

# American Physical Therapy Association

## Standards & Required Practices – Quality Standards for Continuing Education Draft 2 September 2008

Preface: Goal #2 of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Education Strategic Plan states: “Develop systems to promote and measure continued competence.” One of the objectives under Goal #2 is to “establish quality standards and benchmarks for continued competence.” These standards will serve as a common foundation for ensuring quality in continuing education and a common language for addressing the varied issues associated with continued competence in physical therapy.

The Draft #2 of Quality Standards & Required Practices for Continuing Education detailed below is a compilation of standards and guidelines from APTA’s Board of Directors’ Guidelines: Standards of Quality for Continuing Education Offerings, 2008 ANSI/IACET standards and criteria, Canadian Physiotherapy Association, APTA component criteria for prior approval of continuing education offerings, and the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. This second draft includes feedback from APTA continued competency work group (June 2008) and Continued Competency Interest Group (November 2007).

STANDARD	GUIDELINES/REQUIRED PRACTICES
1. Content within the continuing education (CE) offering is relevant to physical therapist practice and the designated audience(s).	1.a Relevant content for CE offerings in physical therapy include clinical practice, practice management, research, education, clinical science, professionalism, clinical management and all topics within the scope of practice of a physical therapist. 1.b The target audience is identified for the content. 1.c Content is defined by the Guide to Physical Therapist practice, PT and PTA Normative Models for Education, Descriptions of Specialist practice, and/or state practice acts. 1.d Content includes interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches. Content could also include offerings from other disciplines that are clearly relevant to physical therapy. 1.e CE offerings in physical therapy are limited to audiences with the prerequisite knowledge and skills
2. Each CE offering adheres to APTA’s policies and positions including the APTA’s Code of Ethics, and Standards of Practice for Physical Therapy and to relevant state requirements/regulations/rules for licensure renewal.	2.a People-first language is consistently used. 2.b ICF terminology is recommended.

<p>3. Each CE offering has specific written learning outcomes (objectives) based on identified needs.</p>	<p>3.a Learning outcomes are published for the potential learner to review. 3.b Learning outcomes describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities that the learner will be able to achieve at the completion of the CE offering.</p>
<p>4. Each CE offering is planned and conducted by qualified individuals.</p>	<p>4.a A brief biographic description of each author/presenter is available to potential learners. This biographic description provides relevant information about an author/presenter's expertise as it relates to the CE offering content. 4.a.1. Author/presenter has documented content expertise. 4.a.2. Author/presenter has demonstrated expertise in teaching/learning.</p>
<p>5. Each CE offering provides disclosure information.</p>	<p>5.a CE providers and presenters/authors must disclose any known potential for conflict of interest or appearance of conflict. Disclosures should be made on promotional and course materials. Material gain through any product or service should be addressed during the CE offering. 5.b Copyrights are identified on all audio-visual and course materials. 5.c Author/presenter bias and/or opinion is clearly stated as such. 5.d Authors/presenters must disclose any conflict of interest.</p>
<p>6. Each CE offering should be based on referenced scientific evidence, and/or reflect evidence in practice. Personal experience or hypotheses should be clearly labeled as such.</p>	<p>6.a Current relevant evidence is provided. 6.b A current reference list that specifically correlates to the presented materials is accessible to participants.</p>
<p>7. Each CE offering provides program content and instructional methods based on the specified learning outcomes.</p>	<p>7.a Instructional methods and learning experiences match learning outcomes. 7.b Instructional methods are identified in the course description/information.</p>
<p>8. Each CE offering includes methods to assess participant's attainment of the specified learning outcomes.</p>	<p>8.a Methods for the assessment of learning are developed at the time the CE offering is developed. 8.b Methods of assessment of learning are clearly stated in promotional materials. 8.c Assessments are tailored to the level of learning outcomes. 8.d All requirements for satisfactory completion of a CE offering are clearly stated in promotional materials.</p>
<p>9. The CE Provider furnishes clear, complete information to potential learners about CE offerings.</p>	<p>9.a Information about a CE offering includes a course title and description, a course outline specifying the amount of time designated to each content area, a list of course presenters with pertinent biographical information, the number of contact hours or continuing education units (CEUs), the target audience for the CE offering, costs, authors/presenters, the methods of presentations/instructional design used, and the requirements for successful completion of the CE offering. 9.b Prerequisite level of knowledge or skill necessary for participation. (i.e. Basic, Intermediate, Advanced, Multi level) in a CE offering are clearly stated.</p>

<p>10. The CE Provider furnishes a supportive learning environment and learning resources.</p>	<p>10.a Informed consent is included if the CE offering could present risk to the participant.  10.b Prerequisite assignments are identified.  10.c Prerequisite learning is identified for all CE offerings.  10.d. The CE Provider identifies and provides the physical, material, and technological resources necessary to support the CE offering.</p>
<p>11. The CE Provider has established processes for developing and administering programs.</p>	<p>11.a The CE Provider has a designated person/group responsible for the administration and record keeping of the CE program.  11.b The CE Provider utilizes a review process to ensure adherence to the standards of quality.  11.c The CE Provider regularly collects feedback from participants measuring attendee satisfaction with the CE offerings content and implementation methods.  11.d The CE Provider has published policies and procedures concerning cancellation, fees and refunds.</p>
<p>12. The CE Provider maintains cumulative records that are available to the participant.</p>	<p>12.a The provider of a CE offering issues certificates of completion to and records the participation of each individual who qualifies for the award of continuing education units (CEUs).  12.b Records include the provider's name and address, learner's name and unique identifier, learning program title, completion date of the program, number of CEUs/contact hours, successful completion or failure.  12.c Records are held for a minimum of 4 years.</p>

Send comments to:

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