DETERMINING PRACTICE GAPS AND EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

COMMITTEE EDUCATION PLANNING
UNDERSTANDING TERMS

• Knowledge - new knowledge—facts, data, information that help learners to understand the new topic

• Competence - figuring out how to put the knowledge into action

• Performance - doing whatever it is that one learned

• Patient Outcomes – can be delivery of safe and effective care, patient satisfaction, patient engagement aligned with the CME Mission

• Professional Practice Gap – When there is a gap between what the professional is doing or accomplishing compared to what is "achievable on the basis of current professional knowledge," there is a professional practice gap.
What problem is the activity planned to address and how are the intended participants involved?

Describe the difference between best practice and current practice of your intended audience/participants.

A best practice may be outlined in a national guideline or consensus statement from a credible organization, from peer-reviewed medical literature where more than one source agree on the practice, or from the considered opinion of the expert planning committee member(s) in the case when no published guideline exists.
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Why does the problem exist?
Describe the reason(s) why the problem (professional practice gap) outlined above exists.
A few examples of why a practice gap could exist are:
- New methods of diagnosis or treatment
- Availability of new medication(s) or indication(s)
- Development of new technology
- Input from experts regarding advances in medical knowledge
- Legislative, regulatory, or organizational changes affecting patient care
Verbalized needs and interests which may be derived from:

- Requests submitted on participants’ activity evaluation forms
- Formal surveys of potential participants (mail and/or internet based)
- Informal comments
- Patient problem inventories compiled by potential participants
- Consensus of faculty members within a department/division or service area
Learning objectives are the take-home messages; what should the learner be able to accomplish after the activity?

Objectives should bridge the gap between the identified need/gap and the desired result.

What do we want to change?

The learning objectives describe what learners will be able to do to address the identified professional practice gap(s).

Each objective should include a verb that is chosen to describe something the learner will be able to do.
**DESIRED RESULTS**

Desired results are what you expect the learner to do in his/her practice setting.

How will the information presented impact the clinical practice and/or behavior of the learner?

How will you know if the activity was effective in producing change?

Following the activity, how will you know if the activity has been successful in “closing” the practice gap of your learners? Describe how you will measure the change.
ACCME CRITERIA FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING
The provider has developed a planning process, on an institutional basis, that asks planners to describe professional practice gaps and their underlying educational needs. In addition, the provider uses quality and safety data as the basis for its regularly scheduled series. The provider demonstrated its process in the sample of activities selected for review.
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The provider asks its learners what topics they want covered at the next annual meeting as well as in planning its online modules. The provider uses its expert faculty recommendations for hot topics and developing areas of interest that should be included.

**Rationale:** The provider did not describe or demonstrate that it plans its activities to address professional practice gaps and the needs that are the cause of those gaps.
CRITERIA 3

The provider generates activities/educational interventions that are designed to change competence, performance, or patient outcomes as described in its mission statement.
The provider described its process of planning a yearly curriculum around the gaps identified for each specialty/care team. The curriculum builds – starting with a root cause analysis of the problem, identifying the educational need (knowledge, competence or performance), and determining the best method for achieving change. As part of its planning process, the provider ensures that each activity is designed to change physician strategies that can be applied to practice.
The provider described in its self-study report the generation of activities designed to change competence, performance, or patient outcomes as described in its mission statement. However, there was no evidence of the implementation of this process in the activities reviewed. The activities selected for review were focused solely on changing knowledge.

**Rationale:** Although knowledge is an acceptable educational need, the ACCME’s criteria ask the provider to design activities to use new knowledge or skills to change competence, performance or patient outcomes.
RESOURCES

Simplifying Faculty Development in Accredited CME
https://www.accme.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/810_20190410_Simplifying_Faculty_Development_in_Accredited_CME.pdf

AAFP Guidelines for Writing Learning Objectives

Helpful Tips for Completing the Needs and Gaps for Educational Planning
https://northwestern.cloud-cme.com/assets/northwestern/PDF/Helpful%20Tips%20for%20Completing%20the%20Gap%20and%20Needs%20Section.docx

Writing a Practice Gap Statement, Educational Needs Development Description and Learning Objectives
https://med.emory.edu/assets/pdfs/Practice_Gap_Writing.pdf