VCU Health™
Continuing Education

Planning guide

For those planning accredited continuing education activities

Updated June 2020

Who should access this guide?

Individuals involved in the planning of continuing education (CE) activities who are interested in applying for CE credit.

For technical instructions for the CloudCME LMS system and online CE Activity Application form, please review the "Continuing Education Activity Application" guide.

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Terms and definitions

- Activity Type – term used by accrediting body to classify educational programs

- Interprofessional continuing education (IPCE) - when members from two or more professions learn with, from, and about each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes

Accreditation

VCU Health Continuing Education is a Jointly Accredited provider, recognizing our commitment to interprofessional education. This accreditation allows us we are able to offer a wide variety of credits for the health care team, including:

- AAPA Category 1 CME credit for physician assistants
- ACPE credit for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians
- **AMA PRA Category 1 Credit**™ for physicians
- ANCC credit for nurses
- APA credit for psychologists
- ASWB ACE credit for social workers

What does this mean for planning committees?

1. Additional credit types are now available for your learners.
2. All continuing education activities designated to offer credit must align with Joint Accreditation criteria and requirements stipulated by VCU Health Continuing Education.
3. Interprofessional activities must be designed **by** the health care team, **for** the health care team.
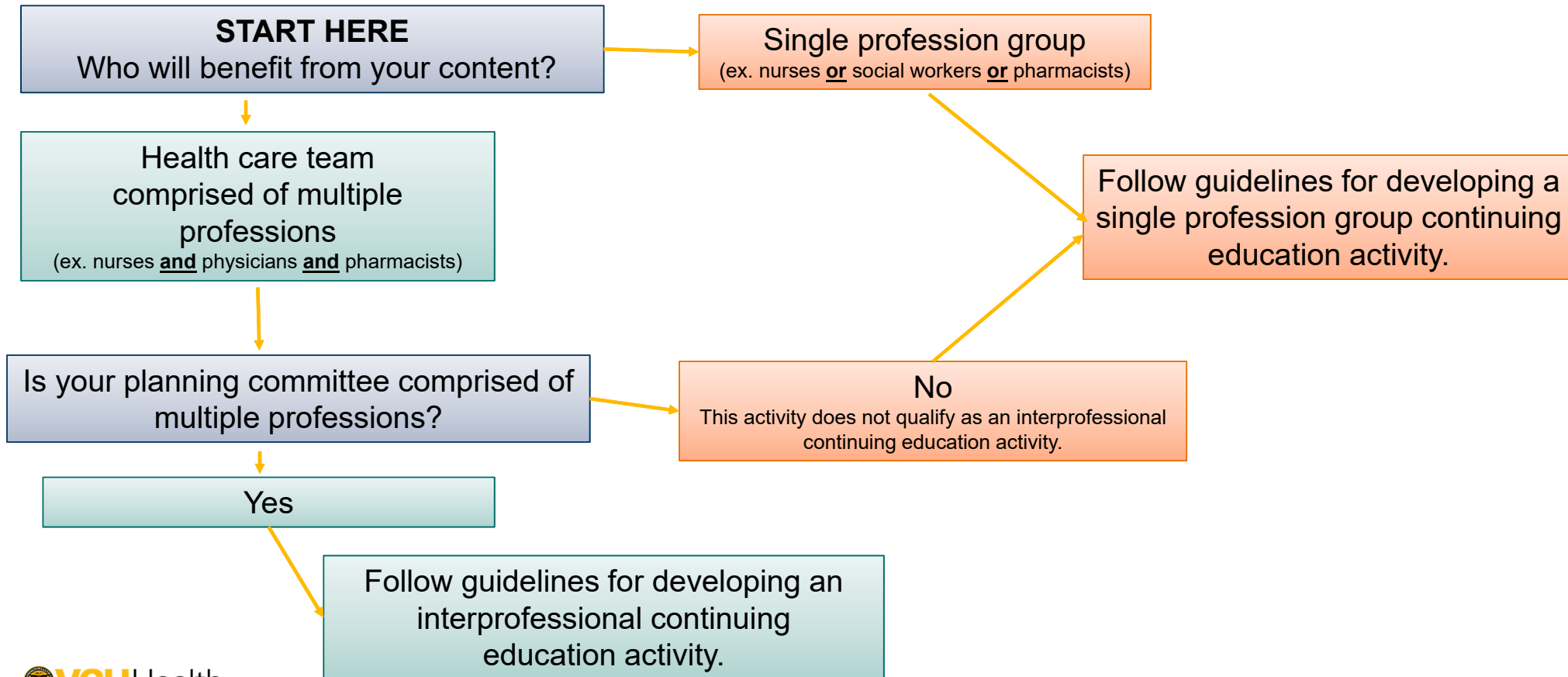4. Planning committee members should reflect the target audience.

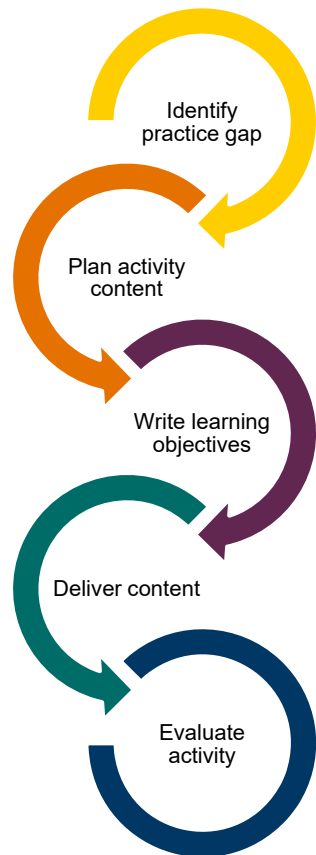JOINTLY ACCREDITED PROVIDER™
INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION

VCU Health is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) to provide continuing education for the health care team through November 2025.

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Is my activity considered interprofessional continuing education?

Use this flowchart in the beginning of your planning process to guide the development of the continuing education activity.

START HERE
Who will benefit from your content?

Single profession group
(ex. nurses **or** social workers **or** pharmacists)

Health care team
comprised of multiple
professions
(ex. nurses **and** physicians **and** pharmacists)

Follow guidelines for developing a
single profession group continuing
education activity.

Is your planning committee comprised of
multiple professions?

No
This activity does not qualify as an interprofessional
continuing education activity.

Yes

Follow guidelines for developing an
interprofessional continuing
education activity.

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Planning process

Identify practice gap

Plan activity content

Write learning objectives

Deliver content

Evaluate activity

This guide follows the planning process shown.

Each element is indicated in the header.

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What is the problem you are trying to address?

The **practice gap** – a difference between what is currently happening in practice and the desired practice or opportunity for improvement – is the problem you are trying to address with your educational activity. A best practice is to review what learners currently know and/or do (actual practice) versus what they should know and/or do (best practice).

Actual Practice

Best Practice

Practice Gap

Suggested planning committee discussion questions:
1. Why does our target audience need to participate in this educational activity?
2. What do they need to know?
3. How did you figure out this problem (practice gap) exists?

Identify practice gap

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Tips for writing practice gaps

Identify practice gap

Practice gaps can be…

- General – appropriate for regularly scheduled series.
- Specific – appropriate for courses and internet enduring materials.

Practice gaps should…

- Specify the target audience the activity is designed for.
  - Interprofessional activities must address practice gaps of the health care team and/or the individual team members' knowledge, skills, or performance as part of the health care team.
- Describe the problem the activity is trying to address.

Example single profession practice gaps

Gap type	Target audience	Activity type	Example
General	Single profession	Grand Rounds	Internal medicine providers share that they lack understanding of various medical innovations and associated strategies that can be implemented in their practice.
Specific	Single profession	Course	Intensivists are not routinely prescribing low tidal volume ventilation to patients with acute lung injury.

Identify practice gap

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Example interprofessional practice gaps

Gap type	Target audience	Activity type	Example
General	Interprofessional	Tumor Board	Oncology teams are inconsistent in the implementation of the latest screening and management recommendations.
Specific	Interprofessional	Course	Practitioners managing patients with acute stroke only follow treatment recommendations 30% of the time. With optimal team management, patient survival and quality of life can be significantly improved. Health care teams lack knowledge of new stroke recommendations and lack strategies to implement into their practice.

How did you figure out this problem existed?

A **needs assessment** provides the evidence to support the educational need for your activity. It should be data driven and identify the cause of the practice gap.

Suggested planning committee discussion questions:

1. What sources of data should be considered?
2. What data was collected to justify planning this educational activity?
3. How will this information be used in the activity?

| Common needs assessment data sources |
|---|
| Survey data from stakeholders, target audience members, subject matter experts |
| Input from stakeholders |
| Quality studies and/or performance improvement activities |
| Evaluation data from previous education activities |
| Trends in literature, law, health care |
| Direct observation |
| Advice from authorities in the field |
| Public health data |

What kind of educational need will be addressed?

Identify practice gap

Educational needs fall into three categories:

Knowledge needs – target audience does not know
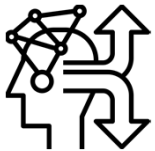
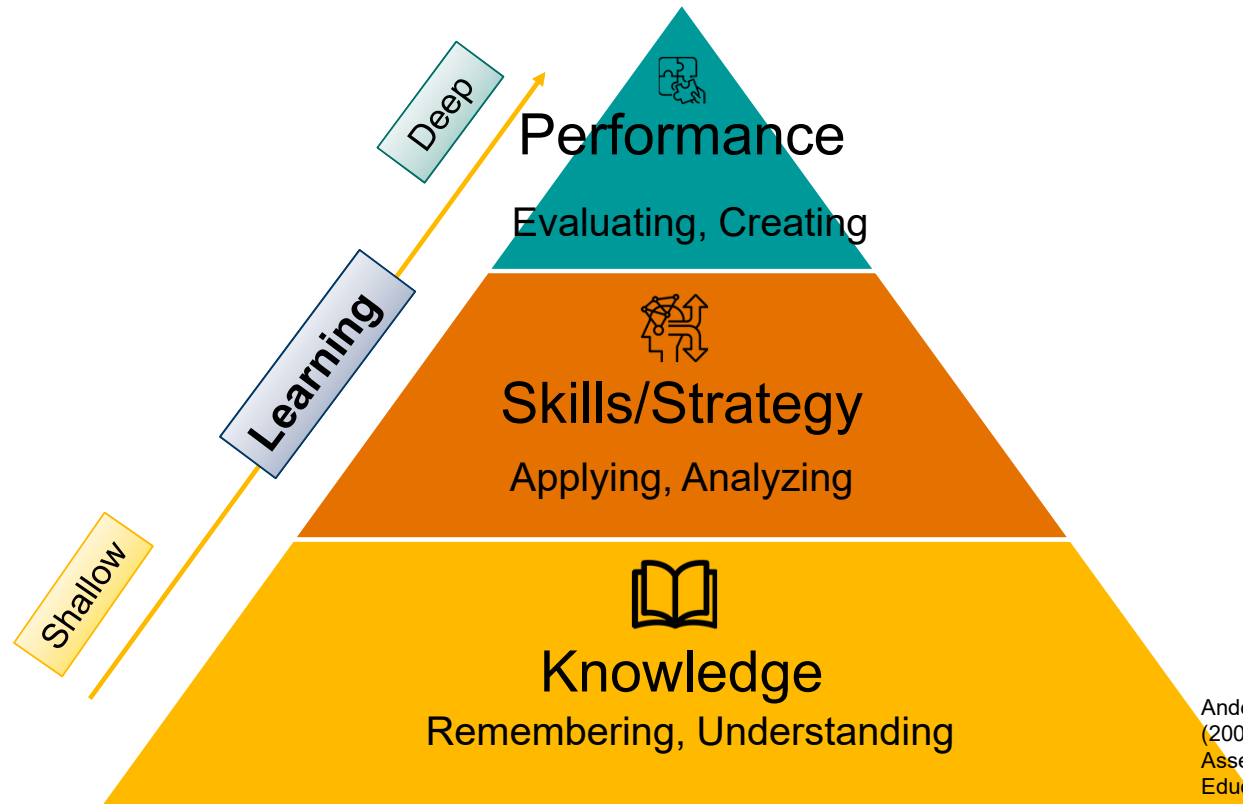**Skills/strategy needs** – target audience does not know how

Performance needs – target audience is unable to show or do in actual practice

What kind of educational need will be addressed?

Identify
practice gap

Educational needs follow a continuum from shallow to deep learning.

Deep

Learning

Shallow

Performance

Evaluating, Creating

Skills/Strategy

Applying, Analyzing

Knowledge

Remembering, Understanding

Anderson, L.W. and David R. Krathwol, D.R., et al (2000) A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Allyn & Bacon

Example single profession educational need

Identified practice gap: A new antibiotic was recently approved for treating community acquired pneumonia.	
Need type	**Need statement**
Knowledge	Understanding that a new antibiotic is available for community acquired pneumonia.
Skills/strategy	Knowing how to prescribe the antibiotic to patients with community acquired pneumonia.
Performance	Ability to integrate an evidence based approach to using the new antibiotic in clinical practice.

Example interprofessional educational need

Identified practice gap: Communication between members of the health care team is negatively impacting patient safety because the team is not utilizing communication techniques.	
Need type	**Need statement**
Knowledge	Understanding of communication techniques.
Skills/strategy	Knowing how to utilize communication techniques.
Performance	Ability to incorporate communication techniques to reduce safety errors.

Activity content guidelines

Planning committees are recognized as the subject matter experts and charged with ensuring that the activity content is:

Designed to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships of individual learners and/or the health care team.

Based on the body of knowledge and skills generally recognized and accepted by the profession and/or the health care team.

Non-promotional and independent of any commercial interest influence.

What is the best format to deliver planned content?

Plan activity content

> Suggested planning committee discussion question:
> 1. What educational format is the most appropriate for the content and desired results of this activity?

Most commonly used formats include:

Courses – partial day to multiple day live activities
ex. conferences, symposia, workshops

Regularly Scheduled Series – live activities planned for the same audience on a regular schedule
ex. case conferences, Grand Rounds, Journal Clubs, M&M, Tumor Boards

Enduring materials – Internet – asynchronous online content the learner accesses at their convenience
ex. online courses

FAQ:
Can learners receive credit for attending live activities via videoconference?

Yes, if the learners at the remote location are able to fully participate in discussions, ask questions, and receive answers.

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Learner engagement strategies

Incorporating active learning strategies and learner assessment will help you to assess if the activity addressed the problem you intended it to.

Educational need type the activity will address	Suggested active learning techniques
Knowledge	Integrating opportunities for dialogue or question/answer
	Including time for self-check or reflection
	Games and quizzes to practice recall
Skills/Strategy	Reviewing case studies with interactive discussion
	Use of an audience response system
	Providing opportunities for problem-based learning
Performance	Example with practice
	Role play
	Demonstration
	Simulation/practice exercises

Learning objectives

Learning objectives are required for all accredited educational activities and should:

- Clearly communicate the focus of the educational content.
- Link the educational need to the expected outcomes.
- Align with activity educational need and practice gap.
- Be consistent with professional competencies of target audience (i.e. scope of practice).
- Define faculty and learner responsibilities.
- Enable evaluation of the learners and the content.

Suggested planning committee discussion question:
1. What observable learner action(s) should be achieved by the end of the activity?

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Learning objectives

Each learning objective should have a verb appropriate for the educational need type/level of learning for the activity and a stem describing the learner outcome.

Verb: chosen by activity type that elicits or describes a measurable/observable behavior
Stem: outcome-based take away

Helpful hints:
Do: Describe the observable action that you would expect to see the learner "doing" upon completion of the learning activity.
Don't: Do not describe the instruction that you, the faculty member, will perform in order to teach the learner.

Do: Describe only one action in each objective.
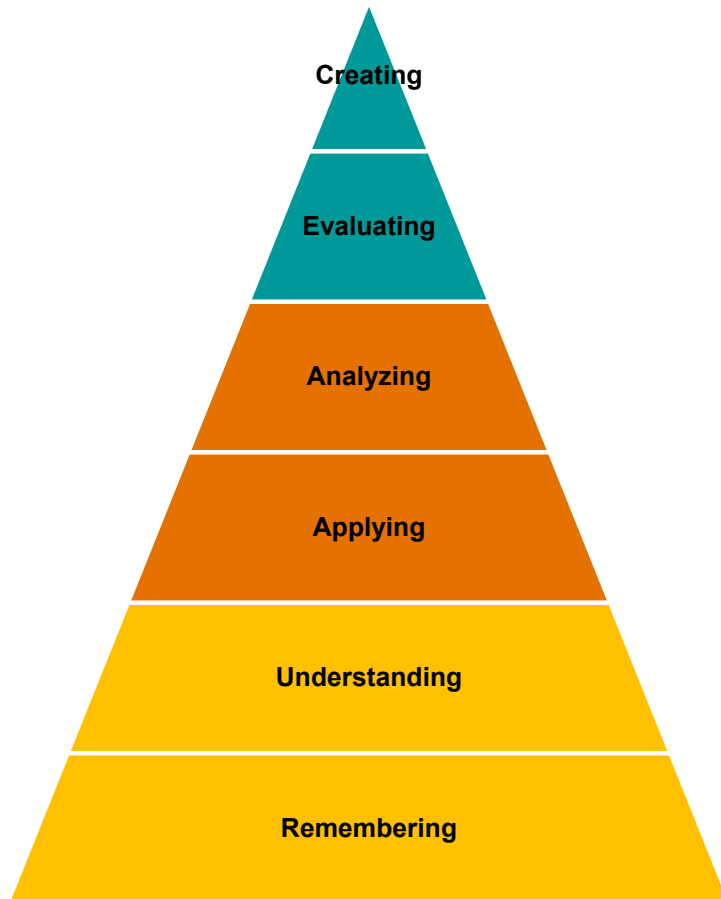**Don't:** Combine more than one action using "and."

Do: Write learning objectives that are supported by the content of the learning activity.
Don't: Write a learning objective based on content that is insufficiently addressed.

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Learning objectives

Write learning objectives

Select "stem" verbs based on identified educational need

Pyramid (top to bottom):
- Creating
- Evaluating
- Analyzing
- Applying
- Understanding
- Remembering

Creating: Assemble, construct, create, design, develop, formulate, plan, propose

Evaluating: Appraise, argue, assess, defend, evaluate, judge, select, support, value

Analyzing: Calculate, compare, contrast, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, examine, experiment, test

Applying: Choose, demonstrate, employ, illustrate, interpret, operate, schedule, sketch, solve, use, write

Understanding: Classify, describe, explain, identify, locate, outline, recognize, report, select

Remembering: Define, list, name, order, recall, repeat, reproduce, state

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Anderson, L.W. and David R. Krathwol, D.R., et al (2000) A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. Allyn & Bacon

Example single profession learning objectives

	Identified practice gap: A new antibiotic was recently approved for treating community acquired pneumonia.	
Need type	**Need statement**	**Learning objectives**
Knowledge	Understanding that a new antibiotic is available for community acquired pneumonia	• Describe risks and benefits of new antibiotic. • Discuss available treatments for community acquired pneumonia.
Skills/strategy	Knowing how to prescribe the antibiotic to patients with community acquired pneumonia	• Compare new antibiotic to existing treatment options. • Choose appropriate antibiotic for patients with community acquired pneumonia.
Performance	Ability to integrate an evidence based approach to using the new antibiotic to treat community acquired pneumonia in clinical practice	• Select appropriate antibiotic. • Formulate treatment plan for community acquired pneumonia.

Example interprofessional learning objectives

Identified practice gap: Communication between members of the health care team is negatively impacting patient safety because the team is not utilizing communication techniques.		
Need type	**Need statement**	**Learning objective**
Knowledge	Understanding of communication techniques	• Name common team communication techniques. • Explain how communication can impact patient safety.
Skills/strategy	Knowing how to utilize communication techniques	• Demonstrate appropriate team communication in role play scenario. • Examine communication behaviors that impact patient safety.
Performance	Ability to incorporate communication techniques to reduce safety errors	• Select appropriate team communication in practice. • Assess team's communication skills.

Write learning objectives

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Content delivery

Planning committees are encouraged to provide learners with materials and resources to use in practice, more than copies of presentations.

Common examples include:

- Patient reminders
- Pocket guides
- Screening tools

Activity evaluation

VCU Health Continuing Education has template evaluation forms available to planning committees. All accredited continuing education activities must collect evaluation data that summarizes changes in practice. VCU Health does this through learner self-report of intent to change practice.

Planning committees should think about what information would be helpful to collect in advance to inform evaluation tool design.