



Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education Definition of Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy

What is the definition of continuing education?

Continuing education for the profession of pharmacy is a structured¹ educational activity designed or intended to support the continuing professional development of pharmacists and/or pharmacy technicians to maintain and enhance their competence. Continuing pharmacy education (CPE) should promote problem-solving and critical thinking and be applicable to the practice of pharmacy.

What does 'applicable to the practice of pharmacy' mean?

In general, for guidance in organizing and developing CPE activity content, providers should ensure that, as for all health care professionals, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians should develop and maintain proficiency in six core areas*:

- delivering patient-centered care,
- working as part of interprofessional teams,
- practicing evidence-based medicine,
- focusing on quality improvement,
- using information technology, and
- developing and maintaining safe and effective medication use processes**.

*Adapted from Institute of Medicine's Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality, April 2003.

The American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP) [Curricular Outcomes and Entrustable Professional Activities \(COEPA, pronounced COPA\) 2022](#) and the [Pharmacy Technician Certification Exam \(PTCE\) Content Outline](#) should be utilized by ACPE-accredited providers as guides in developing CE activity content appropriate for pharmacists and/or pharmacy technicians.

How will CPE activities for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians be designated?

Announcement materials (e.g., brochures, advertisements, e-mail blasts, or other announcements) should clearly and explicitly identify the target audience that will benefit from the content of the CPE activity. If a CPE activity includes pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in the same CPE activity specific and separate learning objectives should be described for each, pharmacists, and pharmacy technicians. Please note that CPE activities pertaining to, for example, law, may have one set of objectives for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians.

In addition, a Universal Activity Number is an identification number that is assigned to each CPE activity developed and provided, or jointly provided, by an ACPE-accredited provider. This number is developed by appending to the ACPE provider identification number (e.g. 0197), the joint provider designation number (0000 for no joint provider, 9999 for joint providers), the year of CE activity development (e.g., 23), the sequential number of the CPE activity from among the new CPE activities developed during that year (e.g., 001), and the topic and format designators (see below).

Joint Provider Designators:

ACPE-accredited providers that collaborate on content development with ACPE and/or non ACPE-accredited providers are engaging in joint providership. ACPE expects all CPE activities to comply with the *Accreditation Standards for Continuing Pharmacy Education*. It is the accredited provider's responsibility to demonstrate to ACPE compliance through written documentation.

- 0000 - no joint providership
- 9999 - joint providership with another organization

Format Designators:

Home Study Format: Enduring content that does not have live interaction between the speaker and audience. These activities are valid for a maximum of three years, and any date between the 3-year release and expiration date is a valid date of participation to claim credit.

Live Format: Live interaction between the speaker and audience. While these activities are valid for a maximum of three years, specific live dates and locations must be submitted and the learner can only claim credit on those specific live dates.

Home and Live Format: The same activity content is being conducted, but in two different formats. The first format (Live) is conducting the content at a live session with real-time speaker/audience interaction, and the second format (Home study) is a recording of that same live session posted as enduring content. Two UANs (same sequence number) will be generated if this selection is made. Learners attending the Home study session will receive Home study credit with the H-UAN, and the learners attending the live session will receive live credit with the L-UAN.

Both Format: If the activity format of Home and Live is selected for a Certificate Program, a B (for "both") will populate in the final UAN, indicating this activity requires both the home study portion and live portion to be completed for the learner to claim credit. Each format has different content and a different credit amount can be applied to each format tab to make a cumulative credit amount for the entire Certificate Program. This is different than the Home and Live format for Application and Knowledge- based activities, where the Home and Live format is the same content, but created in two different formats and credit is designated on the General tab.

- L - Live activities
- H - Home study and other mediated activities
- B - Activities that contain both live and home study or mediated components (Certificate Programs)

Topic Designators – activities are related to:

If a CPE activity's target audience is exclusively for *pharmacists*, the designation "P" will be used as follows:

- 01-P **Disease State Management/Drug therapy** - activities that address drugs, drug therapy, and/or disease states.
- 02-P **HIV/AIDS** - activities that address therapeutic, social, ethical, or psychological issues related to the understanding and treatment of patients with HIV/AIDS.
- 03-P **Law Related to Pharmacy Practice** - activities that address federal, state, or local laws and/or regulations affecting the practice of pharmacy.
- 04-P **Pharmacy Administration** - activities that address topics relevant to the practice of pharmacy that include the economic, social, administrative and managerial aspects of pharmacy practice and health care.

- **05-P Patient Safety** - activities that address topics relevant to the prevention of healthcare errors and the elimination or mitigation of patient injury caused by healthcare errors.
- **06-P Immunizations** - activities related to the provision of immunizations, i.e., recommend immunization schedules, administration procedures, proper storage and disposal, and record keeping. This also includes review for appropriateness or contraindication and identifying and reporting adverse drug events and providing necessary first aid.
- **07-P Compounding** - activities related to sterile, nonsterile, and hazardous drug compounding for humans and animals. This includes best practices and USP quality assurance standards, environmental testing and control, record keeping, error detection and reporting, and continuous quality improvement processes.
- **08-P Pain Management** - activities that address any component regarding the treatment and management of pain, including the prescribing, distribution and use of opioid medications, and/or the risks, symptoms, and treatment of opioid misuse/addiction.
- **99-P Additional Topic Areas** - activities related to topics relevant to the practice of pharmacy not included in the classifications of the topic designators 01-08.

If a CPE activity's target audience is exclusively for *pharmacy technicians*, the designation "T" will be used as follows:

- 01-T Disease State Management/Drug therapy
- 02-T HIV/AIDS
- 03-T Law Related to Pharmacy Practice
- 04-T Pharmacy Administration
- 05-T Patient Safety
- 06-T Immunizations
- 07-T Compounding
- 08-T Pain Management
- 99-T Additional Topic Areas

Note: If the CPE activity is intended for both pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, that activity will have the same Universal Activity Number with respect to the provider identification number, joint provider designation, year of release, sequence number and format; however, the topic designator in the number will be specific to each audience, either a "P" or "T." For example:

0197-0000-23-001-L05-**P** (activity number to be used for pharmacists)

0197-0000-23-001-L05-**T** (activity number to be used for pharmacy technicians)

Have questions?

If you have any questions as to what constitutes continuing education for the profession of pharmacy, please contact the ACPE staff at ceinfo@acpe-accredit.org or phone 312-664-3575.

¹ Continuing education whereby the components comply with the ACPE *Standards for Continuing Pharmacy Education*