

GUIDELINES FOR CME PLANNING AND APPLICATIONS

ACCME and AMA definition of continuing medical education (CME):

CME consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, and professional performance and relationships that a physician uses to provide services for patients, the public or the profession.


There are specific terms used in accredited (certified) continuing medical education used for physician and healthcare professional lifelong learning as well as licensing; these are:

Professional practice gap, Knowledge, Competence, Performance and Patient Outcomes

What is a “professional practice gap?”

- 1) What is the “problem/situation” the CME education is designed to address?
- 2) What is it that medical practitioners do NOT currently know, understand, or practice?
- 3) What is the current knowledge and practice that could be improved?

ACCME definition of the “gap”: *When there is a gap between what the professional is doing or accomplishing compared to what is “achievable based on current professional knowledge.”*

Current practice		Best/ideal practice
Current knowledge and practice	PRACTICE GAP 	What should be known and practiced

The “need” underlying the professional practice gap is one or more of the following:

Knowledge	Competence	Performance	Patient Outcomes
Facts (descriptive knowledge) Skills (procedural knowledge) Data, Information	Thinking about how new knowledge/skills could be applied. Strategies. Ability.	Knowledge and competence put into clinical practice by the practitioner.	The application of learned knowledge, competence, and performance in practice. The delivery of safe and effective patient care, patient health status, patient satisfaction or even patient engagement.
A familiarity, awareness or understanding	What a practitioner would do if they could.	The application of learned knowledge in actual practice.	

ACCME EXAMPLE COURSE

Activity Title: *Assessment and Management of Patients with Depression in Primary Care*

Professional Practice Gap: *Despite the availability of effective treatments, patients with major depressive disorder often are under-treated or inadequately treated resulting in continued distress.*

Knowledge need: NONE **Competence need:** NONE

Performance need: *Physicians need to refine their screening and assessment of patients who may be at risk to depressions by conducting a thorough individualized depression assessment and an effective interview.*

Describe what this CME activity is designed to change: *This activity was designed to improve physician screening and assessment for depression.*

Explain why this educational format is appropriate for this activity: *This activity will use didactic lectures, interactive cases, and role-playing to train physicians to conduct interviews more effectively.*

Discuss with learners the changes they intend to make to their strategies, performance, or patient care that will result from this activity. *Learner will use the evidence-based checklist presented and role-playing to improve screening patients for depression.*