



**Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education  
Guidelines Associated with the ACPE Definition of  
Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy**

In October 2006, the ACPE Board of Directors adopted a revised Definition of Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy. This definition better defines continuing pharmacy education (CPE), includes pharmacy technicians, describes the professional competencies identified for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, and explains the responsibilities of a provider of continuing pharmacy education.

A multitude of educational CPE activities exist in various formats and venues. Some of these activities benefit pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in their lifelong learning process but do not necessarily constitute CPE as defined by the ACPE *Definition of Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy* and the ACPE *Criteria for Quality and Interpretive Guidelines*. As a result, such CE activities should not have continuing pharmacy education credit provided. At the same time, some of these formats and venues may be restructured to meet the requirements for CPE. The following document includes commonly asked questions to further guide the CPE provider as to what constitutes CPE and how some of these venues may be reformatted so they may be offered for CPE credit. The questions are provided in sections, alphabetically, by venue.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the ACPE staff.

**Association membership or leadership activities**

- What leadership activities are considered CPE?  
Leadership activities that may be considered as CPE are activities that include the development of supervision and management skills of the pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician as it relates to their pharmacy practice.
- Can an association offer CPE activities in conjunction with a membership rally?  
Yes, however the hours awarded for credit should be only for the CPE component and not the membership rally.

**Committee meetings**

- Can committee meetings award CPE credit?  
A committee, such as a Board of Directors, association committees, hospital committees, etc. consists of a group of individuals delegated to consider, investigate, take action on, or report on some matter. If the committee's agenda includes a formal, structured, and specific educational component that is conducted by an ACPE-accredited provider, a minimum of 60 minutes (equal to one contact hour) and the participants can be engaged in the activity, participants may receive credit only for the educational component. The committee members may not receive credit for the time spent on the work of the committee.

### **Location of the continuing pharmacy education activity**

- Can CPE be offered during a cruise or at a resort?  
The facilities utilized should be appropriate and adequate to the content and method of delivery of the CPE activity and be appropriately equipped. In addition, the educational delivery should be separate from any promotional, extracurricular or leisure activity. Credit should only be awarded for the time the pharmacist participates in the educational activity.

### **News briefs and/or news updates**

- Are newsletters that cover a variety of brief unrelated subjects considered CPE?  
No. Although this type of newsletter may be worthwhile and quick to read, it is mostly informational and does not constitute CPE. This content defies Criterion 19 of ACPE's *Criteria for Quality* that states, "Each CE activity shall be designed to explore one subject or a group of closely related subjects." Instead, providers may use this venue as an educational needs assessment whereby, a pharmacist informs the provider of areas within the newsletter for which he or she would like further education; or providers may alter the format and content of this type of newsletter to have a common theme, relate content to the contemporary practice of pharmacy, and incorporate relevant active learning or learning assessments so then it may be considered for CPE credit.

### **Participation on clinical rounds**

- Can pharmacists receive CPE credit for participation on clinical rounds?  
Clinical rounds can be an invaluable learning experience; the exposure to real patients, multidisciplinary discussion, and active participation provide a great opportunity for learning. However, in order to offer CPE credit, the experience needs to be formal and structured. It can:
  - i. be organized as part of a larger organized CPE series,
  - ii. be part of a certificate program that meets Standards No. 3 Instructional Design (*Standards and Quality Assurance Procedures for ACPE-Accredited Providers of Continuing Pharmacy Education Offering Certificate Programs in Pharmacy*) or
  - iii. held in conjunction with other related and integrated instructional experiences such as didactic components, reflection exercises, etc.
- Can teaching, precepting or mentoring of pharmacy students be considered for CPE credit?  
No. Teaching as part of one's work responsibilities cannot be considered as CPE. A pharmacist may receive CPE credit as the faculty member for an activity that is providing CPE credit, but only on the first occasion of the activity, and only for the amount of credit being awarded to participants.

### **Participation and/or presentation in journal clubs**

- Can journal clubs be offered for CPE?  
A journal club can be offered for CPE credit if it is formal, structured, has a specific focus or theme, includes measurable learning objectives and an instructional design where assessment of learning can take place. The provider should notify participants of the requirements for credit if various formats are used (e.g. pre-reading of the article, live discussion directed by the journal club leader, etc.)
- How are hours assigned to a journal club?  
As indicated in the *Criteria for Quality*, Criterion 6, an educationally sound and defensible process must be employed and documented. Acceptable procedures include, but are not limited to:

- Pilot testing the activity with a group of pharmacists and/or pharmacy technicians who are representative of the target audience and ascertaining the average length of time for completion for only those participants who successfully complete the CPE activity.
- Rendering a determination by an advisory panel, consisting of individuals qualified by experience and training in the development and administration of CPE.

### **Participation and/or presentation of poster sessions**

- Are poster sessions considered CPE?
 

A poster session can be offered as CPE credit if it is formal, structured, has a specific focus or theme, includes measurable learning objectives and an instructional design in which assessment of learning can take place. The provider must ensure that the posters include appropriate content. For example, research-based poster sessions on a variety of topics that do not focus on a specific focus or theme would not be considered CPE. In addition, the setting must be in an environment conducive for learning and discussion. For example, exhibit halls are not considered a setting conducive for CPE poster sessions. A poster session that has a limited number of posters with a specific theme, appropriate learning objectives, includes active learning and learning assessment components, and the provider is able to verify the pharmacists' and/or pharmacy technicians' participation may be considered for CPE credit.
- How are hours assigned to a poster session?
 

As indicated in the *Criteria for Quality*, Criterion 6, an educationally sound and defensible process must be employed and documented. Acceptable procedures include, but are not limited to:

  - Pilot testing the activity with a group of pharmacists and/or pharmacy technicians who are representative of the target audience and ascertaining the average length of time for completion for only those participants who successfully complete the CPE activity; or,
  - Rendering a determination by an advisory panel, consisting of individuals qualified by experience and training in the development and administration of CPE.

### **Patient Safety**

- What topic areas would be assigned the topic designator “05” for patient safety?
 

The prevention of healthcare errors, and the elimination or mitigation of patient injury caused by healthcare errors (defined as an unintended healthcare outcome caused by a defect in the delivery of care to a patient). Healthcare errors may be errors of:

  - i. commission (doing the wrong thing),
  - ii. omission (not doing the right thing), or
  - iii. execution (doing the right thing incorrectly).

Errors may be made by any member of the healthcare team in any healthcare setting. (definitions approved by the National Patient Safety Foundation® Board July 2003)

### **Personal development, i.e. financial seminars, etc.**

- Can personal financial seminars be considered CPE?
 

No. Educational sessions that pertain solely to personal issues, such as financial seminars that discuss individual retirement accounts, investments, etc. are not considered CPE. However, financial management courses that pertain to managing pharmacy practice can be considered for continuing education credit if the activity is applicable to the practice of pharmacy.
- Can a pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician receive credit for a session regarding time management or burn out prevention?
 

If the session includes content relating to the practice of pharmacy, it can be considered for CPE credit.

## Universal Program Number (UPN)

- How will the UPN be depicted if a CPE activity is designed only for pharmacists?  
If the CPE activity is intended for pharmacists only, that activity will have the same UPN with respect to the provider identification number, cosponsor designation, year of release, sequence number and format; however, the topic designator in the number will be specific to each audience. For example: 197-000-06-001-L05-**P** (program number to be used for pharmacists).
- How will the UPN be depicted if a CPE activity is designed only for pharmacy technicians?  
If the CPE activity is intended for pharmacy technicians, that activity will have the same UPN with respect to the provider identification number, cosponsor designation, year of release, sequence number and format; however, the topic designator in the number will be specific to each audience. For example: 197-000-06-001-L05-**T** (program number to be used for pharmacy technicians).
- How will the UPN be depicted if a CPE activity is designed for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians?  
If the CE activity is intended for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, providers must be able to demonstrate needs assessments, performance objectives, and learning assessments for the pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, respectively. The CPE activity will be assigned two UPNs specific to each audience. For example:  
197-000-06-001-L05-**P** (program number to be used for pharmacists)  
197-000-06-001-L05-**T** (program number to be used for pharmacy technicians)
- How will the UPN be depicted if a CPE activity is also designed for physicians and/or nurses?  
If the physician or nurse participated in a CPE activity and request an ACPE statement of credit, the UPN would be depicted as it is for pharmacists. For example: 197-000-06-001-L05-**P** (program number to be used for pharmacists).
- What happens if pharmacy technicians attend and participate in a CPE activity designed for pharmacists (“P” designation)?  
The UPN designation is based upon the content and the intended audience. If the content is geared for pharmacists, the UPN should have a “P” designation and the statements of credit should contain a UPN with the “P” designation. The pharmacy technician would receive a “P” designated statement of credit that should not be acceptable to the pharmacy technicians’ regulatory body.
- What happens if pharmacists attend and participate in a CPE activity designed for pharmacy technicians (“T” designation)?  
The UPN designation is based upon the content and the intended audience. If the content is geared for pharmacy technicians, the UPN should have a “T” designation and the statements of credit should contain a UPN with the “T” designation. The pharmacist would receive a “T” designated statement of credit that should not be acceptable for credit for relicensure.

## Work experience

- Is on the job training considered CPE?  
In general, on-the-job training/work experience would not be considered for CPE credit. However, if the training/work experience is formal, structured, involves knowledge and skills that can be applied to any pharmacy setting, and is conducted by an ACPE-accredited provider then the training/work experience may be offered for CPE credit. For example, if the employee were to observe other employees for a certain time period, this would not be considered for CPE credit. However if the training/work experience includes a

didactic/classroom component, viewing a videotape, etc. this may be considered for CPE credit. In addition, if the training/work experience is specific to that setting, CPE credit cannot be offered, e.g. reading the company's policies and procedures, attending a training session for the hospital or chain computer system, etc.

- Can a pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician who is conducting a session that awards CPE credit also receive the CPE credit?

Yes. The pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician may receive CPE credit for the time assigned to the activity and only on the first occasion of the activity. The pharmacist and/or pharmacy technician cannot receive CPE credit for the time spent in the preparation of the material.