

2022

Accreditation Policy Handbook

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American Association of
NURSE PRACTITIONERS

AANP

American Association of
NURSE PRACTITIONERS®

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The American Association of Nurse Practitioners® (AANP) is a professional membership organization and a continuing education (CE) accrediting body. As such, AANP CE is not affiliated with or accredited by any other organization. AANP CE activity approval indicates that an educational activity has been reviewed by AANP Accreditation staff and independent reviewers, if applicable, who deem it educationally sound, relevant to nurse practitioner (NP) practice and consistent with all AANP accreditation requirements. AANP Accreditation Standards are consistent with the philosophy of Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) standards. AANP-approved activities must be fair and balanced (unbiased). In addition to planning balanced content on proposed topics, commercial funding and faculty-industry relationships must be disclosed to learners. The ACCME, U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Office of Inspector General (OIG) and Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America® (PhRMA) have established guidance for industry-supported scientific and educational events. The implementation of AANP-approved activities must be consistent with this guidance.

AANP accreditation of individual activities **does not** imply partnership or sponsorship of the activity. Use of the AANP logo is not permitted, as AANP is acting as the accreditor or approver, not the provider. Accreditation by AANP does not imply an agreement regarding the implementation of the activity or management of funds for activities approved for CE credit.

2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of AANP Accreditation is to establish and maintain a standard approach to reviewing and approving CE activities and thereby granting accreditation for CE activities.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

The following terms are beneficial to enhancing one's understanding of this policy:

Accreditation Criteria: The requirements that must be met to be approved for AANP accreditation.

Accreditation Review: The review process for AANP accreditation is performed by staff in the AANP Education and Accreditation Department.

Accreditation Statement: The standard statement that must appear on all AANP-accredited CE activities and associated materials. There are two variations of the AANP Accreditation Statement: one for the activities for which approval is pending, and one for the activities that have received approval. For more information, see sections 8.0 and 9.0.

Accreditor: An organization that awards CE credit for an educational activity, if approved.

Activity: A CE activity is an educational offering that is planned, implemented and evaluated in accordance with the AANP Accreditation Criteria, Standards and Accreditation Policies.

Activity ID Number: The identification (ID) number assigned by AANP to the application once it has been submitted. This ID number is to be used for marketing, CE certificates and all communication with AANP.

Activity Sponsor or Provider: AANP defines the accreditation applicant as the activity's sponsor or provider, which is the institution or the organization providing the CE activity. When activities receive

commercial or other external funding, the grantor is designated as the funder or supporter, not the sponsor or provider. An ineligible entity (commercial interest) may not serve as the sponsor or provider of an AANP-approved activity.

Advanced Activity: Any live activity that is more than 15 contact hours or any live activity presented three or more times within the accreditation period, blended on-demand activities with a virtual component of four to nine months, a CE series – either three-months (may be repeated up to three times) or six-months (no repeats), any podcast or a virtual activity that lasts up to six months with no repeats.

Blended On-demand Activity: An activity offered live or as a live webinar on a specific date, recorded and offered to participants for up to nine months after the live presentation. This activity may not be repeated.

Commercial Support: Monetary or in-kind contribution given by an ineligible entity (commercial interest) for the support of an educational activity or project.

Conflict of Interest: AANP considers financial relationships (in the 24 months immediately preceding the date of the proposed activity) to create conflicts of interest (COIs) in CE when individuals have both the opportunity to influence the content of a CE activity and have a financial relationship with an ineligible entity (commercial interest). AANP requires anyone able to influence or control the CE content to disclose any financial relationships with an ineligible entity (commercial interest) in the 24 months preceding the date of the proposed activity (not the submission date).

Contact Hours: One AANP contact hour of CE (1.0 CH) is equivalent to 60 minutes of learning. Contact hours and CE units (CEUs) or continuing medical education (CME) are **not interchangeable or synonymous. The terms “CEU” and “CME” should not be used in relation to AANP-approved CE credit.**

CE Series: Multi-component activity where all pieces build on one another or are specific to a single disease process. The same set of learners would be enrolled for the entirety of the program. Examples include specialty certificate programs and NP fellowship or residency programs. This activity would have a single AANP-assigned activity ID with one CE certificate.

Eligibility of Entities (previously termed Commercial Interest): To ensure that accredited CE has scientifically justified recommendations and is fair, balanced and free of commercial bias, AANP has aligned with the ACCME Standards. AANP reserves the right to determine which entities and activities are awarded AANP accreditation.

Entities that may be accredited (eligible entities) or that participate in accredited activities include those whose mission and function incorporate providing clinical services directly to patients; educating health care professionals; or serving as a fiduciary to patients, the public or population health; and other entities that are not otherwise ineligible. Examples include:

- Ambulatory procedure centers.
- Blood banks.
- Diagnostic labs that do not sell proprietary products.
- Electronic health records companies.
- Government or military agencies.
- Group medical practices.
- Health law firms.

- Health profession membership organizations.
- Hospitals or health care delivery systems.
- Infusion centers.
- Insurance or managed care companies.
- Nursing homes.
- Pharmacies that do not manufacture proprietary compounds.
- Publishing or education companies.
- Rehabilitation centers.
- Schools or universities with NP programs.
- Software companies.

Ineligible entities (commercial interests) that **may not** be accredited include those whose primary business is producing, marketing, selling, reselling or distributing health products used by or on patients. Examples include:

- Advertising, marketing or communication firms whose clients are ineligible entities.
- Bio-medical startups that have begun a governmental regulatory approval process.
- Compounding pharmacies that manufacture proprietary compounds.
- Device manufacturers or distributors.
- Diagnostic labs that sell proprietary products.
- Growers, distributors, manufacturers or sellers of medical foods and dietary supplements.
- Manufacturers of health-related wearable products.
- Pharmaceutical companies or distributors.
- Pharmacy benefit managers.
- Reagent manufacturers or sellers.

Owners and Employees of Ineligible Entities (Commercial Interest): The owners and employees of ineligible entities are considered to have unmitigable financial relationships and must be excluded from participating as planners or faculty. They must not be allowed to influence or have any control of the educational activity planning, delivery or evaluation.

Enduring Activities: Enduring activities are accessible over an extended period, allowing for independent study. Enduring activities may stand alone. Those developed from a live meeting **must** have a separate application. Applications involving enduring activities must include a statement and supporting documentation regarding how the credit request was determined (see Section 6.0). Examples include monographs, journal supplements, CDs or online activities. An enduring activity may last one or two years. If an enduring activity is approved for two years, an additional one-year peer review is mandatory and must be submitted and approved within one month after first year of accreditation. For example, if the activity starts on Jan.1, 2022, the peer review must be completed by Feb. 1, 2023. If the peer review is not completed, the activity will no longer be accredited. The activity must then be discontinued and the term AANP-accredited must be removed from the activity.

Evaluation: A formal evaluation of each CE activity is essential for maintaining or improving the quality of future activities. Evaluation measures need to be developed during activity planning and linked to the objectives. There are four mandatory questions for every evaluation. If the activity is held virtually (live or recorded), additional questions must be added to determine the learner outcome.

Methods used to evaluate the learner's achieved outcome level may include one or more of the following items:

- Commitment to change – Learner reflection or identification of planned change.
- Another instrument designed to collect data on changes in learner knowledge or performance that can be attributed to the activity.

Faculty or Speaker: A qualified activity's faculty member or speaker must have expertise based on education and experience related to the topic and population covered. For example, a gerontological provider should not be faculty on a topic specific to pediatric patients. Pharmacology content must be presented by a prescriber (e.g., NP, PA, MD, DO, ND), Pharm.D., pharmacist or pharmacologist. Employees of ineligible entities may not serve as faculty or planners if the content the employee controls relates to the business lines or products of the commercial interest employer. An employee of an ineligible entity may be allowed to serve as faculty or planner if the content controlled by the employee is not related to the business lines or products of the ineligible entity. Faculty includes moderators and poster presenters.

Independent Peer Review: A documented critical evaluation must be performed by a peer who is a qualified expert in the same content area that is being reviewed. **The peer reviewer must not be associated with the provider or the planning committee and must be independent of the activity being reviewed. The peer reviewer must have no conflict of interest.** Independent peer reviewers must provide documentation that supports their qualification as an expert in the content area and must meet other requirements, such as submitting a completed disclosure form. The appropriate form for the two-year enduring peer review will be provided by AANP.

Innovative Activities: Any activity that does not fall under the traditional activity or advanced activity categories will fall into this category. These activities would need to have a predetermination review to verify whether they are appropriate for accreditation.

Live Activities: Live in-person activities occur when the learner attends an activity at a venue. Live webinar activities occur when the speaker presents information via a digital platform and learners attend virtually. Live recorded activities occur when a session is prerecorded and the learner listens or watches on a virtual platform at a set date and time. Speakers may or may not be available to answer questions after the session is viewed.

NP CE: Providing CE for NPs is a systematic, structured, accredited educational process designed to enhance the knowledge and skills of NPs and influence professional performance and evidence-based practice. NP CE goes above and beyond basic NP academic education to assist the NP as they continue to learn. CE excludes activities designed for the promotion of specific products, services or devices. **No promotional activities may occur during CE events. This includes the distribution of product brochures or product information in conjunction with handouts. No slides or handouts developed by an ineligible entity may be used during presentations.**

NP CE Content: Acceptable content for NP CE includes information to assess, diagnose, manage and treat multiple illnesses and conditions in primary care and specialty areas; wellness; prevention; health promotion; legislative or policy issues affecting health care and practice; conversational foreign language relevant to health care; and business or practice management. Self-improvement and exercise or stress-reduction technique topics must be supported by measurable objectives that describe how the content will ultimately benefit or improve patient outcomes. Personal finance and life support courses – to include basic life support (BLS), neonatal resuscitation program (NRP), pediatric advanced life support (PALS) and advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) – are not acceptable for NP CE credit.

Objectives: Learning objectives must be written in observable, measurable terms to allow the learner to precisely assess their proficiency in achieving knowledge immediately after the completion of the activity. A minimum of two to three learning objectives for a session lasting up to one hour, with more objectives for longer sessions, is required for accreditation. Objectives for pharmacology credit must indicate more than an incidental mention of drugs. Please review the information in the Pharmacology Content section below.

Pharmacology Content: Pharmacology CE is designed to enhance the learner's ability to prescribe and monitor patients on pharmacotherapy. It includes topics such as pharmacokinetics and clinical applications of drugs. Pharmacology credit must be supported by an activity's objectives and detailed content. The incidental mention of drugs or a pharmacological treatment does not qualify for pharmacology credit. Pharmacology content must be presented by appropriate faculty. Review information about faculty or speaker above.

Podcast: This can be a live or recorded activity that must be at least 15 minutes in length and have learner-focused objectives. It can be broadcast once or hosted digitally for up to nine months. This is considered an advanced activity.

Posttest: A posttest is a set of questions successfully answered by the participant at the end of the activity, prior to completing the evaluation. Posttests are not mandatory; however, they can be used as a determination of learning at the end of an activity. The posttest should include one or two questions per measurable objective. The activity's host organization will determine the pass rate for the post-test using the AANP pass rate of 70% as a guide.

Relevant Financial Relationship(s): AANP adopts ACCME's definition of a relevant financial relationship, which is one in which the individual benefits by receiving any amount of compensation that creates a COI. A relevant financial relationship must not have occurred in the 24-month period preceding the time the individual accepted a role influencing or controlling the content of an AANP-accredited activity. Benefits from these relationships include salary, royalty, intellectual property rights, consulting fee, honoraria for promotional speakers' bureau, ownership interest (e.g., stocks, stock options or other ownership interest, excluding diversified mutual funds) or other financial benefits. These benefits are usually associated with employment, management position, independent contractor (including contracted research) consulting, public speaking, teaching, participation on an advisory committee or review panel, board membership and other activities from which remuneration is received or expected.

Speakers' Bureau: Speaking on behalf of a pharmaceutical or medical device company to promote the company's product is considered marketing by the FDA. These presentations consist of using materials or content created or prepared by the company and may include specific training on the product as part of the participation. This differs from accredited education, in which the educational content must be independent of any ineligible entity influence and must be fair and balanced without promotion of specific products or services.

Supporter: See eligibility of entities (commercial interest), commercial support and activity sponsor or provider.

Traditional Activities: Live activities with up to 15 CH presented in person or via webinar format with up to two presentations in the accreditation term or blended on-demand activities with a virtual component of up to three months.

Virtual: These are activities that are presented online. The activity can be live or prerecorded and hosted on a website. It can be presented via an online meeting platform, such as Zoom, Teams or Webex.

Webinar: A webinar is a virtual activity that is presented at a specific time and may be repeated. It may be live or prerecorded.

4.0 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

AANP Accreditation Standards are consistent with guidance from the ACCME, FDA, OIG and PhRMA.

Standard 1: Independence

- 1.1 CE providers must ensure that decisions regarding the following are made completely free of ineligible entity control or influence: 1) determination of educational need; 2) determination of objectives; 3) selection of individuals or organizations that will be in a position to control or influence the content (e.g., faculty, content experts, activity chair and planners); 4) content development; 5) selection of educational method or content delivery; and 6) evaluation of the activity.
- 1.2 The use of an educational activity or material developed by an ineligible entity is prohibited.
- 1.3 An ineligible entity cannot serve as a partner in a joint provider relationship.
- 1.4 An ineligible entity is not eligible for AANP accreditation.

Standard 2: Fair and Balanced Content

- 2.1 All activities bearing AANP accreditation must be designed and implemented to provide a fair and balanced coverage of the topic, with content presented from more than one perspective.
- 2.2 The educational activity must not promote the specific business interest of an ineligible entity. During their presentations, faculty may not promote or sell products or services that serve their professional or financial interests.
- 2.3 Generic names must be used throughout the educational activity. If a brand or trade name is used in print, the generic name must also be included. For example, generic (Trade). Pharmacologic content must include a balanced range of therapeutic options or identify that it is the only option available.
- 2.4 Any planned discussion of the off-label, experimental or investigational use of drugs or devices must be disclosed. This information must be repeated at the time the discussion occurs within the activity.
- 2.5 Activity evaluations must include measurement of any perceived commercial or other bias related to the educational activity. These evaluations must also include a measurement of whether the content presented is fair and balanced.

Standard 3: Disclosure Related to Potential COI

- 3.1 Any individual in a position to influence or control the educational content must disclose any relevant financial relationships (see definition of relevant financial relationships) prior to the approval of AANP CE credit.
- 3.2 Learners must be informed of relevant financial relationships. In the absence of any financial relationship, learners must be informed that no financial relationship exists.

Standard 4: Mitigation Related to Conflict of Interest

- 4.1 Before the educational activity is implemented, CE providers must have a mechanism in place to identify and appropriately mitigate all COIs.

- 4.2 Prior to implementation of the educational activity, CE providers must document that anyone who is in a position to control the educational activity content has disclosed all relevant financial relationships to the CE provider.
- 4.3 If any individual in a position to control the content of the educational activity refuses or fails to disclose relevant financial relationships, that individual must be disqualified and a replacement must be identified.

Standard 5: Appropriate Use of Commercial Support

- 5.1 CE providers must make all decisions regarding the use and disbursement of commercial support independently and free from commercial influence.
- 5.2 A written, signed agreement detailing the terms, conditions and purposes of the commercial support – and which adheres strictly to the rules and restrictions governing commercial support as outlined in this handbook – must exist between the commercial supporter and the CE provider. If additional educational partners exist, a similar agreement is required between them and the CE provider. Ineligible entities are prohibited from engaging in joint providership for accredited activities. Joint providership enables eligible entities to work with other eligible entities to deliver accredited CE.
- 5.3 CE providers must have policies and procedures in place governing the appropriate use and disbursement of any commercial support, including honoraria and reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses for planners, faculty, joint providers and partners.
- 5.4 Social events or meals must be conducted appropriately without competing with or taking precedence over the educational events.

Standard 6: Acknowledgment of Commercial Support

- 6.1 All commercial support or other support (financial or in-kind) must be disclosed to the learners prior to the delivery of educational content.
- 6.2 Acknowledgment of the support must be included on any activity announcements, invitations or marketing materials. Should funding be pending at the time of printing or publishing these materials, a statement regarding the potential funding must be included. For example, “This educational activity may receive support through an educational grant from a commercial interest.” Appropriate acknowledgment of any commercial support must be provided at the time of the educational activity.

Standard 7: Separation From Promotion

- 7.1 Commercial exhibits or advertisements must not influence CE content or interfere in any way with the CE presentation or materials, nor can they be a condition that influences commercial support.
- 7.2 Product promotion or product-specific advertisement or marketing of any type is prohibited in the same space before, during or after a CE activity.
- 7.3 During accredited activities presented digitally or online, learners must be able to engage in the accredited material presented without having to click through, watch, listen to or be presented with product promotion or product specific advertisement.
- 7.4 Educational content developed by an ineligible entity (commercial interest) **may not** be used during a CE activity. This includes the distribution of product brochures or product information in conjunction with educational activity handouts.
- 7.5 Use of an ineligible entity (commercial interest) or commercial supporter’s logo on CE activity materials is prohibited.

5.0 ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

Certain criteria are universally expected by AANP, as well as by certification and regulatory bodies, when considering the appropriateness and quality of an educational activity. For accreditation application, the following information should be made evident, regardless of the format used:

- An understanding of the AANP Standards must be evident and followed.
- The educational activity must be based on an identified NP need for CE.
- The educational activity must be appropriate for the target audience.
- The educational activity must be planned and implemented without ineligible entity (commercial interest) influence.
 - Faculty and speakers must disclose all relevant financial relationships and must include the related clinical area. This information must be provided to AANP with the application.
 - Activities with faculty, speakers or planners serving on an ineligible entity speakers' bureau in related clinical areas will be considered, **provided the educational activity content is included for AANP review with the accreditation application.** Faculty must include all financial relationships on the disclosure slide, including the company the relationship is with, the role the speaker has with the company and the clinical area or disease process to which it is related. The slide must include the statement: "All financial relationships have been mitigated."
 - Employees of ineligible entities (commercial interests) **may not** serve as faculty, speaker or planner if the content the employee controls relates to the business lines or products of the ineligible entity employer.
 - Activities with a faculty, speaker or planner employed by an ineligible entity may be considered if the content controlled by the employee is not related to the business lines or products of the ineligible entity employer and **the educational activity content is included for AANP review with the accreditation application.**
- For any potential source of bias or conflict identified, the activity planner(s) must take measures to ensure content is fair and balanced, and they must provide a notation to describe the measures taken. AANP reviewers also assist in the process of ensuring fair and balanced content, because they consider the proposed content and faculty or speaker details and make recommendations, when warranted. Options for conflict resolution include:
 - Limit the speaker and session to content that does not include therapeutic options. You must send AANP revised objectives when requested.
 - Add a second speaker (without any commercial relationships) to present the content on therapeutic options. Be sure to include their bio and disclosure when making this addition.
 - Replace the speaker with another qualified individual who is free of commercial relationships.
 - Submit educational activity content for an AANP review to verify the content is fair and balanced.
 - Provide the educational session as an unaccredited activity.
- The content of the educational activity must demonstrate an enhanced level of learning and, for clinical topics, promote improvements in the quality of health care established by evidence-based practice.

- The faculty or speaker presenting the accredited activity will possess the appropriate educational level and experiential knowledge in the topic presented.
- See the definition for faculty above.
- The educational activity must include measurable participant learning objectives describing an anticipated change in knowledge, skills or attitude.
 - Activities with multiple sessions, units, chapters, etc., must include objectives that are specific for each.
 - Activities requesting pharmacology credit must include measurable objectives related to the pharmacology content (see the definition for pharmacology content). Additionally, the number of minutes devoted to pharmacology content must be included with the submission.
 - All activities must have an evaluation tool measuring knowledge gained from the activity.
- The CE provider must acknowledge any commercial support and have policies in place to appropriately manage commercial support.
- The educational activity must maintain a separation from promotion.
- The evaluation plan or method must include the required evaluation of:
 - Whether learning objectives were met.
 - If the faculty or speaker demonstrated experiential knowledge.
 - If there was any perceived commercial bias.
 - Whether there was fair and balanced coverage of the topic, including content presented from more than one perspective.
- If the activity is presented virtually, learner outcome questions must be included. These are in addition to the four required questions listed above.
- Advertising or marketing materials directed toward the attendees must not state AANP accreditation approval prior to receipt of final approval. A statement referring to pending status may be used (see Section 8.0).
- A copy of the certificate of completion for AANP CE credit must be provided for participants who complete the CE activity. Certificates of completion must not be issued to the participants until the conclusion of the AANP-accredited activity. The content on the certificate should include:
 - Name of the participant.
 - Title of the educational activity.
 - Location of the educational activity.
 - Date of the educational activity.
 - Name of person coordinating the activity.
 - Sponsor or provider name.
 - Total contact hour(s).
 - Applicable pharmacology hours.
 - The following statement: “This activity is approved for XX contact hours of continuing education (which includes XX hours of pharmacology) by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners®. Activity ID# xxxxxxxx. This activity was planned in accordance with AANP Accreditation Standards and Policies.”

6.0 CE CREDIT

- 1. Contact Hours:** 1.0 CH of CE is equivalent to 60 minutes of learning. Contact hours and CEUs or CME are not interchangeable or synonymous. The terms CEU and CME should not be used in relation to AANP-approved CE credit.
- 2. Minimum Credit:** An AANP CE activity will not provide fewer than 0.25 CH (15 minutes of learning).
- 3. What Constitutes Credit:** CE credit is awarded only for the educational presentation and for time devoted to questions and answers, which allows for open dialogue on the topic. AANP credit is not awarded for time spent on introductory remarks, breaks, product exhibits or post-activity evaluation.
- 4. Credit Breakdown:** AANP CE credit is based on a maximum total of contact hours that one individual can earn for the educational activity. Pharmacology contact hours, if requested, will also be included. A credit breakdown is a helpful resource and will be provided at no additional cost.
- 5. Credit for Live Activities:** The recommended length for a live (in-person) AANP-approved CE activity is equivalent to at least 30 minutes (0.50 CH) of learning. The number of credits will be based on the actual amount of time spent on eligible content. When no breaks are designated, AANP will deduct 15 minutes per segment of educational content exceeding four hours, as well as 30 minutes for a meal break for activities that are six or more hours in length.
- 6. Credit for Poster Sessions:** CE credit may be approved for poster sessions held in conjunction with live or virtual activities of at least 1.0 CH in duration. The formula used to determine poster session credit awards 0.16 CH per two posters (i.e., five minutes per poster). There should be at least three posters (0.25 CH) submitted for credit. If the activity has more than 15 posters, credit may be based on the time the poster sessions are offered, if that is less than five minutes per poster. Review and billing the posters will be counted as five minutes each. Poster credit applications must include each poster's title, the presenter's name and credentials and the objectives. Poster presenters are considered faculty and must complete a faculty bio and disclosure.
- 7. Credit for Print Enduring:** Credit for printed pieces must be based on the Mergener formula (preferred) or an alternate formula. A [Mergener formula calculator](#) is located online.
- 8. Credit for Webinar, Virtual, On-demand and Enduring Activities:** Credit for online activities must be based on the actual time it takes an individual to reasonably complete each required component of the activity, plus the time to complete the posttest. If a posttest is used, the hosting organization must determine the passing score for the posttest and number of questions per session objective. Posttest questions are to be based on the session objectives and may be true/false, multiple choice or narrative, per the organization's choice. There must be one or two questions per session objective. The level of difficulty should be at or above the application level of Bloom's Taxonomy or Depth of Knowledge 3 (DOK3) of Webb's Depth of Knowledge.
- 9. Credit for Posttest Completion:** Although posttest questions provide a final opportunity to reinforce learning on an enduring or live webinar CE activity, posttest questions are intended as a method to validate participation in an activity, not as a primary learning tool. Therefore, the amount of credit that can be awarded for time spent in any posttest assessment is limited to no more than 1.5 minutes per question. The amount of credit awarded for posttest completion will represent up to 25% of the time required to otherwise complete the activity, or 15 minutes per activity, whichever is less. Successful completion by the participant will be determined by the host organization (applicant). A pass rate of at least 70% is required but may be more stringent.

- 10. Pharmacology Credit:** Upon request, pharmacology CE credit will be identified. **The online application must indicate the amount of pharmacology credit requested. Pharmacology content must be clearly identified in the activity description and supported by an activity's clearly defined objectives.** If pharmacology credit is requested after a submitted activity has been reviewed and approved, a revised application will be required – with the same time allowances for the activity review and with applicable fees.
- 11. Claimed Credit:** Learners should claim credit only for the portion of the activity they attended and successfully completed. The credit claimed must be for the entire session but does not have to be the whole activity if it has multiple separate sessions. To obtain credit, learners must complete evaluations and posttests (if required) within the time frame designated by the hosting organization. This time may be no greater than six months after the end of the activity. If the learner has not completed the evaluation and post-test in the allotted time, credit cannot be awarded to that learner.
- 12. Withdrawal of Credit:** AANP reserves the right to withdraw or rescind credit once approved. If credit is rescinded, the provider must contact learners and inform them that the CE is not valid. Examples for which credit may be withdrawn include, but are not limited to, the following:
- Failure of the planners or faculty to disclose a relationship with an ineligible entity.
 - Failure of the planner or faculty to disclose funding, support or other assistance received for the activity.
 - Changes in the educational objectives, content, faculty or methodology.
 - Evaluations indicating strong bias in content.
 - Major changes to approved educational content or faculty without notifying AANP.
 - The inclusion of promotional activities in the same space as the CE activity.
 - Failure to obtain a completed, approved peer review within 13 months of launching a two-year enduring activity.

7.0 ACCREDITATION APPLICATION PROCESS

AANP prefers to be as environmentally friendly as possible and has adopted the AANP Online Accreditation Application system. To explore potential alternatives, please contact ceapps@aanp.org. For a more detailed process and additional information about fees, please see the AANP Application Process Guide.

7.1 Online Application Process

A complete application and review fee is required to begin the review process. Applications submitted more than 90 calendar days prior to the activity's start date and applications submitted after the start date will not be accepted. Refer to the AANP Application Process Guide for complete details.

- All the following information is required to complete the online application:
 - Submission of the sponsor or provider name and demographic details.
 - General information regarding the activity (e.g., date, location, title, etc.).
 - Name and email contact of the party responsible for payment.
 - Names and email addresses for all planners and faculty involved in the activity.
 - Agenda or schedule.
 - Activity Detail Form (Excel spreadsheet).

- Activity evaluation questions.
- Certificate of completion.
- Samples of any related educational activity material, such as announcements and marketing pieces (draft copies accepted). These materials must include:
 - Pending accreditation statement.
 - Acknowledgment of any commercial support, if applicable.
- Any activity content (i.e., slide presentations to resolve potential conflict of interest) requiring AANP review.
- Any activity content to validate the requested contact hours for virtual, on-demand or enduring activities (i.e., length of the video or recording, Mergener formula results, posttest questions, etc.).
- Payment must be received prior to the full review of the application. Instructions for payment will be emailed to the application contact person after AANP accepts the application for review.

8.0 APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

1. The review process for accreditation at AANP involves the following steps. **Note: Applications submitted more than 90 calendar days prior to the activity's start date will not be accepted.**
 - a. **Preliminary Review** – AANP Accreditation staff will review the initial application for completeness. If all criteria and requirements for submission are not met, the applicant will be notified that additional information is needed.
 - b. **Accepted for Full Review** – If the application appears complete upon receipt by AANP, the application will be accepted for full review. This does not imply the educational activity is approved. The applicant will be notified when the activity has been accepted for full review.
 - c. **Full Review** – AANP Education and Accreditation team members will conduct a full review and determine if the activity is approved for accreditation. During this process, the reviewer may discover a need for additional information or materials that are required to complete the review.
2. Once an application is accepted for full review, the applicant can **expect the full review process to take between 15 and 20 business days.**
3. **Expedited Reviews:** A 10- to 14-business-day expedited review can be requested (and is automatic if the submission is made fewer than 15 business days prior to the activity) by completing the expedite request inquiry in the online application and completing the entire submission process. An additional fee is required for an expedited review. AANP reviews all expedite requests on a case-by-case basis, and requests are granted at AANP's discretion. Approval or denial for an expedited review will be made within one business day of the emailed request. This expedited review does not guarantee approval. If additional information or materials are required during the full review, a more extended review period may result.
4. If additional materials are required to complete the full review, the application will be considered incomplete and will result in the review process being placed on hold. Additionally, a longer review process time for a second full review must be expected as a potential delay. This may also necessitate additional review fees for a prolonged review period.

5. Applicants will be notified if their application for accreditation is not approved, in which case, the review fee is not refunded. Examples of reasons for non-approval include, but are not limited to:
 - a. AANP standards were not followed.
 - b. The educational activity did not meet the definition of NP CE.
 - c. The faculty or speaker is not qualified to deliver the content.
 - d. The educational activity is deemed to be promotional in whole or in part.
 - e. The AANP criteria requirements were not met.
6. Applicants may appeal the determination of non-approval by submitting a written request to AANP within 15 days of denial. The request must detail the basis for the appeal.
7. AANP reserves the right to deny reviewing any application for accreditation.
8. The following are appropriate AANP Accreditation Statements to be used before or during the review:
 - a. Prior to submission of the application, the following statement may be used in educational activity materials: “This education activity will be submitted to the American Association of Nurse Practitioners® for approval of up to XX contact hours of accredited education.”
 - b. Once accepted for review, the following statement can be used in educational activity materials: “This education activity is pending approval by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners® of up to XX contact hours of accredited education.”

9.0 ACCREDITATION APPROVAL

Approval Period: The approval period for an accredited activity is three months, six months, one year or two years. An activity accredited for two years must have a peer review completed and approved at one year. The peer review must be submitted and approved within one month after the one-year accreditation anniversary, or accreditation will be revoked for this activity. This period begins from the initial start date of the activity and concludes on the last day of the month of the approval period, providing that no changes are made. If an enduring activity has expired but a learner has begun the activity prior to the expiration date, providers of enduring activities may allow learners 30 calendar days to complete the activity.

- AANP must be notified of all changes to the original approved educational activity before they are implemented.
 - This includes, but is not limited to, changes in a faculty or speaker, session topic, objective and the time allowed for each objective, session (added or dropped) and date or venue changes.
 - Approved changes will be noted and saved in the original application file. If the requested change is **not approved**, then the activity must remain as originally submitted until the change request is approved, or the activity accreditation will be withdrawn until the issue is resolved.
- When an activity’s content must be updated, AANP requires the following steps be completed:
 - Submit to AANP any changes related to the original activity as soon as you are aware of the changes.
 - Any additions or major changes to an approved activity will require a **new application, and applicable fees** will apply. Contact AANP prior to resubmitting a new application.

- **Live Activity Repeats:** The number of repeats must be identified with dates and locations in the initial application. Repeat presentations not identified in the initial applications will only be allowed at the discretion of the accreditation team.
- The activity may only be presented as the approval states on the official approval letter. No additional repeat presentations may occur over the approved number.
- Post-activity reporting for each repeated presentation will follow the live activity reporting schedule, as outlined in Section 10.0.
- For additional presentations over the selected tier, the applicant will be required to follow the AANP Application Process, as outlined in Section 7.0 of this policy.
 - **AANP Accreditation Stamp:** Activities approved for AANP CE credit will receive a digital version of an “Accredited by AANP” stamp, which may be used in the activity materials. The stamp may only be used in materials associated with the approved activity.
 - **AANP Logo:** The AANP logo **may not** be used on AANP-approved activities for which AANP is not acting as an accrediting provider or partner. All logo useage must be approved in advance, including those activities for which AANP is an accrediting provider or partner.
 - **Approval Language:** Once the CE activity has been approved, providers may use the following statement: “This activity is approved for XX contact hours of continuing education (which includes XX hours of pharmacology) by the American Association of Nurse Practitioners®. Activity ID# xxxxxxxx. This activity was planned in accordance with AANP Accreditation Standards and Policies.”

10.0 POST-ACCREDITATION APPROVAL

1. **Record Maintenance:** Providers must maintain records for at least six years. Records should include a copy of the approved activity, any related announcement(s), the activity date and time, a participant roster, the amount of credit awarded, an evaluation summary, a copy of the CE certificate and any related documents. Records may be maintained as hard copies or in an electronic format.
2. **Submission of Post-activity Documents:** Within one month of the end of the activity, an attendance roster, a summary of the activity evaluation and – if used – the posttest with the pass rate for your organization must be submitted to the AANP application system for review. For two-year enduring activities, these items must be completed and within 11-13 months of the activity’s start date, the peer review must be submitted and approved. **Timely submission of the post-activity documents is required for review of any subsequent applications, and AANP reserves the right to deny future applications after a failure to submit post-activity reports.**
 - a. Rosters must include a count for total participants, the total number of NP participants and a unique identifier (no SSN) for each individual. Additionally, the report must include:
 - i. A statement completed in the online portal, which validates that any speaker COI and off-label information was disclosed to the participants (completed when the documents are uploaded in the application system).
 - ii. Rosters containing participants from multiple disciplines must clearly identify those who are NPs.

- b. The evaluation report must be in a summary format, not the actual evaluation forms.
 - i. The evaluation questions must be the exact evaluation questions approved with the accreditation application.
 - ii. The same questions must be asked of all attendees.
 - iii. For the required bias question, the actual number or percentage of affirmative and negative answers is required.
 - c. If a posttest is used as part of the evaluation tool, the post-test summary must be in summary format.
 - i. The posttest questions must be the exact post-test questions approved with the accreditation application,
 - ii. The same questions must be asked of all attendees.
 - iii. The pass rate identified in the application must be listed.
 - iv. You must identify the number of attendees who passed and who failed.
 - d. For any live activity that is repeated, the above report is due one month after the repeated date.
 - e. For any virtual or on-demand activity, the above report is due one month after the end of the approval period.
 - f. For any enduring activity, the above reports are due one month after the start date, with a final cumulative report due at one year.
 - g. For a two-year enduring activity, the above reports are due at one month and at the end of the approval period. An additional one-year peer review is mandatory and must be submitted and approved within one month after the first year of accreditation.
3. **Release of Attendee Information:** No information regarding attendees should be released to third parties without permission of the learners.



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