



Instruction Manual for CE Approval of Individual Educational Activities



Oregon Continuing Education Activities for Nurses (OCEAN) Oregon Nurses Association (ONA)

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Part I: The Approval Process

Congratulations on your decision to seek approval to award contact hours for your nursing continuing professional development (NCPD) activity! This process for educational design and implementation of American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) accreditation criteria, administered to you by Oregon Nurses Association's Approver Unit, will help you develop an activity that will contribute to quality patient care and/or enhanced professional development for nurses. We encourage you to use the application materials as you plan your activity, rather than trying to fit an already planned activity into the forms. This will help to ensure 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 Accredited Approver Program Director of OCEAN for all aspects of how the educational activity is planned, implemented, and evaluated.
6. Your organization must NOT be an ineligible company (any entity whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients, or any entity that is owned or controlled by an entity whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients).
7. You must ensure that the learning activity meets the definition of nursing continuing professional development – 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 an ineligible company are not acceptable.

Eligibility Verification

1. Retrieve the *Applicant Eligibility Verification Form* from the OCEAN Approver Unit webpage <https://www.oregonrn.org/page/ApproverUnit>
2. Submit the completed form via email to OCEAN@oregonRN.org.
3. You will receive email notice that the forms have been reviewed and if you are eligible to proceed, instructions to complete the application process. Also included in the email

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notification are instructions to pay the application fee online or via check. Please note that an application will not receive final approval until fees are paid in full. The fee schedule is found on page 9 of this document and is also posted on the [OCEAN Approver Unit webpage](#). 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.

Required Application Materials

1. Once eligibility has been granted, the following application materials will be emailed to you:
 - a. OCEAN IAA Instruction Manual (this document)
 - b. Individual Educational Activity Application
 - c. Financial Relationships Form
 - d. Educational Planning Table
 - e. Commercial Support Agreement (if applicable to your educational activity)
 - f. Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited CE
2. Include any other documents relevant to your activity. (Note – a number of sample documents provided on the [OCEAN Approver Unit webpage](#) are TEMPLATES ONLY and should be modified to meet your organization's specific needs – agenda, evaluation form, CE certificate, disclosure statements)
3. Review the entire instruction manual and all application materials 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 any necessary supporting documentation. 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.
5. 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 start date. Applications submitted less than 30 days prior to the activity start date will be charged an expedited review fee. OCEAN reserves the right to refuse an application if there is not adequate time for nurse peer review or applicant response to correct any deficiencies.

Individual Educational Activity Application

(Only select sections of this form are explained below; 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 (either in person or virtually):
 - 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.

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- 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 (such as the Mergener formula) 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 equal to 60 minutes of learning time.
 - d. The unit of measure used in NCPD is the **contact hour**, NOT the CEU. This is an important distinction, as the two terms do not mean the same thing. Please ensure that “contact hour” is the term used on all 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 (Content Expert). 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 include a Financial Relationships Form for each member of the planning committee.
- 5. Be sure that relevant financial relationships (RFR) information for each planning committee member is indicated on both the application itself and on everyone’s Financial Relationships Form. Note that employees of ineligible companies (as defined on page 2, item 6) may NOT serve as members of the planning committee for a NCPD activity if the topic of the activity is related to the products of that company.
- 6. Follow step 5 for each presenter/faculty/author. Note that employees of ineligible companies may NOT serve as speakers or authors for a NCPD activity if the topic of the activity is related to the products of that company.
- 7. Description of the professional practice gap or opportunity for improvement – provide a brief description of the problem or opportunity for improvement this activity is designed to address for your learners.
- 8. Learning Outcome – all NCPD 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 help measure your outcomes to validate 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 full contact hours.
- 10. Identify the method(s) for evaluating the learning activity. There is a sample evaluation tool on the [OCEAN Approver Unit webpage](#) that you can use if you wish. You are not required to use this or any evaluation 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 whether the stated professional practice gap was closed or narrowed and whether

learners achieved the learning outcome for the activity. You will be required to submit a sample of your evaluation tool/process with 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 out to prospective learners.
12. If the educational activity has, or will receive, commercial support (financial or in-kind support from ineligible companies), complete the Commercial Support Agreement form and submit it with your application.
13. Disclosures – indicate how required information will be provided to learners prior to the beginning of the learning activity. Submit supporting documentation with your application.
14. Certificate – check to ensure that all required items are included on your CE certificate. Submit a sample certificate with 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), materials associated with this activity such as agendas and certificates of completion must clearly indicate the Provider awarding the contact hours and who is responsible for adherence to the ANCC criteria.
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.

Financial Relationships Form

(See the “Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited CE” document for full details regarding the information required on this form)

1. This form must be completed by each person who can control or influence the content of the learning activity. This includes planning committee members and speakers/faculty/authors.
2. Each person filling out their own financial relationships form must complete the first page titled “Information about All Financial Relationships from Nurse Planners, Content Expert, Faculty, and Others”. These forms are to be collected by the Nurse Planner.
3. The Nurse Planner then fills out the second page (titled “Worksheet for Mitigation of Relevant Financial Relationships of Planners, Faculty, and Others”) of ALL financial relationship forms, completing the following four (4) steps, detailed on the form itself:

STEP 1: Review collected information about financial relationships and **exclude owners or employees of ineligible companies** from participating as planners or faculty.

STEP 2: Determine which relationships are **relevant financial relationships (RFR)**.

STEP 3: Choose a **mitigation strategy** for each person who has a relevant financial relationship and **implement** that strategy before the person assumes their role.

Step 4: **Document** the mitigation strategies you used for each relevant financial relationship identified for the individual.

4. Note – another person on the planning committee who is knowledgeable about relevant financial relationships must validate the Nurse Planner’s information (i.e., complete the mitigation worksheet on the Nurse Planner’s financial relationships form).

Educational Planning Table

Complete the educational planning table for any activity more than 3 hours in length. Each column should be filled in with information as noted in the headings. Generally, one measurable learning 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 intended learning outcome(s).

Instructional 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 something like the example here:

Content	References	Time Frame	Faculty	Instructional Strategies Used
Identify key issues in diabetes management. 1. Definition 2. Prevalence 3. Manifestations 4. Impact	American Diabetes Association Clinical Diabetes 2021 Jan; 39(1): 14-43. https://doi.org/10.2337/cd21-as01	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	Rathod S. Novel Insights into the Immunotherapy-Based Treatment Strategy for Autoimmune Type 1 Diabetes. Diabetology. 2022; 3(1):79-96. https://doi.org/10.3390/diabetology3010007	9:45-10:20 35 min.	T. Bone	Group activity Case study Sharing of findings Discussion of plans for implementation
Evaluation Time		10:20-10:30 10 min.		Participants will reflect on their learning during completion of the evaluation form
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. 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 nursing continuing professional development activity was approved by Oregon Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

2. Criteria for successful completion – describe what the learner must do to earn their CE certificate. This can include attendance at all or part of the learning activity, completion of an evaluation form and/or pre/post-test, active participation in the activity, to name a few.
3. Presence or absence of relevant financial relationships (RFR) for all individuals in a position to control content, including mitigation (if applicable).

If relevant financial relationships were identified, the disclosure statement must include:

- a) The names of individuals with relevant financial relationships,
- b) The names of the ineligible companies with which they have a relationship (identify ineligible companies by their names only, do not include logos or trade names),
- c) The nature of the financial relationships, and
- d) A statement that all relevant financial relationships have been mitigated. The mitigation steps do not need to be outlined.

Example: Samantha Turner is on the speakers' bureau for ABC Pharmaceuticals. The relevant financial relationships have been mitigated. No relevant financial relationships were identified for any other individuals with the ability to control content of the activity.

4. If applicable, state the expiration date (the last date learners will have access to) of any enduring material associated with the educational activity.
5. If applicable, identify the **commercial support** (financial or in-kind support **from ineligible companies**) that has been received for the educational activity. It is generally good (but not required) to acknowledge **sponsorship** (financial or in-kind support **from eligible companies**) that has been received to support the activity.
6. If applicable, identify the Joint Provider of the activity.

Supporting Documents

Submit supporting documents with your application. These include:

- Financial Relationships Forms for each person with the ability to control or influence the content of the educational activity
- Educational planning table, as previously 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

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- 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
- Commercial support 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. The OCEAN office will notify you with payment instructions once application materials are received. 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 undergo quantitative review by OCEAN personnel to ensure that all required components of ANCC accreditation criteria 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 nurse peer review until all required components are submitted to OCEAN.
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 Accredited Approver Program Director. 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 two (2) years** – evidence supports the quality and integrity of the educational design, and you can present the activity as often as desired during the 2-year approval period, as applicable. Activities that are solely comprised of enduring material will be granted a 3-year approval period.
 - 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 Accredited Approver Program Director 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.

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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:
 - a. Total number of contact hours offered upon activity completion
 - b. Total number of activity RN participants
 - c. Total dollar amount of commercial support received, if any
 - d. Name of joint provider organization, if any
 - e. A copy of an evaluation summary
 - f. 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 2-year approval period, 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 approval period.

Application Fee Schedule (effective January 1, 2023)

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

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

Application fees are based on the total number of contact hours requested. An additional expedited review fee will be charged for applications submitted less than 30 days* prior to the scheduled start of the learning activity.

Contact Hours	Application Fee	Expedite Fee < 30 days
0.5 – 4.0	\$250	\$300
4.1 – 8.0	\$450	\$325
8.1 – 16.0	\$800	\$350
16.1 or more	\$1000	\$400

*For applications submitted less than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled start of the learning activity, OCEAN reserves the right to decline the application or charge additional fees.

Should there be situations where the nurse 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.

Part II: Additional Information & Explanation

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

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OCEAN will contact with any questions about the application. The Nurse Planner consults with the Accredited Approver Program Director 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.

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:

- 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 practice and where do 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 professional practice 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 learning 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.

Planning, Implementing, and Evaluating Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD) Activities

Once the needs assessment has been conducted, the gap identified, and the learning 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 one person with expertise in the content of the learning activity (Content Expert). Even if the Nurse Planner is also a content expert, there must be at least two people on the

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planning committee. 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 provided by OCEAN can be used as a guide to help your planning committee carry out and document the planning process. The **educational planning table** allows for delineation of content descriptions, references used, time frames, faculty, and instructional strategies used. 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 **instructional 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 only 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 (generally no older than 5-7 years) 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 learning outcome.

Time frames for each objective should be specified. For a short (1-3 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 or recorded 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 **enduring only activity approval (3 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. Most importantly, the summative evaluation is used to determine whether the activity was able to close, or narrow, the professional practice gap identified during the needs assessment process. The summative document must be retained in the file. (You are not required to keep individual learner evaluation forms.)

Awarding Contact Hours

Contact hours are awarded to learners based on time. For “live” activities, 60 minutes is equal to one (1) contact hour. Evaluation time should be included in calculation of contact hours. Other instructional 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 formulas (such as the Mergener formula) related to word count and difficulty of material or historical data in publications. If needed, please contact OCEAN@oregonRN.org for additional information.

The unit of measure used in nursing continuing professional development (NCPD) 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.

As the provider of the NCPD, you are responsible for awarding certificates of completion to learners once they have successfully completed the learning activity (based on the criteria for successful completion developed by your planning committee). The certificate **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 nursing continuing professional development 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 to prospective learners prior to receiving 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 nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.

Addressing Specific Issues

- a. **Relevant financial relationships** – see the “Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited CE” document related to identifying, mitigating and disclosing relevant financial relationships for all individuals in a position to control or influence the content of the educational activity.
- 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 relevant financial relationships 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 the “Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited CE” document related to content integrity in the presence of commercial support. Commercial support is defined as a financial or in-kind contribution for a learning activity given by an ineligible company (any entity whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients, or any entity that is owned or controlled by an entity whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, re-selling, or distributing healthcare products used by or on patients). For example, a pharmaceutical company or a manufacturer of wound dressing products would be considered an ineligible company. Employees of ineligible companies are NOT permitted to serve on planning committees or as speakers/authors for NCPD activities if the topic is related to the products or services of the ineligible company.
- d. **Sponsorship** – Sponsorship is defined as a financial or in-kind contribution for a learning activity given by an eligible company. A sponsor, for example, might be a nursing home that hosts a seminar or a printing company that produces your brochures at no cost. Nursing homes and other healthcare facilities, and non-healthcare related companies are exempt from the definition of an ineligible company, therefore eligible and their support is considered sponsorship support instead of “commercial” support.
- e. **Joint Providers** – relates to two or more organizations *working together* to plan, implement, and evaluate NCPD 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 outcomes 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 not required as part of the OCEAN application process, however it can be a useful tool in negotiating between/among the provider and joint providers, specifying terms such as noted above and any other agreements between the parties. Marketing materials for the learning activity must prominently indicate the name of the provider of the contact hours, 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 ensuring 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.

Using OCEAN and the Accredited Approver Program Director as a Resource

The Accredited Approver Program Director 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 Accredited Approver Program Director. From time to time, you will be asked to evaluate the work of the Accredited Approver Program Director and the OCEAN Continuing Education Department in providing support to your organization. Your feedback will help us continue to strengthen our processes.

Recordkeeping

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

Activity File Information:

- Title and location (if live and in-person) of activity
- Type of activity format: Live or Enduring or Blended
- Date live activity presented or, for ongoing enduring activities, date first offered and subsequent review dates
- Description of professional practice gap
- Evidence that validates professional practice gap
- Educational need that underlies the professional practice gap
- Description of target audience
- Desired measurable learning outcomes
- Description of evidence-based content with supporting reference or resources

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- Learner engagement strategies used
- Criteria for awarding of contact hours
- Description of evaluation method (evidence that change in knowledge, skills, &/or practices of target audience was assessed)
- Names and credentials of all individuals in a position to control content (must identify who fills the roles of Nurse Planner and content experts)
- Demonstration of relevant financial relationship process for all individuals in a position to control content (planners, presenters, faculty, authors, &/or content reviewers)
 - Name of individual, ineligible company and nature of relationship
 - Collected within the 24 months preceding the activity
- Evidence of a mitigation process, if applicable
- Number of contact hours awarded for activity & method of calculation
- Agenda, if activity is longer than 3 hours
- Documentation of completion and/or certificate must include:
 - Title and date of the educational activity
 - Name and address of provider of the educational activity (web address acceptable)
 - Number of contact hours awarded
 - Activity approval statement
 - Space for participant name
- Commercial Support Agreement with signature and date (if applicable)
 - Name of the Ineligible Company
 - Name of the Provider
 - Complete description of all the CS provided, including both financial and in-kind support
 - Statement that the ineligible company will not participate in planning, developing, implementing, or evaluating the educational activity
 - Statement that the ineligible company will not recruit learners from the education activity for any purpose
 - Description of how the CS must be used by the Provider (unrestricted use and/or restricted use)
 - Signature of a duly authorized representative of the ineligible company with the authority to enter the binding contracts on behalf of the ineligible company
 - Signature of a duly authorized representative of the Provider with the authority to enter the binding contracts on behalf of the Provider
 - Date on which the written agreement was signed
- Evidence of disclosing to the learner:
 - Activity approval statement
 - Criteria for awarding contact hours
 - Presence or absence of relevant financial relationships for all individuals in a position to control content (planning committee, presenters, faculty, authors, and/or content reviewers)
 - Commercial support (if applicable)
 - Expiration date of enduring material (if applicable)
 - Joint Providership (if applicable)

- Materials associated with this activity, e.g., agendas and certificates of completion, must clearly indicate the Provider awarding contact hours and responsible for adherence to the ANCC criteria

File Additions after the Activity (not required as part of the application for CE approval, but good information to include for recordkeeping)

- Summative evaluation (summary of data collected, not each evaluation form)
- Participant names and credentials, including unique identifiers (can be RN license number, email address, or other identifier)

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 financial relationship 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.

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 NCPD 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 (RN participants only)
3. Total dollar amount of commercial support received, if any
4. Name of joint provider organization, if any
5. A copy of the summative evaluation
6. Any other information as requested by OCEAN, particularly related to outcome data

Responding to Inquiries and/or Complaints

Should a situation arise where the OCEAN Approver Unit and Accredited Approver Program Director 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

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information or address the issue at hand will result in suspension and/or revocation of your activity approval.

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.

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 Accredited Approver Program Director for more information regarding the appeal process.

OCEAN Contact Information

OCEAN Continuing Education
Oregon Nurses Association
18765 SW Boones Ferry Rd, Ste 200
Tualatin, OR 97062
Office 503.293.0011
OCEAN@oregonRN.org