Needs Assessment Process

Kathleen McCartney, PharmD
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WHAT DOES ACPE REQUIRE?

Standard 2: Educational Needs Assessment
The provider must develop CPE activities based on a multifaceted process where educational needs are prospectively identified.

- Complete *before* planning the program
- Guides development of content and delivery
- Use multiple strategies to identify gaps in knowledge/skills/abilities
- Identify gaps between what participants *do* and what is *needed/desired*
- Representatives of intended audience identify their own educational needs

Other reasons for conducting needs assessments

- Helps with planning, development of content, communication with faculty
- Required for grant applications
- Better results for audience

HOW TO DO A GAP ANALYSIS

The professional practice gap: questions to ask*:

- **Why** develop an educational activity?
- **Why** address this topic?
- **Why** is there a need for an educational intervention?
- **How** do you know that?
- **What** is the professional practice gap?

The underlying educational need: questions to ask:

- **What** needs to change or improve to close the gap (in terms of competence or performance)?
- **What** is the reason the gap needs to be addressed?

APPROACHES TO NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Consider the needs assessment a short term paper!

Some sources for your paper:

- Environmental scanning of news publications (such as, The Pharmacist's Letter, Facts & Comparisons NEWS, the Medical Letter, ISMP Medication Safety Alerts, Medscape, state pharmacy association). Also, don't forget your local newspaper.

- Review professional literature and practice trends in pharmacy on an ongoing basis.
- Maintain a list of new drugs and updates to national practice guidelines.
- Interview practitioners and audit professional practice developments to identify areas of focus and ways to improve programming and procedures.
- Consult with subject experts, such as your School of Pharmacy faculty, or adjoint faculty with practice sites outside your School.
- Consult with individuals who represent various practice groups in pharmacy, including members of your CPE advisory committee.
- Solicit input regarding needs for future programs as a component of each program evaluation tool.
- Perform focused surveys of target audiences. Such surveys can be developed in conjunction with co-sponsors and can be distributed by mail, e-mail, or to participants of meetings.
- Conduct focus groups.
- Follow legislative and regulatory developments in your state, or nationally.
- Scan reports and recommendations from patient safety groups and changes to standards of accrediting bodies
- Conduct chart reviews or audits (or get someone else to!)
- Population health data at state or national levels.
- See what other CE programs are being offered (e.g., ACPE PLAN).

* from Chita Submaramiam, PhD