

A large, stylized leaf graphic in shades of gray is positioned on the left side of the page, extending from the top to the bottom. The leaf has a central vein and several smaller veins branching off, creating a sense of movement and growth. The background is white with faint, light gray lines forming a grid or pattern.

# **ANCC NCPD Accredited Approver Policy and Operations Manual**

## **Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation**

 American Nurses Credentialing Center

NCPD Accredited Approver Policy & Operations Manual, Version 1.0 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), July 1, 2025

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# Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation

 American Nurses Credentialing Center

## ANCC NCPD ACCREDITED APPROVER POLICY AND OPERATIONS MANUAL

Published by American Nurses Credentialing Center, 8403 Colesville Road, Suite 500, Silver Spring, MD 20910

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### DISCLAIMER

Adhering to all of the processes within the *ANCC NCPD Accredited Approver Policy and Operations Manual* facilitates organizational accreditation but does not, in and of itself, guarantee achievement of accreditation.

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### NOTICE

Changes may be made to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria and the *ANCC NCPD Accredited Approver Policy and Operations Manual*. Accredited organizations must confirm that they are using the most current edition of the *ANCC NCPD Accredited Approver Policy and Operations Manual* and other up-to-date resources to ensure that they are demonstrating adherence to the current ANCC NCPD Accreditation™ standards.

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### REFERENCE

ANCC. (2025). *NCPD accredited approver policy and operations manual: Version 1.0 (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.)*. American Nurses Enterprise.

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### EFFECTIVE DATE – JULY 1, 2025

Accredited organizations are to use this manual effective immediately. All other manuals and memos are to be archived.

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# PREFACE

It is a distinct honor to present the updated Policy and Operations Manual for the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Nursing Continuing Professional Development (NCPD) Accreditation Program™ for Accredited Approvers, developed in collaboration with the Commission on Accreditation in Nursing Continuing Professional Development (COA-NCPD). This policy and operations manual outlines the most current Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation policies and operational expectations for Accredited Providers. While the format and presentation have been refreshed, including the new American Nurses Enterprise branding, the foundational elements of the accreditation process remain grounded in evidence-based standards.

The ANCC Accreditation Program is governed by the volunteer COA-NCPD, whose members bring diverse expertise from academia, professional associations, government, educational organizations, and the interprofessional healthcare community, both domestically and internationally. This governance structure ensures strategic direction, oversight, and the continuous advancement of criteria that respond to the needs of today's nursing workforce.

The ANCC COA-NCPD has completed a comprehensive review of the current ANCC Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation™ criteria and requirements for Accredited Providers. Following this review, the COA-NCPD has approved significant revisions to the criteria, including updates to individual activity requirements. These updates are designed to enhance the quality and relevance of the continuing professional development provided by organizations approved as providers and individual activities approved by Accredited Approvers, thereby benefiting both the providers and the nurses they serve. This is the first substantive update to the criteria since 2015.

This manual includes a dedicated chapter on the educational design process, emphasizing the structure, processes, and quality outcomes that shape activity planning and contribute directly to improvements in nursing practice and patient or system outcomes.

On behalf of the COA-NCPD and the ANCC Accreditation Program team, we would like to express our gratitude for your unwavering commitment to excellence and for being an integral part of this vibrant community of practice. The Power of Nursing™ is about leading learning—today, tomorrow, and always.

**JENNIFER GRAEBE, DrPH, MSN, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN**

Senior Director, Nursing Continuing Professional Development Accreditation and Joint Accreditation™ Programs, American Nurses Credentialing Center

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# CHAPTER 5

## APPROVING APPROVED PROVIDERS AND INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY APPLICANTS

Section One outlines the eligibility and application requirements for Accredited Approvers (Constituent State Nurses Association of the American Nurses Association and the Federal Nursing Service ) to approve organizations as Approved Providers, including the criteria for submitting the narrative component of the application process. Approved Providers may be eligible for up to three years of approval.

### SECTION ONE: APPROVING APPROVED PROVIDERS

#### Eligibility For Approval As An Approved Provider

An organization can only become an Approved Provider if it meets the structural and operational components of the Approved Provider as outlined below.

- To be eligible to apply to become an Approved Provider, an applicant must be one of the following:
  - American Nurses Association organizational affiliate,
  - College or university,
  - Constituent and State Nurses Association (C/SNA) of the ANA,
  - Federal Nursing Service (FNS),
  - Healthcare facility,
  - Health-related organization,
  - Multidisciplinary educational group,
  - Professional nursing education group,
  - Specialty nursing organization (SNO), or
  - National nursing association/organization.
- Be in compliance with all applicable international, federal, state, and local laws and regulations that affect the Approved Provider’s ability to meet ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria;
- Be in compliance with ethical standards as identified in the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses and ethical standards for business operations;
- Not be an ineligible company as defined in the glossary and the
- Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education;
- Be administratively and operationally responsible for coordinating the entire process of planning, implementing, and delivering NCPD;

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## Primary Nurse Planner

A registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted nursing license (or international equivalent) and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent), and who has the authority with an approved provider to ensure adherence to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria in the provision of NCPD.

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## Nurse Planner

A registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted nursing license, and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent) who is actively involved in all aspects of planning, implementation, and evaluation of each NCPD activity. The nurse planner is responsible for ensuring that appropriate educational design principles are used and that processes are consistent with the requirements of the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program.

- Identify a Primary Nurse Planner who will serve as the liaison between the ANCC Accredited Approver and the Approved Provider;
- Have a Primary Nurse Planner who is a registered nurse, holds a current, unrestricted nursing license (or international equivalent) and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent), and who has authority within the organization to ensure compliance with the accreditation criteria and Accredited Approver requirements in the provision of NCPD;
- Have a Primary Nurse Planner who is responsible for the orientation of all Nurse Planners in the organization to the accreditation criteria;
- Ensure that all other Nurse Planners in the Approved Provider are registered nurses who hold current, unrestricted nursing licenses (or international equivalent) and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent);
- Ensure that each NCPD activity has a qualified Nurse Planner who is an active participant in the planning, implementation, and evaluation process;
- Be operational for a minimum of six months prior to application;
- Have completed, if initial applicants, the process of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation for at least three separate educational activities provided at separate and distinct events:
  - With the direct involvement of a Nurse Planner;
  - That adhered to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria;
  - That were each a minimum of one hour [sixty (60) minutes] in length (contact hours may or may not have been offered); and
  - That were not jointly provided.
- Target NCPD activities to nurses in a single HHS region and its contiguous states (based on the HHS regions: [hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/regional-offices/index.html](https://hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/regional-offices/index.html)). Applicants whose target audience is in multiple regions or in states that are not confined to a single region and its contiguous states for more than 50% of its activities may not be Approved Providers. Instead, it must apply to ANCC as an Accredited Provider through the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program.
- Accredited Approvers must provide direction to Approved Providers that marketing an activity on a national platform, such as a website, social media, or national publication, targets nurses outside of the HHS region. Therefore, it must verify that over 50% of the activities provided are not targeted to an audience outside of the HHS region or its contiguous states. It is the responsibility of the AA-PD to ensure adherence to this policy and investigate compliance if there is concern that an Approved Provider is not adhering to this requirement. Evidence that the approved provider is maintaining geographic boundary requirements is required. If the investigation reveals that the approved provider is in violation, it should be directed to the ANCC to apply as an Accredited Provider.

- Follow all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations that affect the organization’s ability to meet Accredited Approver criteria.

## Primary Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Description

### Licensure and Educational Requirements

- A registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted nursing license (or international equivalent) and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent), and who has the authority with an Approved Provider to ensure adherence to the ANCC Accredited Approver and ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria in the provision of NCPD.

### Primary Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Competencies

- Compliance Oversight: Demonstrates the authority to ensure the Approved Provider operates in full compliance with the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria, addressing all operational aspects of the organization.
- Operational Accountability: Ensures adherence to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria in all facets of nursing continuing professional development activities, maintaining alignment with organizational operations as an Approved Provider.
  - Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria.
  - Ensures all educational activities adhere to the standards for planning, implementing, and evaluating continuing professional development activities.
  - Maintains documentation to support compliance with accreditation requirements.
  - Identifies professional practice gaps and analyzes the underlying causes.

- Selects appropriate established competencies from professional sources that align with the professional practice gap and underlying educational need of an educational activity.

- Develops measurable learning outcomes aligned with the identified practice gaps, underlying educational needs, and identified professional competencies.

- Designs and implements assessment methods to assess learning outcomes and program effectiveness.

- Analyzes evaluation data to identify demonstrate impact on professional practice and opportunities for improvement for future activities.

- Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education and effectively incorporates these standards into the planning and implementation of accredited educational activities.

- Nurse Planner Development: Leads the orientation and fosters the ongoing competence of Nurse Planners, ensuring alignment with the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria.

- Credential Verification: Ensures each Nurse Planner is a registered nurse with a current, unrestricted nursing license (or international equivalent) and possesses a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent).

- Criteria Compliance in Educational Activities: Ensures all Nurse Planners have a thorough understanding of the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria and maintain accountability for adherence throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation of educational activities.

- Advocacy: Advocates for appropriate resources to successfully adhere to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria and provide high-quality continuing education.

## Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Competencies

- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria.
- Ensures all educational activities adhere to the standards for planning, implementing, and evaluating continuing professional development activities.
- Maintains documentation to support compliance with accreditation requirements.
- Identifies professional practice gaps and analyzes the underlying causes.
- Selects appropriate established competencies from professional sources that align with the professional practice gap and underlying educational need of an educational activity.
- Develops measurable learning outcomes aligned with the identified practice gaps, underlying educational needs, and identified professional competencies.
- Designs and implements assessment methods to assess learning outcomes and program effectiveness.
- Analyzes evaluation data to identify impact on professional practice and identify opportunities for improvement for future activities.
- Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education and effectively incorporates these standards into the planning and implementation of accredited educational activities.

## ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

**OO1: Provide an executive statement or high-level strategic summary of the Approved Provider (should be less than 1,000 words).**

### Required Elements:

- Provide an overview of the Approved Provider.
- Identify the mission of the Approved Provider as it relates to its NCPD educational activities.
- Discuss the impact of Approved Provider status on the organization and its learners.

### Guiding Considerations:

- Who supports the Approved Provider in the organization?
- What is the mission or goal of the Approved Provider in the organization?
- Does the Approved Provider support specific initiatives and strategic goals within the organization?

**OO2a: Submit a list including names, credentials, and roles of the Primary Nurse Planner(PNP) and Nurse Planner(s) (if applicable).**

### Required Elements:

- Include a list with the names, credentials, and roles of the PNP and Nurse Planners in the Approved Provider.

**OO2b: Attest that the Primary Nurse Planner and Nurse Planner(s) (if applicable) meet the eligibility requirements outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria.**

### Required Elements:

- Attest to the PNP meeting eligibility requirements outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Criteria.
- Attest to the Nurse Planner(s) meeting eligibility requirements outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Criteria.



**NOTE:** This will be “Not Applicable” if the organization did not have Nurse Planners at the time of initial approval or during the approval term limit\*\* before reapproval.

\*\*The reapproval term limit is defined as the duration of time for which the organization is approved.

## OO2c: Attest that the Primary Nurse Planner and Nurse Planner(s) (if applicable) understand and adhere to the required roles and responsibilities outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Criteria.

### Required Elements:

- Attest to the PNPs adhering to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria.
- Attest to the Nurse Planners adhering to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria.



**NOTE:** This will be “Not Applicable” if the organization did not have Nurse Planners at the time of initial approval or during the approval term limit\*\* before re-approval.

\*\*The approval term limit is defined as the duration of time for which the organization is approved.

## OO2d: Attest that the Provider understands and adheres to the required geographic boundary rule outlined in the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Criteria

### Required Elements:

- Attest to the Provider’s understanding and adherence to the required geographic boundary rule.

## STRUCTURAL CAPACITY

**SC1: Submit the Approved Provider’s NCPD mission statement and a brief narrative that demonstrates the alignment of the mission statement to the expected outcomes of its educational program in terms of impact or changes in knowledge, skill, and/or practice (no more than 500 words).**

### Required Elements:

- Provide the Approved Provider’s NCPD mission statement.
- Describe how the mission statement aligns with the expected outcomes in terms of impact or changes in knowledge, skill, and/or practice.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What is the NCPD mission statement?
- What are the expected outcomes of your overall educational programming?
- What are you measuring, in aggregate, to demonstrate the impact of your educational activities on knowledge, skills, and/or practice?

**SC2: Describe how the Primary Nurse Planner was oriented to the role, how competence is evaluated, and how the AP-PD engages in professional development opportunities to ensure adherence and compliance with ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria.**

### Required Elements:

- Describe how the PNP was oriented.
- Describe how the PNP's competence is assessed.
- Describe how the PNP engages in professional development opportunities and how it improves or enhances the role of the PNP.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What processes and resources were used to orient the PNP to their role?
- What criteria or benchmarks are used to evaluate the PNP's competence in their role?
- How does the PNP stay updated on changes in ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria?
- How does participation in professional development activities enhance the PNP's ability to fulfill their role?

**SC3: Describe the process the PNP uses for onboarding, orienting, monitoring compliance, and supporting professional development for Nurse Planners.**

### Required Elements:

- Discuss how the PNP onboards and orients new Nurse Planners to the roles and responsibilities outlined in the Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Description\*.
- Discuss how the PNP provides ongoing compliance monitoring and supports professional development for the Nurse Planners based on the roles and responsibilities outlined in the Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Description\*.



**NOTE:** This will be “Not Applicable” if the organization did not have Nurse Planners at the time of initial approval or during the approval term limit\*\* before re-approval.

\*\*The approval term limit is defined as the duration of time for which the organization is approved.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What steps are included in the onboarding process to introduce new Nurse Planners to their roles and responsibilities?
- What processes or tools (e.g., audits, regular meetings) are used by the PNP to monitor Nurse Planners' compliance with their roles and responsibilities?
- What professional development opportunities are offered to Nurse Planners to enhance their competence?

## EDUCATIONAL DESIGN PROCESS

**EDP1: The provider describes the process for identifying professional practice gaps to address a problem in practice or an opportunity for improvement or enhancement.**

### Required Elements:

- Describe the process used to identify problems in practice or opportunities for improvement or enhancement.
- Discuss how Nurse Planners analyze the professional practice gaps to determine if this is a problem that can be impacted by education.
- Describe the process for identifying appropriate evidence to determine the existence of a professional practice gap.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What steps are included in your process for identifying professional practice gaps?
- How do Nurse Planners evaluate whether an identified gap can be addressed effectively through education?
- What data sources (e.g., surveys, performance metrics, patient outcomes, feedback from learners) are used to identify problems in practice or opportunities for improvement?

**EDP2: The provider describes the process for identifying the underlying educational needs (knowledge, skill, and/or practice) that contribute to the professional practice gap(s).**

### Required Elements:

- Describe the process for determining if the educational activity should focus on knowledge, skill, and/or practice.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What steps are involved in analyzing the professional practice gap to identify the underlying educational needs of knowledge, skill, and/or practice?
- How do you determine if the educational activity should focus on increasing knowledge?
- What criteria do you use to decide if the educational activity should focus on building or improving skills (if applicable)?
- How do you determine if the gap is related to practices or application in real-world settings (if applicable)?

**EDP3: The provider describes the process for identifying the competencies that align with the identified professional practice gap and underlying educational needs (knowledge, skill, and/or practice).**

#### Required Elements:

- Discuss how the Nurse Planner finds established professional competencies.
- Discuss how the Nurse Planner chooses the appropriate competencies that align with the accredited educational activity's professional practice gap and underlying educational needs.
- Describe how the Nurse Planner ensures alignment between the professional practice gap, the underlying educational need, and the identified competencies.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

#### Guiding Considerations:

- What resources or references does the Nurse Planner use to identify established professional competencies?
- What process is used to select competencies that directly address the professional practice gap and underlying educational need(s)?
- How do you review the relationship between the professional practice gap, educational needs, and the selected competencies for alignment?

**EDP4: The provider describes the process for developing learning outcome(s) that are aligned to the professional practice gap, underlying educational needs (knowledge, skill, and/or practice), and identified competencies.**

#### Required Elements:

- Describe the process for how the Nurse Planner develops measurable learning outcome statements.
- Describe how the Nurse Planner ensures alignment between the professional practice gap, underlying educational need(s), competencies, and outcome statement.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

#### Guiding Considerations:

- What steps does the Nurse Planner follow to develop learning outcome statements?
- What methods or tools are used to validate that the outcomes can be objectively assessed?
- How do you review the relationship between the professional practice gap, underlying educational needs, the selected competencies, and learning outcomes for alignment?

**EDP5: The provider describes the process for choosing assessment method(s) that measure changes in learner knowledge, skill, and/or practice expected from participating in the educational activity.**

#### Required Elements:

- Describe the process used to choose the appropriate assessment method.
- Describe how the Nurse Planner ensures that the assessment method measures a change in knowledge, skill, and/or practice that aligns with the professional practice gap, underlying educational need, competencies, and outcome statement.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

#### Guiding Considerations:

- How do you determine which assessment method(s) to use for a specific educational activity?
- How do you verify that the chosen assessment method measures the intended change in learner knowledge, skills, and/or practice?
- How do you ensure that the assessment method aligns with the professional practice gap, underlying educational need, identified competencies and outcome statement(s)?

**EDP6: The provider describes the process for identifying appropriate active learning strategies to promote learning and actively engage learners in educational activities.**

#### Required Elements:

- Describe how the Nurse Planners select appropriate active learning strategies.
- Discuss how active learning strategies align with the underlying educational need.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

#### Guiding Considerations:

- How do you select active learning strategies for an educational activity?
- How do you ensure the selected active learning strategies align with the underlying educational need?
- How do you ensure the selected active learning strategies are appropriate for the learning environment of the activity?

**EDP7: The provider describes the process of analyzing individual activity assessment data to create a summative evaluation.**

#### Required Elements:

- Discuss how the Nurse Planner analyzes individual educational activity data to determine whether the activity successfully achieved the desired outcomes (changes in knowledge, skill, and/or practice).
- Describe how the Nurse Planner analyzes individual educational activity data to guide future activities.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

#### Guiding Considerations:

- What process do you use to analyze assessment data from individual educational activities?
- How do you determine whether an educational activity achieved the desired outcomes?
- How do you use the results of your analysis to inform future educational activities?



**NOTE:** The ANCC adopted the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education. Approved Providers are required to adhere to these standards. While the standards use the term “accredited,” it is important to note that the education offered by Approved Providers is categorized as “approved,” not “accredited.”

**EDP8: The provider describes the process used to develop activities/interventions that comply with the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education (CE), which includes the responsibility to:**

- **Standard 1:** Ensure content is valid.
- **Standard 2:** Prevent commercial bias and marketing in accredited continuing education.
- **Standard 3:** Identify, mitigate, and disclose relevant financial relationships.
- **Standard 4:** Manage commercial support appropriately (if applicable).
- **Standard 5:** Manage ancillary activities offered in conjunction with accredited continuing education (if applicable).

#### Required Elements:

- Describe how the Nurse Planner ensures that the content of CE activities meets all four elements of Standard 1.
- Describe how the Nurse Planners ensure that the content of accredited CE activities and the accredited CE program meet expectations of elements 1 AND 2 of Standard 2.
- Does the Nurse Planner share the names or contact information of learners with an ineligible company or its agent? [State YES or NO]
  - If yes, describe the process, and provide an example(s) of the mechanism(s) used to obtain the explicit consent of individual learners.

- Describe the process for collecting information from all planners (including the Nurse Planner), faculty, and others in control of educational content about all financial relationships with ineligible companies for activities.
- Does the organization use employees or owners of ineligible companies in its accredited CE activities? [State YES or NO]
  - If yes, describe how you meet the expectations of Standard 3.2 (a-c).
- Describe the process used to determine which financial relationships are relevant to the educational content.
- Describe the methods/steps used to mitigate all relevant financial relationships appropriate to the role(s) of activity planners, including the Nurse Planner.
- Describe the methods/steps used to mitigate all relevant financial relationships appropriate to the role(s) of presenters and authors.
- Describe what the Nurse Planners do to ensure that learners are informed of the presence or absence of relevant financial relationships and that all relevant financial relationships have been mitigated.
- Does the organization accept, or plan to accept, commercial support [defined as financial or in-kind support from ineligible companies]? [State YES or NO]
  - If yes, describe how the organization meets the expectations of all four elements of Standard 4.
- Does the organization offer ancillary activities, including advertising, sales, exhibits, or promotion, for ineligible companies and/or nonaccredited education in conjunction with your accredited CE activities? [State YES or NO]
  - If yes, describe how the organization meets the expectations of all three elements of Standard 5.
- The documentation in the Activity Files aligns with and reinforces the narrative provided in the self-study.

## QUALITY OUTCOMES

**Q01: The provider analyzes the results of its overall NCPD activities to determine the degree to which it meets its NCPD mission, and the expected results articulated in terms of knowledge, skill, and/or practice changes.**

### Required Elements:

- Identify at least one of the expected results regarding changes in knowledge, skill, and/or practice the Approved Provider identified during the approval term that impacted the professional development of nurses and/or patients, the organization or the health system.
- Describe the metric(s) by which you measured the achievement of the expected result.
- Describe the initiatives implemented to reach this expected result during the approval term.
- Describe how the results were analyzed and conclusions reached in relation to the achievement of the expected results.

## Guiding Considerations:

- What was one of the expected results related to changes in knowledge, skill, and/or practice that your Approved Provider aimed to achieve during the approval term (shared in SC1)?
- What metrics did you use to measure the achievement of the expected results?
- What initiatives or activities were implemented to achieve the expected results?
- How did you analyze the data collected to assess the achievement of the expected results?
- What conclusions were drawn based on the analysis?

## Q02: The provider evaluates its operations as an Approved Provider and its overall effectiveness, including identifying the metrics used to measure success.

### Required Elements:

- Identify at least one operational quality improvement outcome for the NCPD program during the approval term.
- Describe the metric(s) by which you measured the achievement of the outcome.
- Describe the operational quality improvement initiative implemented to reach this outcome during the approval term.
- Describe how the results were analyzed and conclusions reached in relation to the achievement of the operational quality improvement initiative.

### Guiding Considerations:

- What was one operational quality improvement (QI) initiative for the NCPD program that occurred during the approval term?
- What metrics did you use to measure the achievement of the QI initiative?
- What initiatives or activities were implemented to achieve the QI initiative?
- How did you analyze the data collected to assess the achievement of the QI initiative?
- What conclusions were drawn based on the analysis?

## ACTIVITY FILE DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS:

The following section outlines the documentation requirements for the activity file or performance in practice files. For more information, for each element, beyond documentation requirements, see the Educational Design Process Chapter.

### Activity Types:

- **Live:** Live activities can be in person or web-based and have no expiration date. The provider is expected to periodically evaluate repeated live activities to determine if the practice gap still exists and ensure the underlying educational need remains applicable to the target audience. Content should be evaluated regularly to ensure it is the most current evidence. Live activities may be repurposed into enduring activities. If they are repurposed, they will need to have an expiration date. The NP will also need to consider learner engagement and evaluation strategies that might be different with the transition from live to enduring formats.
- **Enduring:** Enduring material is provider-directed and learner-paced. Enduring materials should have an expiration date based on the content of the material. Providers must review content of any enduring material at least every three years or more frequently if there are new developments in the content field.
- **Blended:** Blended activities involve a “live” component in combination with a provider-directed, learner-paced component. The learner-paced component can be an integral part of the blended activity or can exist on its own as enduring material.

## NCPD Activity File Requirements

- Title of activity
- Location of activity
- Type of activity format (e.g., live vs. enduring)
- Nurse Planner name and credentials
- Date live activity was presented OR for ongoing enduring activities, date first offered and subsequent review dates
- Identify the target audience
- Description of professional practice gap **(EDP1)**
- Evidence that validates the professional practice gap **(EDP1)**
- Educational need(s) that underly the professional practice gap (knowledge, skill, and/or practice) **(EDP2)**
- The established professional competency(ies) and the professional source that developed the competency(ies) **(EDP3)**
- Desired learning outcome(s) **(EDP4)**
- Description of the assessment method **(EDP5)**
- Active learning strategies used **(EDP6)**
- Description of the evidence-based content **(EDP8 Standard 1)**
- References or resources used to support the evidence-based content **(EDP8 Standard 1)**
- Attestation that the activity meets the expectations of all three elements of Standard 2 **(EDP8 Standard 2)**
- Number of contact hours awarded for the activity, including the method of calculation
  - If the activity is longer than three hours, an agenda must be provided for the entire activity
- Documentation of completion and/or certificate:
  - Title of the educational activity
  - Date of the educational activity
  - Name and address of the provider of the educational activity (web address or email address is acceptable)
  - Number of contact hours awarded
  - Approval statement
  - Space for learner's name

- Demonstration of identification and mitigation of financial relationships with ineligible companies for all individuals in a position to control content (planners, presenters, faculty, authors, and/or content reviewers) **(EDP8 Standard 3)**
  - If applicable, include:
    - Name of individual
    - Evidence that the individual is provided with the definition of an ineligible company
    - A list of financial relationships, within the past 24 months, in any amount that exists between the individual and the ineligible company (if any)
  - If not applicable (due to exceptions outlined in the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education Standard 3):
    - Include a statement in planning documentation that financial relationships were not identified and mitigated because the educational activity was exempt
    - Provide a list of the names and credentials of all individuals in position to control
- Evidence of mitigation of relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies (if applicable) **(EDP8 Standard 3)**
- Commercial support agreement with date (if applicable) **(EDP8 Standard 4)**
- Evidence of disclosures to learners:
  - Approval Statement of the provider awarding contact hours
  - Criteria for awarding contact hours statement
  - Presence or absence of relevant financial relationships for all individuals in a position to control content (if applicable) **(EDP8 Standard 3)**
  - Expiration date statement (if applicable, for enduring education only)
  - Joint Providership statement (if applicable)
  - Commercial Support (if applicable) **(EDP8 Standard 4)**
- Summative Evaluation **(EDP7)**
  - Note: A summative evaluation is not required for Individual Activity Applicants.

NCPD ACTIVITY FILE REQUIREMENT	REQUIRED ELEMENTS
<b>TITLE OF ACTIVITY</b>	
<b>Location of activity</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> In-person events: Include city, state, country <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual and online enduring: Indicate “online” for the activity location.
<b>Type of activity format</b>	Indicate if the activity is live, enduring, or blended.
<b>Nurse Planner name and credentials</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Nurse Planner name <input type="checkbox"/> Credentials of Nurse Planner
<b>Date or date range</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> If live, it must include the date the activity was first offered and subsequent offering dates, if applicable. <input type="checkbox"/> If an enduring activity, it must include the date the activity was first offered, subsequent review dates, and the expiration date.
<b>Identify the target audience</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> The target audience <b>must</b> include the registered nurse, but may also include other members of the healthcare team.
<b>Description of professional practice gap</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> What is the problem or opportunity that needs to be addressed by this activity?
<b>Evidence that validates the professional practice gap</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> What data (quantitative, qualitative, anecdotal) supports the need for this educational activity? <input type="checkbox"/> Data can come from a number of sources, including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Survey data from stakeholders, target audience, and subject matter experts</li> <li>— Input from stakeholders (learners, managers, healthcare team)</li> <li>— Evidence from quality studies and/or performance</li> <li>— Improvement activities to identify opportunities for improvement</li> <li>— Evaluation data from previous activities</li> <li>— Trends in literature</li> <li>— Direct observation</li> </ul> <p>◆ <b>It is not sufficient to state that the evidence to support the professional practice gap is that there was a “request” or that the education is “mandated.”</b></p>

NCPD ACTIVITY FILE REQUIREMENT	REQUIRED ELEMENTS
<p><b>Educational needs that underlie the professional practice gap</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Indicate the underlying educational need: Knowledge, skill, and/or practice.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— What do the learners not know (<b>knowledge</b>)?</li> <li>— What do the learners not know how to do (<b>skill</b>)?</li> <li>— What are the learners unable to implement or integrate into their practice setting (<b>practice</b>)?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>The established professional competencies and the professional source that developed the competencies.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify the professional competencies that have been identified from a professional source (i.e., a specialty organization, ANA scopes and standards, a state practice act).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identified competencies must align with the professional practice gap and the underlying educational need(s).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify the professional source that developed the competencies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Desired learning outcome(s)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide a measurable learning outcome that demonstrates what learners should know, show, or do upon completing the activity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Learning outcome(s) must align with the professional practice gap, underlying educational need(s), and identified competencies. An outcome must be identified to address each underlying educational need.</li> <li>◆ <b>Learning outcomes are distinct from learning objectives.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Description of the assessment method</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A description of the method that will be used to assess/measure achievement of the learning outcome(s) and demonstrate a change in knowledge, skills, and/or practice as a result of the educational offering.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Assessment methods must align with the professional practice gap, underlying educational need(s), identified competencies, and learning outcome(s). An assessment method must be selected to measure each outcome.</li> <li>◆ <b>The intent to change practice is not an acceptable short-term or long-term assessment method for measuring impact or change in practice.</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Active learning strategies used</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide the active learning strategies that were incorporated into the educational activity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Active learning strategies must be congruent with the activity format and the underlying educational need.</li> <li>◆ <b>Q&amp;A is not considered an active learning strategy.</b></li> </ul>

NCPD ACTIVITY FILE REQUIREMENT	REQUIRED ELEMENTS
Description of the evidence-based content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Describe the content of the educational activity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> May use a table, an outline format, an abstract, a detailed agenda, or a narrative response.</li> </ul>
References or resources used to support the evidence-based content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify and include the best available evidence reference(s) that support the content of the educational activity.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> References are not required to be provided in APA format. However, references should include adequate detail to ensure that the information referenced can be located (i.e., page number, date, standards number).</li> <li>◆ <b>External URL links to resources are not acceptable.</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Having an expert speaker is not sufficient to support evidence-based content. Published references must also be present.</b></li> </ul>
Attestation that the activity meets the expectations of all three elements of Standard 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide an attestation statement within the activity documentation that states the activity meets the requirements outlined in Standard 2.</li> </ul>
Number of contact hours awarded for the activity, including the method of calculation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Provide the number of contact hours awarded, and the method of calculation must be defensible.</li> <li>◆ <b>If the activity is longer than three hours, an agenda must be provided for the entire activity.</b></li> </ul>
Documentation of completion and/or certificate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Title of the educational activity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Date of the educational activity (if enduring, include the actual date that the learner has completed the activity)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Name and address of the provider of the educational activity (web address or email address is acceptable)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of contact hours awarded</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Approval statement</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Space for the learners name</li> <li>◆ <b>Initial applicants must submit a sample certificate of completion for each educational activity, that includes the accreditation statement to be used once accreditation is attained. The certificate should include all the required elements outlined above.</b></li> </ul>

NCPD ACTIVITY FILE REQUIREMENT	REQUIRED ELEMENTS
<p>Demonstration of identification and mitigation of financial relationships with ineligible companies for all individuals in a position to control content as outlined in Standard 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>If applicable, for each individual</i> in a position to control content, include:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The names of individuals and their roles in planning the activity.</li> <li>▪ A list of financial relationships, within the past 24 months, in any amount that exists between the individual and the ineligible company (if any).</li> <li>▪ The form, tool, or mechanism used to collect information regarding financial relationships.</li> <li>▪ The form/tool/mechanism must include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Evidence that the individual is provided with the definition of an ineligible company.</li> <li>– Evidence of the financial relationships with ineligible companies that has been collected for the past 24 months.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>If not applicable</i> (due to exceptions outlined in Standard 3):           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Include a statement in planning documentation that financial relationships were not identified and mitigated because the educational activity was exempt.</li> <li>▪ Provide a list of the names and roles of all individuals in a position to control content.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Evidence of mitigation of relevant financial relationships with ineligible companies as outlined in Standard 3 (if applicable)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If a relevant financial relationship is identified, document the mitigation strategy implemented.</li> </ul>
<p>Commercial support agreement with date as outlined in Standard 4 (if applicable)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If applicable, provide a dated copy of the commercial support letter of agreement (LOA) with the ineligible company that was executed prior to the start of the accredited education.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The commercial support agreement must align with the requirements outlined in Standard 4.</li> </ul>
<p>Evidence of appropriate management of ancillary activities in conjunction with the activity, as outlined in Standard 5 (if applicable).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Marketing materials associated with the activity in which advertising or marketing for or on behalf of ineligible companies is permitted.</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence to demonstrate that the accredited education is separated in space and/or time from nonaccredited ancillary activities (i.e., exhibits or nonaccredited education).</li> </ul>

**EVIDENCE OF DISCLOSURES TO LEARNERS:**

<p><b>Approval Statement of the provider awarding contact hours</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Must be written as outlined in Chapter 3.</p>
<p><b>Criteria for awarding contact hours statement</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Clearly outline what is expected of the learners in order to earn contact hours.</p>
<p><b>Presence or absence of relevant financial relationship identification and mitigation statement as outlined in Standard 3 (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> If a relevant financial relationship is identified, the statement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Name of individual with relevant financial relationship</li> <li>▪ Name of ineligible companies with which they have a relevant financial relationship(s)</li> <li>▪ The nature of the relationship(s)</li> <li>▪ A statement that the relationship has been mitigated</li> </ul> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If a relevant financial relationship is not identified, the statement includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A statement indicating no relevant financial relationships were identified for all individuals in a position to control content.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Enduring activity expiration date statement (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The expiration date must be shared with learners and cannot be more than three years from the initial date the activity was offered.</p>
<p><b>Joint Providership statement (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> A statement that the activity is jointly provided, which includes the names of the organizations engaged in joint providership.</p>
<p><b>Commercial Support statement as outlined in Standard 4 (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The name(s) of the ineligible company(ies) that gave commercial support.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The nature of the commercial support, if it was in-kind. Disclosure must not include the corporate or product logos, trade names, or product group messages for ineligible companies.</p>

## EVIDENCE OF DISCLOSURES TO LEARNERS:

### For all disclosure statements:

- The activity file documentation must include evidence of how the disclosures were provided to learners.
- Initial applicants must prepare and submit sample disclosures to learners for each educational activity that contains the accreditation statement, to be used once accreditation is attained. The disclosures must include all the applicable disclosure statement requirements.

### Summative Evaluation

**Note:** A summative evaluation is not required for Individual Activity Applicants

- A post-activity analysis of the educational activity assessment data that demonstrates if the educational activity successfully changed the knowledge, skill, and/or practice of the learners.
- An analysis of individual educational activity assessment data to guide future activities.

## Approval Decisions:

Upon completion of the application process, the Accredited Approver Program Director (AA-PD) will make an approval decision. The decision will be communicated to the Primary Nurse Planner. Types of accreditation decisions are detailed below.

### Approved with Distinction

Applicants that provide exemplary narratives and full compliance to the Approved Provider Accreditation with Distinction criteria will be awarded Approval with Distinction (starting July 1, 2026).

### Approved

Applicants that demonstrate compliance with the NCPD accreditation criteria will be awarded Approval.

### Approval with a Progress Report

Applicants that have not fully demonstrated compliance in their self-study and activity file documentation will be approved with a progress report. The Approved Provider will be required to submit documentation to reflect changes that have been made within the organization to bring the organization into full compliance with the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria. If an organization cannot be fully approved, a progress report may be requested, which may result in an inability to award contact hours.

## Provisional Approval with Progress Report

Applicants that have provided sufficient evidence to demonstrate partial compliance with the accreditation criteria and/or activity file documentation will receive provisional approval for 12 months with a required progress report. The provisionally approved organization will be required to submit evidence to demonstrate that changes have been made within the organization to bring the organization into full compliance with ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria. The AA-PD will re-assess provisional status following review of the requested documentation and make a determination for full approval, approval with progress report, or denial of approval at that time. If an organization cannot be fully approved, a progress report may be requested, which may result in an inability to award contact hours.

## Denial

Applicants that do not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation criteria will be denied. Applicant organizations may reapply once they have addressed deficiencies and can provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria.

**This section outlines eligibility and requirements for Accredited Approvers to approve applicants for individual NCPD activities. Individual educational activities may be approved for up to two years.**

## SECTION TWO: APPROVING INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITY APPLICANTS

### Eligibility For Approval Of Individual NCPD Activities

The Individual Activity Applicant is defined as an individual, organization, or part of an organization submitting an educational activity for approval from an Accredited Approver. The Individual Activity Applicant must have a registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted nursing license and a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent) who functions as the Nurse Planner for the activity. The Nurse Planner is responsible for ensuring that the educational activity is developed according to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation criteria.

Those interested in submitting an NCPD activity for approval from an Accredited Approver must complete the eligibility verification process and meet all eligibility requirements. The Accredited Approver is responsible for assessing whether the applicant is eligible to apply. To be eligible to apply for activity approval, the applicant must:

- Not be an ineligible company as defined by the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education.
- Be in compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations that affect the organization's ability to meet ANCC accreditation criteria.
- Be in compliance with all educational design requirements as noted by the Accredited Approver .
- The organization applying to provide the activity and award the contact hours must be geographically located in the United States or in a United States Territory.
  - Accredited Approvers may not accept applications from organizations outside of the United States and should refer International Activity Applicants to the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program team.
- Have one Nurse Planner who is operationally responsible for coordinating the process of planning, implementing, and evaluating the activity.

### A Nurse Planner must:

- Be a registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted nursing license (or international equivalent); this means that they have an active RN license with no practice restrictions;
- Hold a baccalaureate degree or higher in nursing (or international equivalent); and
- Be competent in applying the evidence-based educational design process to independently plan, implement, and evaluate NCPD activities for the Approved Provider.

## Nurse Planner Role and Responsibility Competencies

- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the ANCC NCPD Accreditation Program criteria.
- Ensures all educational activities adhere to the standards for planning, implementing, and evaluating continuing professional development activities.
- Maintains documentation to support compliance with accreditation requirements.
- Identifies professional practice gaps and analyzes the underlying causes.
- Selects appropriate established competencies from professional sources that align with the professional practice gap and underlying educational need of an educational activity.
- Develops measurable learning outcomes aligned with the identified practice gaps, underlying educational needs, and identified professional competencies.
- Designs and implements assessment methods to assess learning outcomes and program effectiveness.
- Analyzes evaluation data to identify impact on professional practice and identify opportunities for improvement for future activities.
- Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the Standards for Integrity and Independence in Accredited Continuing Education and effectively incorporates these standards into the planning and implementation of accredited educational activities.

## Approval Decision(s)

Upon completion of the application process, the Accredited Approver Program Director (AA-PD) will make an approval decision. The decision will be communicated to the Nurse Planner. Types of accreditation decisions are detailed below.

### Approved

Applicants who demonstrate FULL compliance with the NCPD accreditation criteria for activity files will be awarded Approval. See Activity File Documentation Requirements in Section 1 of this chapter.

### Denial

Applicants that do not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate FULL compliance with the accreditation criteria will be denied. Applicant organizations may reapply once they have addressed deficiencies and can provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate compliance with Accreditation Program criteria.