

INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE

Committee on Planning a Continuing
Health Care Professional Education
Institute
Allied Health

ACCREDITATION, CREDENTIALING & CONTINUING EDUCATION

- Some allied health examples:
 - Physician Assistants
 - Dietitians
 - Physical Therapists
 - Dental Hygienists
 - Respiratory Therapists

A QUICK NOTE

- State licensure boards almost universally accept the professions' national certification examinations as the gateways to professional licensure and some boards approve courses or their sponsors, including national association sponsors

THE NUMBERS

- There is a multitude of allied health professions and almost every one of them requires continuing education either to maintain state licensure, where applicable or to retain national registration or certification status in professional associations

LICENSED VS. CREDENTIALIALED

- Continuing education requirements may vary and differ depending on a profession's licensure or credential status
- Typically, licensed allied health individuals must meet their states' continuing education requirements;
- Credentialed or registered professionals may have national requirements that may or may not be required to practice

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

- As a requirement for licensure maintenance or renewal PAs must complete 100 hours of CE every two years
- Approval of the American Academy of Physician Assistants required for sponsors
- Every 6 years, PAs must pass a recertification examination to keep the initials PA-C.

DIETITIANS

- In the states that license dietitians to practice, there is mandatory continuing education to retain licensure privileges
- Most boards approve courses or sponsors, such as the ADA-Commission on Dietetics Registration's Professional Development Resource Center

DIETITIANS (continued)

- The Commission also requires all registered dietitians to complete 75 (50 for technicians) CPEUs every 5 years in order to maintain national certification, through mandatory participation in the Commission's Professional Development Portfolio (ADA website at <http://www.cdrnet.org/pdrcenter>).

PHYSICAL THERAPY

- The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) does not approve continuing education courses or their sponsors;
- Requirements are stipulated by state boards
- APTA developed 12 standards and accompanying Required Practices and Quality Standards (draft 8/08)

DENTAL HYGIENE

- CE requirements set by state boards: shortest cycle for re-licensure is one year; longest is five
- Twenty-six state boards have designated the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) as “an approved” sponsor of CE (ADHA: Continuing Education Resource, requirements by state, August 2008)

RESPIRATORY THERAPY

- Regulated by state boards, except Alaska and Hawaii
- American Association for Respiratory Care-Continuing Respiratory Care Education
- Typically 30 hours of CE required, in many states 10 hours of which must be from AARC approved category I credit (e.g. Washington)

THE BABBLE EFFECT

- Similar to accreditation standards for the diverse allied health professions educational programs, the expectations and even the language used for CE requirements for continued practice remains disjointed
- Such a situation creates confusion, a plethora of regulatory boards and adds costs to health care delivery

A HINT OF PROMISE

- In 1997, a group of 18 health professions assembled at a summit to analyze concerns about continued competency of health professionals
- JACHCO published standards requiring health care facilities assess and address the continuing competencies of all health **care workers** (Commission on Dietetic Registration-Professional Development Resource Center, <http://www.cdrnet.org/pdrcenter/background.htm>)

A DIALOGUE FOR IMPROVEMENT

- For accreditation: standardize language across the professions; emphasize as a required standard inter-professional education and practice; utilize a common definition of cultural competency and eliminate as much as possible processes and emphasize practice competencies using common coin language understandable to the public

A DIALOGUE FOR IMPROVEMENT

- For professional Continuing Education:
Seek out and eliminate possible conflicts of interests by professional associations in the provision of CE
- Create real opportunities for cross-professional participation in CE that emphasize team practices
- Remove barriers between CE courses and for credit academic courses

SOME THOUGHTS

- A creative approach: CE providers seek ACE approval of some courses or group of courses as worthy of academic credit.
- Benefit: might both assure appropriate competency maintenance and growth but also help individuals increase their academic advancement, especially for needed faculty in the academy

SOME THOUGHTS (CONTINUED)

- Create a national oversight commission to:
- Help develop inter-professional standards for professional CE
- Provide a forum for the professions to seek common cause and improve health care through competency growth of their practitioners, and
- Provide opportunities for dialogue with consumers and other legitimate parties of interest.

FINIS

- Thank you.

David M. Gibson, Ed.D., FASAHP
Association of Schools of Allied Health
Professions