to be kept separate from the learning activity. See the *ANCC Content Integrity Standards, 2014* on the OCEAN website for more details regarding working with vendors and/or product displays.

6. **Using OCEAN and the Nurse Peer Review Leader as a Resource**

   The Nurse Peer Review Leader of the Accredited Approver Unit is the person accountable to the ANCC Accreditation Program to ensure that activity applicants are adhering to criteria and that the approver unit is appropriately providing information, guidance, and support. Any time you have questions, please feel free to contact the Nurse Peer Review Leader. From time to time, you will be asked to evaluate the work of the Nurse Peer Review Leader and the OCEAN Continuing Education Department in providing support to your organization. Your feedback will help us continue to strengthen our processes.
7. Recordkeeping

The following records are expected to be retained in a secure file (electronic or hard copy) for six (6) years:

Application Form / Biographical/COI Form / Planning Table Information & Attachments
- Title and location (if live) of activity
- Type of activity format: live or enduring (independent study)
- Date live activity presented or, for ongoing enduring activities, date first offered and subsequent re-evaluation dates
- Description of the target audience
- Method of the needs assessment
- Findings of the needs assessment
- Names, titles, and expertise of activity planners
- Role held by each Planning Committee member – must include identification of the Nurse Planner and content expert(s)
- Names, titles, and expertise of activity presenters, faculty, authors, and/or content reviewers
- Conflict of interest disclosure statements from planners
- Resolution of conflicts of interest for planners, if applicable
- Conflict of interest disclosure statements from presenters, faculty, authors, and/or content reviewers
- Resolution of conflicts of interest for presenters, faculty, authors, and/or content reviewers, if applicable
- Purpose of activity
- Objectives of activity
- Evidence of gap in knowledge, skill, or practice for the target audience
- Content of activity: an Educational Planning Table (Objective, Content, Time Frame, Speaker and Teaching Strategy grid)
- Instructional strategies used
- Evidence of learner feedback mechanisms
- Rationale and criteria for judging successful completion
- Method or process used to verify participation of learners
- Number of contact hours awarded for activity, including method of calculation
  (Provider must keep a record of the number of contact hours earned by each participant)
- Template of evaluation tool(s) used
- Marketing and promotional materials
- Means of ensuring content integrity in the presence of commercial support (if applicable)
- Commercial support agreement with signature and date (if applicable)
- Means of ensuring content integrity in the presence of sponsorship (if applicable)
- Sponsorship agreement with signature and date (if applicable)
- Joint Provider Agreement with signature and date (if applicable)
- Evidence in writing of disclosing to the learner:
  - Purpose and/or objectives and criteria for successful completion
  - Presence/absence of COI for everyone involved with activity
  - Activity approval statement
  - Sponsorship and/or commercial support (if applicable)
  - Expiration date for enduring materials (if applicable)
Documentation of completion must include:
Title and date of educational activity
Name and address of activity provider
Number of contact hours awarded
Activity approval statement (written exactly as instructed)
Participant name

File Additions after the Activity
Summative evaluation (summary of data collected, not each evaluation form).
Participant names and credentials, including unique identifiers (can be employee number, birth date, email address, or other identifier)

8. Responding to Monitoring Requests

Accreditation criteria require that accredited approvers monitor the activities of individual activity providers on a regular basis, not just if or when the organization submits a new application. Monitoring activities could occur at any time and will typically focus on one aspect of your activity – submitting a sample marketing brochure, certificate, or Bio/COI form, for example. Participation in monitoring activities is required. Failure to submit material as requested will result in suspension and/or revocation of activity approval.

9. Submitting Reports

Reports are required to enable OCEAN to collect statistical data regarding your educational activity. This data is used to analyze the effectiveness of OCEAN in carrying out its mission of increasing educational opportunities for registered nurses. Additionally, data is shared, as required, with the ANCC accreditation program. ANCC in turn uses the information to evaluate the effectiveness of its role in promoting quality CNE globally. Evaluation data will be published and shared in aggregate for both OCEAN and ANCC use.

Report requirements will be specified at the time of activity approval or via email during the period of activity approval. Responses typically are requested within 30 days. As with the monitoring requests, failure to submit requested report data will result in suspension and/or revocation of activity approval. Note that if you repeat an activity during the 2-year period of approval, you must submit information about any repeat sessions as well as the initial session.

Post-activity required reporting data includes:
1. Total number of contact hours offered upon activity completion
2. Total number of activity participants
3. Total dollar amount of commercial support received, if any
4. Total dollar amount of sponsorship received, if any
5. Name of joint provider organization, if any
6. A copy of the summative evaluation
7. Any other information as requested by OCEAN, particularly related to outcome data

10. Responding to Inquiries and/or Complaints

Should a situation arise where the OCEAN Approver Unit and Nurse Peer Review Leader have a concern about your activity, you will be asked to provide explanations and/or evidence to the ONA Cabinet on Education. Examples include but are not limited to data found on an organization’s website that is not in adherence to criteria or a complaint from a learner. If you are asked to respond to an inquiry or a complaint, you will be provided with
detailed information about what is requested (confidentiality of complainants will be maintained) and a specific time frame for your response. Failure to provide the required information or address the issue at hand will result in suspension and/or revocation of your activity approval.

11. Adhering to Federal, state, and/or Local Laws or Regulations

Your organization is expected to follow all applicable laws/rules that affect your ability to adhere to accreditation criteria. Evidence of violation of such laws/rules will result in suspension and/or revocation of your activity approval. Note that this includes copyright laws regarding use of published materials.

**Part III: Issues of Non-adherence**

The ONA Cabinet on Education reserves the right to suspend or revoke activity approval in situations where criteria are not followed, complaints are not resolved, laws/rules are not followed, or fees are not paid. Notification of suspension/revocation will occur by certified mail or email with response notification. If suspension and/or revocation occur, the organization must immediately cease awarding contact hours, representing itself as having activity approval, and using the activity approval statement. Suspended organizations may apply for reinstatement within 120 days of the suspension date, based on evidence of resolution of the issue(s) in question. Failure to apply for reinstatement within the 120 day limit will result in revocation of activity approval. The organization whose activity approval status has been suspended and/or revoked may appeal the decision. Contact OCEAN’s Nurse Peer Review Leader for more information regarding the appeal process.

**OCEAN Contact Information**

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