Guide to the Accreditation Process

Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education™
These materials were developed for organizations interested in pursuing accreditation as a Jointly Accredited Provider. These materials may change from time to time. Applicants are expected to confirm the most recent version date as noted in the footer of each page. These materials are divided into subtopic areas, as outlined in the table of contents:

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1. Overview and Background Information

Overview of the Joint Accreditation Process
An organization seeking accreditation as a provider of continuing education for the healthcare team (hereafter “provider”) will submit materials including a self-study report and supporting activity files, along with an eligibility fee and an application fee. Providers will participate in the process of accreditation review that is jointly managed by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC). The review process is expected to take approximately 13 months and will include:

- Determination of Eligibility;
- Engagement by the provider in a self-study to reflect on its program of continuing education;
- Submission of a self-study report in which the provider describes its practices and verifies these practices using examples;
- An interview conducted by a three-person team of volunteer surveyors and a staff member; and
- Review of activity documentation in activity files.

Eligibility
Providers are eligible to seek accreditation as a provider of continuing education for the healthcare team if:

- the organization’s structure and processes to plan and present education designed by, and for, the healthcare team have been in place and fully functional for at least the past 18 months; and
- at least 25% (minimum of 9) of the educational activities delivered by the provider during the past 18 months are categorized as “interprofessional” and the provider can demonstrate an integrated planning process that includes healthcare professionals from two or more professions who are reflective of the target audience the activity is designed to address; and
- the provider engages in the Joint Accreditation process and demonstrates compliance with the criteria described below and if currently accredited, any associated accreditation policies required by the respective collaborating accreditors.

Providers must have planned, implemented and evaluated at least 25% of their CE activities, making up at least 9 activities, as interprofessional continuing education activities as defined by ACCME, ACPE and ANCC. These activities are not required to have been offered for continuing education credit for any or all professions involved, however they must have been planned and implemented in accordance with all of the Joint Accreditation Criteria applicable to activity planning.

Two review cycles occur each year. Please refer to the timeline for specific deadlines. Materials submitted by the applicant and results of the interview by the survey team will be presented to a Joint Accreditation Review Committee (Joint ARC) constituted equally by representatives from
the collaborating accreditors. The accreditation recommendation made by the Joint ARC will be forwarded for final decision to the Governing boards of the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC. All accreditation decisions are unanimous and are ratified by the full Governance bodies of the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC.

**DEFINITION OF INTERPROFESSIONAL CONTINUING EDUCATION (IPCE)**

Interprofessional continuing education (IPCE) is when members from two or more professions learn with, from, and about each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes (ACCME, ACPE, ANCC, 2015)

**TERM OF ACCREDITATION**

The standard term of accreditation as a provider of continuing education for the healthcare team is as follows:

- **New Applicants:**
  
  An organization seeking accreditation as a provider of continuing education for the healthcare team that does **not** currently hold at least one accreditation from at least one (1) of the cofounder accreditors (ACCME, ACPE and/or ANCC) or one (1) state accrediting body (ACCME Recognized Accreditor or ANCC Accredited Approver) may be awarded a term of up to 2 years.

- **Currently Accredited:**
  
  An organization that is already accredited in good standing by at least one of the national accrediting bodies (ACCME, ACPE and/or ANCC) and/or one state accrediting body (ACCME Recognized Accreditor or ANCC Accredited Approver) may be awarded a term of four years if the provider is determined to be in compliance with all joint accreditation criteria. If a provider is in noncompliance with any one (1) or more criteria, and is awarded Joint Accreditation, the provider may receive an accreditation term of up to four years with a progress report due in one year.

- **Reaccreditation for Jointly Accredited Providers:**
  
  An organization that is already a jointly accredited provider may be awarded a term of four years if the provider is in compliance with all Joint Accreditation criteria. If the provider is in noncompliance with any one (1) or more criteria, and is awarded Joint Accreditation, the provider may be awarded an accreditation term of up to four years with a progress report due in one year. An organization that is already jointly accredited must have at least 25% of its CE activities during its term Interprofessional.

- **Joint Accreditation with Commendation**
  
  To achieve Joint Accreditation with Commendation, providers need to demonstrate compliance with JAC 1–12 and any seven of the 13 commendation criteria. Providers that successfully achieve Joint Accreditation with Commendation may be awarded a six-year accreditation term. The six-year term will be available only to providers that achieve Commendation; providers that demonstrate compliance with JAC 1–12, but do not demonstrate compliance with the commendation criteria, will receive a four-
year term. Organizations are eligible to seek Joint Accreditation with Commendation if they are currently jointly accredited or they are seeking initial joint accreditation and have been previously accredited by at least one of the following: ACCME, ACPE, or ANCC.

Jointly Accredited providers are required to report all of their CE activities to the Joint Accreditation Program and Activity Reporting System (JA-PARS). JA-PARS is a web-based portal designed to streamline and support the collection of program and activity reporting data from jointly accredited providers. If an applicant organization withdraws from the joint accreditation process and/or is not successful, the provider will have one year to seek accreditation directly through each individual accrediting body as desired. The applicant organization will be responsible for determining the timeline for application, submission of required documentation and any required fees directly through the individual accrediting body.

Under the status of accreditation as a provider of CE for the healthcare team, the provider may also offer continuing education for dentists, nurses, optometrists, pharmacists, physicians, physician assistants, psychologists, and/or social workers separately using only the Joint Accreditation for Interprofessional Continuing Education™ criteria.

**ACCRREDITATION TIMELINE AND PROVIDER MILESTONES**

This timeline is a key resource for preparation of the self-study and presentation of the self-study report. Providers are encouraged to keep a copy of this page to track accreditation process milestones. Some providers use this document to develop an internal work schedule, factoring in holidays, meetings, staff schedules, and other events that might impact the self-study process.

If an organization is new to Joint Accreditation, the application process is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Cycle 1</th>
<th>Cycle 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determination of eligibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Intent to apply</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Eligibility Review Fee ($1,500)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider informed of eligibility decision</td>
<td>July 16</td>
<td>November 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider deadline to submit:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Activity list</td>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>January 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Application Fee ($22,000)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider informed which activity files, at a minimum, will be reviewed</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider contacted to establish interview date</td>
<td>January/February</td>
<td>April/May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider deadline to submit:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Self-Study Report</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>July 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Activity files</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>April/May</td>
<td>August/September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint ARC Meeting</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider notified of decision</td>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>December 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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If an organization is currently a jointly accredited provider, the reaccreditation process is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Cycle 1</th>
<th>Cycle 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intent to re-apply for Joint Accreditation</td>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>October 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider deadline to submit:</td>
<td>September 1</td>
<td>January 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Activity list</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Reapplication Fee ($4,500)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider informed which activity files, at a minimum,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>will be reviewed</td>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>February 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider contacted to establish interview date</td>
<td>January/February</td>
<td>April/May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider deadline to submit:</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>July 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Self-Study Report</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Activity files</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>April/May</td>
<td>August/September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint ARC Meeting</td>
<td>June</td>
<td>October</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provider notified of decision no later than</td>
<td>July 31</td>
<td>December 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conducting the Self-Study**

The self-study process provides an opportunity for the applicant organization to reflect on its program of continuing education (CE). This process can help the applicant organization assess its commitment to and role in providing interprofessional continuing education (IPCE) and determine its future direction.

While an outline of the content of the *self-study report* is specified, the process of conducting a *self-study* is unique to the applicant organization. Depending on the size and scope of its CE program, the applicant organization may wish to involve many or just a few individuals in the process.
2. Data Sources Used in the Accreditation Process

The provider that develops IPCE must meet all accreditation expectations *in practice*. This will be determined through a review of materials used in the planning and implementation of individual CE activities or groups of activities and materials used in the administration of a CE program as well as an interview conducted by a survey team.

The Joint Accreditation process is **an opportunity** for the provider to demonstrate its process of planning interprofessional CE is in compliance with the requirements for joint accreditation. Three explicit data sources will be used to evaluate compliance:

**Self-Study Report:** The provider is expected to provide and describe *examples* of its interprofessional CE practices. When describing a practice, the provider is offering a narrative to give the reader an understanding of the CE practice(s) related to a Criterion or Policy. When asked for an example of a CE practice, evidence (documentation/documents/materials) must demonstrate *implementation* of the practice. Evidence must be chosen from activities that have already been planned and/or implemented.

For information on the structure, format and content requirements for the self-study report, please see **Section 4** of this document.

1. **Activity file review:** The provider is expected to verify that its CE activities meet the Joint Accreditation criteria through the documentation review process. This review is based on the criteria for accreditation as a provider of interprofessional continuing education (IPCE). It is expected that the provider will bookmark or label its activity documentation according to instructions.

A sample of activities will be selected for activity file review. For initial applicants, the activities selected will all have been developed by and provided for the interprofessional healthcare team. For applicants that are currently jointly accredited, the activities selected will include both interprofessional and non-IPCE activities, if the provider includes non-IPCE activities in its CE program. For information on the structure, format and content requirements for activity files, please see **Section 5** of this document.

2. **Accreditation interview:** All applicants are required to participate in an interview with a team of volunteer accreditation surveyors, trained and selected by the Joint Accreditation program who have all reviewed the materials submitted. This allows the provider an opportunity to amplify, verify, and clarify the information provided in the self-study document and activity files. Through dialogue with the survey team, a provider may illuminate its practices in a more explicit manner. The survey team may request that a provider submit additional materials based on this dialogue to verify a provider’s practice. For information on the accreditation interview, please see **Section 7** of this document.
3. The Decision-Making Process

Data and information collected in the accreditation process is analyzed and synthesized by the Joint Accreditation Review Committee (Joint ARC). The Joint ARC makes decision recommendations using the following process:

1. The Joint Accreditation decision making process assesses a provider’s compliance with the Joint Accreditation criteria based on information furnished by the provider, via the self-study report, activity files and through the survey team interview. Compliance options for each of the Joint Accreditation criteria include:
   i. Compliance (the provider meets the expectations of that criterion for Compliance).
   ii. Noncompliance (the provider does not meet the expectations of that criterion for Compliance).

2. The term for Joint Accreditation is up to two, four or six years (see Term of Accreditation above).

3. For a provider seeking Joint Accreditation, noncompliance with any single criterion will result in the requirement of a progress report. Failure to demonstrate compliance in the progress report may result in a change of status to Probation. Probation is given to accredited providers that have serious problems meeting Joint Accreditation requirements. Providers on Probation are required to submit progress reports.

   If a provider is found to be in noncompliance with a majority of the criteria or, as determined by the Joint ARC, the noncompliance is determined to be egregious in nature, such as, but not limited to, control of the education by the pharmaceutical or device industry, then it will not receive Joint Accreditation, or may have its status changed to Probation.

Consequences and Outcomes of a Progress Report

1. If the Provider's evidence is compliant with the Criteria that were in noncompliance, the provider may continue with its accredited term.

2. For a provider on Probation, demonstration of compliance [through a progress report] in all elements will result in its ability to complete its four-year term with a status of Joint Accreditation.

3. The accreditors may request CLARIFICATION at the time of the next Joint Accreditation review to be certain the provider is in compliance.

4. If the provider has not demonstrated compliance with the criterion/criteria that were in noncompliance, a second progress report may be required.

5. The accreditors may place a provider on Probation or withdraw accreditation as the result of the findings of a progress report.

The Joint ARC makes recommendations to the Governance/Decision-making bodies of the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC. All accreditation decisions are unanimous and are ratified by the full Governance bodies of the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC. The accreditation is thus recognized by all three accrediting bodies. This multi-tiered system of review provides the checks and balances necessary to ensure fair and accurate decisions. The fairness and accuracy of accreditation decisions is also enhanced by the use of a criterion-referenced decision-making
system. Accreditation decision letters will be sent to providers electronically following the meetings of the Governance bodies of the ACCME, ACPE, and ANCC.

4. PREPARING THE SELF-STUDY REPORT FOR JOINT ACCREDITATION

A. STRUCTURE AND FORMAT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

Organizations are asked to provide descriptions, attachments, and examples to give the reviewer an understanding of CE practice(s) related to the Joint Accreditation Criteria and Policies. Descriptions are narrative explanations. Attachments are specific documents. Examples are demonstrations of the implementation of the practices described that may include narrative and/or attachments.

The self-study report is a single document submitted to the Joint Accreditors in PDF format. The self-study report must be formatted as indicated below to facilitate the review of your CE program.

1. Separate the content of the self-study report using PDF bookmarks for each Criterion according to the outline provided. Documents received without PDF bookmarks will be returned.
2. Include a Table of Contents listing the page numbers of each narrative and attachment contained within the self-study report.
3. Provide required narrative and attachments for each Criterion.
4. Consecutively number each page - including the attachments. The name (or abbreviation) of the organization must appear with the page number on each page.
5. Type with at least 1” margins (top, bottom and sides), using 11 point type or larger.
6. Do not exceed 150 sides/pages of content, including narrative and attachments. The Intent to Apply and CE Activity List are not counted as part of the 150 sides/pages of content.

B. OUTLINE FOR THE SELF-STUDY REPORT

I. Introduction

a. Self-Study Report Prologue
   • Describe a brief history of the organization’s CE Program.
   • Describe the leadership and structure of the organization’s CE Program.

II. Joint Accreditation Criteria

a. Mission and Overall Program Improvement

   The following criteria outline the expectation that the accredited provider has a roadmap (CE mission) to guide it in its provision of education, that it periodically assesses how well it is meeting that CE mission, and that it identifies changes or improvements that will allow it to better meet its CE mission.
**JAC 1:** The provider has a continuing education (CE) mission statement that highlights education for the healthcare team with expected results articulated in terms of changes in skills/strategy, or performance of the healthcare team, and/or patient outcomes.

**Guidance:** Attach the provider’s CE mission statement to verify the expected results section of the mission statement clearly reflects the changes that are the expected results of the organization’s CE program (i.e., Attach the CE mission statement and highlight the expected results).

**JAC 2:** The provider gathers data or information and conducts a program-based analysis on the degree to which its CE mission—as it relates to changes in skills/strategy, or performance of the healthcare team, and/or patient outcomes—has been met through the conduct of CE activities/educational interventions.

**Guidance:**
1. Describe and include examples of information gathered as a result of overall program evaluation.
2. Based on data and information gathered, provide a narrative that describes the conclusions of your program-based analysis on the degree to which the provider has met its CE mission.

**JAC 3:** The provider identifies, plans and implements the needed or desired changes in the overall program (e.g., planners, teachers, infrastructure, methods, resources, facilities, interventions) that are required to improve its ability to meet the CE mission.

**Guidance:**
1. As a result of program-based analysis, describe identified changes that could help the provider better meet its CE mission.
2. Based on the changes identified that could be made, describe the changes to the CE program that were implemented. For any potential changes that were not implemented, explain why they were not implemented and what plans there are to address them in the future.

**b. Activity Planning and Evaluation Process**

The following criteria outline the expectation that the accredited provider has a roadmap (CE mission) to guide it in its provision of education, that it periodically assesses how well it is meeting that CE mission, and that it identifies changes or improvements that will allow it to better meet its CE mission.

**JAC 4:** The provider incorporates into IPCE activities the educational needs (knowledge, skills/strategy, or performance) that underlie the practice gaps of
the healthcare team and/or the individual members’ knowledge, skills/strategy, or performance as members of the healthcare team.

Guidance:
Describe and provide an example of how the provider incorporates the educational needs (knowledge, skills/strategies or performance) that underlie the professional practice gaps of learners into CE activities. Use the following as an outline for your description:

i. How the provider identifies the professional practice gaps of the healthcare team and/or individual members;

ii. How the provider identifies the educational need(s) that underlie those gaps; and,

iii. How the provider incorporates these needs into activities or a set of activities and,

iv. Describe the professional practice gap(s) and resulting educational need(s) of the healthcare team and/or its individual learners as part of the team for the example selected.

JAC 5: The provider generates activities/educational interventions that are designed to change the skills/strategy, or performance of the healthcare team, and/or patient outcomes as described in its mission statement.

Guidance:
Describe and provide an example of the provider’s process of designing activities to change skills/strategy, or performance of the healthcare team, and/or patient outcomes.

JAC 6: The provider generates activities/educational interventions around valid content that meets the expectations set by Joint Accreditation.

Guidance:
Describe and provide an example of how the provider, at the CE program or activity planning level, ensures that the activity is generated around valid content. (Valid content is based on evidence accepted in the health care professions; conforms to the generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection and analysis; and risks or dangers do not outweigh the benefits and recommendations are not known to be ineffective in the treatment of patients.)

JAC 7: The provider designs education that promotes active learning – so that teams learn from, with, and about each other – consistent with the desired results of the activity.
**Guidance:**
**Describe and provide an example of** how the activity promotes active learning consistent with the expected results. Explain how participants **learned with, from, and about each other in CE activities.**

**JAC 8:** The provider develops activities/educational interventions in the context of desirable attributes of the healthcare team (e.g., Institute of Medicine competencies, professional competencies, healthcare team competencies: values/ethics, roles and responsibilities, interprofessional communication, teams and teamwork\(^1\)).

**Guidance:**
**Describe and provide an example of** how the provider develops CE activities in the context of desirable attributes of the healthcare team (e.g., IOM competencies, professional competencies, healthcare team competencies).

**JAC 9:** The provider utilizes support strategies to sustain change as an adjunct to its educational interventions (e.g., reminders, patient feedback).

**Guidance:**
**Describe** how the provider utilizes support strategies to sustain change as an adjunct (separate from, but in addition) to its educational activities. Include an explanation of how the support strategies were connected to an individual activity or group of activities. Include **two examples** of two different support strategies that have been implemented.

**JAC 10:** The provider implements strategies to remove, overcome, or address barriers to change in the skills/strategy or performance of the healthcare team.

**Guidance:**
**Describe** how the provider implements strategies to remove, overcome, or address barriers to change for the healthcare team. These instances might be specific to the planning of a CE activity or at the overall CE program level. Include two **examples** of different educational strategies that have been implemented to remove, overcome, or address barriers to healthcare team.

**JAC 11:** The provider analyzes changes in the healthcare team (skills/strategy, performance) and/or patient outcomes achieved as a result of its IPCE activities/educational interventions.

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Guidance:

**Describe conclusions** drawn from the analysis of changes in the healthcare team’s skills/strategy or performance or the patient outcomes achieved as a result of the provider’s overall program’s activities/educational interventions. Provide a **summary of the data** upon which analysis of changes in the healthcare team was based and/or documentation of patient outcomes.

### C. Independence

*The following criterion outlines the expectations for independence, identification/resolution of conflicts of interest, appropriate management of commercial support (if applicable), and separation of promotion from education for all education offered by the accredited provider.*

**JAC 12a-d:** The provider develops activities/educational interventions that are independent of commercial interests (ACCME Standards for Commercial Support: Standards to Ensure Independence in CME Activities<sup>SM</sup>).

**Guidance:**

**ACCME Standards for Commercial Support 1:**

i. **Describe how the provider makes the following decisions free of the control of a commercial interest:**

(a) identification of needs;  
(b) the determination of educational objectives;  
(c) the selection and presentation of content;  
(d) the selection of all persons and organizations in a position to control the content;  
(e) the selection of educational methods, and  
(f) the evaluation of the activity. *(SCS 1.1)*

ii. **Under very rare circumstances,** an accredited provider might choose to develop activities that include the presentation of discovery, research or new knowledge by employees of ACCME-defined commercial interests. When that happens, it is important that you demonstrate through your description that there are mechanisms in place that provide appropriate safeguards to the independence of the activity. *(See [http://accme.org/ask-acme/can-provider-allow-oral-or-written-reporting-scientific-research-employee-commercial](http://accme.org/ask-acme/can-provider-allow-oral-or-written-reporting-scientific-research-employee-commercial) for more information on this topic.) If your organization is involved in these rare circumstances, please:

   a. Describe factors the provider considers in determining an appropriate role of an ACCME-defined commercial interest employee in planning and/or presenting accredited CE; and  
   b. Describe the mechanisms implemented to ensure that the provider ensures independence in these situations. *(SCS 1.1)*  
   c. If the provider enters into collaborative educational relationships with non-accredited organizations, describe the process used by the provider to ensure that these organizations are not commercial interests. *(SCS 1.2)*
**ACCME Standards for Commercial Support 2 and 6 (JAC 12a):**

i. **Describe and provide examples of all of** the mechanism(s) (e.g. forms) used by the provider to ensure that all individuals in a position to control educational content (for example, planners, teachers/faculty, authors, reviewers, staff, etc.) have disclosed relevant financial relationships with commercial interests. In the description, include the provider’s mechanism(s) for disqualifying individuals who refuse to disclose. *(SCS 2.1, 2.2)*

ii. **Describe**

   a) the mechanism(s) the provider uses to resolve conflicts of interest for everyone in a position to control educational content specific to their role(s), as presenters, speakers or authors,

   b) the mechanism(s) the provider uses to resolve conflicts for individuals who are planners or reviewers of an accredited CE activity. *[See https://www.accme.org/faq/do-i-need-use-different-approaches-resolve-conflicts-interest-for-planners-i-use-for-other for more information on this topic.]* *(SCS 2.3)*

iii. **Describe** the provider’s process(es) and mechanism(s) for disclosure to the learners prior to the activity of (1) relevant financial relationships of all persons in a position to control educational content and (2) the source of support from commercial interests, if applicable. *(SCS 6.1-6.5)*

**ACCME Standards for Commercial Support 3 (JAC 12b):**

i. **Attach** written policies and procedures governing honoraria and reimbursement of expenses for planners, teachers, and/or authors. *(SCS 3.7-3.8)*

ii. **Describe** how the provider ensures that social events do not compete with or take precedence over educational activities. *(SCS 3.11)*

**NOTE:** *If the provider accepts commercial support, respond to iii - v; if not, omit questions iii - v.*

iii. **Describe process(es)** for the receipt and disbursement of commercial support (both funds and in-kind support). *(SCS 3.1)*

iv. **Describe** how the provider ensures that all commercial support is given with the provider’s full knowledge and approval. Include in the response all policies and processes to ensure that no other payment is given to the
director of the activity, planning committee members, teachers or authors, joint sponsor, or any others involved in the activity. (SCS 3.3; 3.9)

ACCME Standards for Commercial Support 4 (JAC 12c):

i. If commercial exhibits are associated with any of the provider’s CE activities, describe how the provider ensures that arrangements for commercial exhibits do not (1) influence planning or interfere with the presentation and (2) are not a condition of the provision of commercial support for CE activities. (SCS 4.1)

ii. If advertisements are associated with any of the provider’s CE activities, describe how the provider ensures that advertisements or other product-promotion materials are kept separate from the education. Distinguish between processes related to advertisements and/or product promotion in each of the following types of CE activities: (1) print materials, (2) computer-based materials, (3) audio and video recordings, and (4) face-to-face. (SCS 4.2, 4.4)

ACCME Standards for Commercial Support 5 (JAC 12d):

Describe planning and monitoring used to ensure that:

i. The content of CE activities does not promote the proprietary interests of any commercial interests. (SCS 5.1)

ii. CE activities give a balanced view of therapeutic options. (SCS 5.2)

iii. All the recommendations involving clinical medicine in a CE activity must be based on evidence that is accepted within the health profession being addressed as adequate justification for their indications and contraindications in the care of patients. All scientific research referred to, reported or used in CE in support or justification of a patient care recommendation must conform to the generally accepted standards of experimental design, data collection and analysis.

III. Joint Accreditation with Commendation (OPTIONAL)

A. Description

Joint Accreditation offers accredited organizations the option of demonstrating compliance with a menu of criteria that go beyond the core Joint Accreditation Criteria (JAC 1-12) noted above. These optional criteria seek to provide additional incentive as well as encouragement to providers to expand their reach and impact in the IPCE/CE environment.

NOTE: The opportunity to seek and achieve Joint Accreditation with Commendation is optional, and none of the commendation criteria are required.
B. Menu Structure
Joint Accreditation uses a menu structure for organizations seeking commendation in order to create flexibility, reflect the diversity of the IPCE community, and offer a pathway for all provider types to achieve commendation. To achieve commendation, providers need to demonstrate compliance with JAC 1–12 and any seven (7) of the 13 commendation criteria.

C. Critical Elements and Standards for Compliance (Appendix 1)
Critical elements and standards have been defined to be explicit about what demonstrates compliance with each of the commendation criteria. For those commendation criteria that are activity-based (where compliance is demonstrated through the planning, implementation, or evaluation of activities), providers will be expected to demonstrate compliance with at least 10% of their activities, including demonstration in some IPCE activities (Criteria JAC 13, 14, 18). For those commendation criteria that are organizational or project-based, the specific amount or number of projects required to demonstrate compliance has been defined in the critical elements and standards. Please note that one activity may be able to meet multiple criteria. Where the guidance asks for the submission of evidence, unless otherwise noted, please provide a brief narrative describing how each of the critical elements of that criterion are met.

D. Eligibility
Organizations are eligible to seek Joint Accreditation with Commendation if they are currently jointly accredited or they are seeking initial joint accreditation and have been previously accredited by at least one of the following: ACCME, ACPE, or ANCC.

E. Size
A number of criteria included in the Menu of Criteria for Joint Accreditation with Commendation take into consideration the size of the provider's organization as measured by the number of activities offered. For the purposes of evaluating providers for Joint Accreditation with Commendation, please indicate the Program Size by Activities per Term is as follows:
- S (small): less than 39;
- M (medium): 40-100;
- L (large): 101-250;
- XL (extra-large): > 250.

F. Attestation
A number of criteria [JAC 13, 14, 18, 22, 23] included in the Menu of Criteria for Joint Accreditation with Commendation request an attestation to meeting the critical elements of the criterion in at least 10% of the activities in the CE program. Evidence of attestation should include the following statement in the response to the criterion:
“I attest that our organization has met the Critical Elements for JAC [#] in at least 10% of the CE activities (but no less than two activities) during the accreditation term.” [Individual Organizational Representative Name], [Title]

G. Criteria for Joint Accreditation with Commendation

**JAC 13:** The provider engages patients as planners and teachers in accredited IPCE and/or CE.

**Guidance:**
*Describe* how the provider incorporates patients and/or public representatives as planners and teachers. *Attest* to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities during the accreditation term. *Submit evidence* for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8.

**JAC 14:** The provider engages students of the health professions as planners and teachers in accredited IPCE and/or CE.

**Guidance:**
*Describe* how the provider engages students of any of the health professions as planners and teachers. *Attest* to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities during the accreditation term. *Submit evidence* for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8.

**JAC 15:** The provider supports the continuous professional development of its own education team.

**Guidance:**
*Describe* how the provider creates an IPCE-related continuous professional development plan for all members of the IPCE team that is based on needs assessment of the team. *Describe* the time and resources dedicated towards continuous professional development of the IPCE team. The learning plans should include some activities external to the provider. *Submit evidence* demonstrating that the plan has been implemented for the IPCE team during the accreditation term.

**JAC 16:** The provider engages in research and scholarship related to accredited IPCE and/or CE and disseminates findings through presentation or publication.

**Guidance:**
*Describe* the scholarly pursuits relevant to IPCE undertaken by the provider during the accreditation term. *Submit* a description of two projects completed during the accreditation term and the dissemination method used for each.
**JAC 17:** The provider integrates the use of health and/or practice data of its own learners in the planning and presentation of accredited IPCE and/or CE.

**Guidance:**
Describe how the provider teaches about collection, analysis, or synthesis of health/practice data. Describe how the provider uses health/practice data to teach about healthcare improvement. Submit evidence demonstrating the incorporation of health and practice data into the provider’s educational program with examples for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8.

**JAC 18:** The provider identifies and addresses factors beyond clinical care (e.g., social determinants) that affect the health of patients and integrates those factors into accredited IPCE and/or CE.

**Guidance:**
Describe how the provider teaches strategies that learners can use to achieve improvements in population health. Attest to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities (but no less than two) during the accreditation term. Submit evidence for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8.

**JAC 19:** The provider collaborates with other organizations to address population health issues.

**Guidance:**
Describe how the provider creates or continues collaborations with one or more healthcare or community organization. Describe how these collaborations augment the provider’s ability to address population health issues. Submit evidence demonstrating the presence of collaborations that are aimed at improving population health with four examples from the accreditation term.

**JAC 20:** The provider designs accredited IPCE and/or CE (that includes direct observation and formative feedback) to optimize communication skills of learners.

**Guidance:**
Submit Evidence demonstrating the IPCE/CE activities that are designed to improve communication skills. Describe how the provider observed and evaluated communication skills (e.g., in person or video). Describe the process used to provide formative feedback to learners about their communication skills. Submit evidence including a sample of the feedback provided to learners in each activity example for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8

**JAC 21:** The provider designs accredited IPCE and/or CE (that includes direct observation and formative feedback) to optimize technical and procedural skills of learners.
Guidance:
Submit Evidence demonstrating the IPCE/CE activities that are designed to address technical and/or procedural skills that are psychomotor in nature. Describe how the provider observed and evaluated technical or procedural skills (e.g., in person or video). Describe the process used to provide formative feedback to learners about their technical or procedural skills. Submit evidence, including a sample of the feedback provided to learners in each activity example, for the required number of activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6, XL: 8

JAC 22: The provider creates and facilitates the implementation of individualized learning plans.

Guidance:
Describe the framework of the individualized learning plan activity(ies), including how the provider tracks the repeated engagement of the learner/team with a longitudinal curriculum plan over weeks or months. Describe how individualized feedback is provided to the learner/team to close practice gaps. Include two examples of this feedback. List the number and professions of learners and/or teams who participated in the individualized learning plan(s) with repeated engagement and feedback demonstrating that the provider has met or exceeded the number of learners or teams based on program size*. Attest to the accuracy of the numbers provided.

*S: 25 learners or 5 teams; M: 75 learners or 10 teams; L: 125 learners or 15 teams; XL 200 learners or 20 teams.

JAC 23: The provider demonstrates improvement in the performance of healthcare teams as a result of its overall IPCE program.

Guidance:
Describe how the provider measures performance changes of teams. Describe improvements in the performance of teams documented by the provider as a result of the IPCE/CE activities offered. Attest to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities (but no less than two) during the most recent accreditation term. Submit evidence for this many activities: S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL, based the number program size, measured by number of activities in the most recent term: S (small): <39; M (medium): 40 -100; L (large): 101-250; XL (extra-large): >250

JAC 24: The provider demonstrates healthcare quality improvement achieved through the involvement of its overall IPCE program.

Guidance:
Describe how the IPCE program contributes to improvements in processes of care or system performance. Describe how the provider collaborates in the process of
healthcare quality improvement. Submit evidence demonstrating two healthcare quality improvements related to the IPCE program during the accreditation term.

**JAC 25:** The provider demonstrates the positive impact of its overall IPCE program on patients or their communities.

**Guidance:**
Describe how the provider collaborates in the process of improving patient or community health. Describe how the provider contributes to improvement in patient or community outcomes. Submit evidence demonstrating two improvements in patient or community health in areas related to the IPCE program during the accreditation term.

### 5. Activity File Review Materials: Content, Structure and Format

#### A. Selection of Activities for Review

Based on the completed CE Activity List provided, nine (9) activities will be selected for review. Providers will be notified via email of the activities that have been selected.

If the provider is being reviewed for reaccreditation, and a mixture of interprofessional and single profession activities are offered by the provider, then the sample of nine (9) total activities will be split in the following way – six (6) interprofessional and three (3) single profession activities, if applicable.

#### B. Contents of Activity File Review Materials

The activity file review allows providers to demonstrate compliance with the Joint Accreditation criteria and offers providers an opportunity to reflect on its CE practices.

Materials that demonstrate compliance with the Joint Accreditation expectations may result from work done for individual activities or as part of the overall CE program. Meeting minutes and strategic planning documents are two examples of materials that might help a provider show how an activity meets expectations with evidence not directly related to a specific CE activity.

**Note: Expectations for Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS)**

A provider that produces Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS) must ensure that its program of RSSs contributes to fulfilling the provider’s CE mission, fulfills the joint accreditation requirements, and manifests the provider’s engagement with the system in which it operates – just like any other activity type. Like all other activity types, RSSs may be selected for demonstration of compliance with the accreditation criteria. If an RSS is selected, the organization is asked to submit evidence from at least 25% of the sessions that make up the RSS as the activity file.
C. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING ACTIVITY FILE MATERIALS FOR REVIEW

Prepare and submit evidence according to the specifications outlined below; Activity files will be returned if they do not comply with these requirements.

Submit Evidence Using the Joint Accreditation Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstract

The Joint Accreditation Performance-in-Practice Structured Abstract may be downloaded from the Joint Accreditation website, under “Forms and Downloads”. Each activity file should include a completed structured abstract form. Using the Structured Abstract, you will complete text-limited fields, tables, and attach evidence that verifies the activity meets the Joint Accreditation requirements.

Each selected activity needs to be submitted as one (1) PDF file, for a total of nine (9) individual PDF activity files.

D. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PREPARING EVIDENCE OF DESIGNATION OF AMA PRA CATEGORY 1 CREDIT™

As a service to the American Medical Association (AMA), the Joint Accreditation process collects evidence of the use of the AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™ statement and designation of Skill/Procedure level (if applicable). This information will not be considered as part of your Joint Accreditation decision.

Assemble one separate PDF file that includes the name of your organization (no acronyms or abbreviations) and AMA PRA credit in its file name. Include, for each of the activities that were selected for performance-in-practice review (i.e., the nine activities), the evidence of your organization’s use of the:

- **AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™** Designation Statement by submitting a copy of the page of the brochure or handout which indicates the AMA’s PRA statement
- **AMA New Skills and Procedures Levels** (if applicable)

This one PDF file should include the labeled evidence from all activities that were selected for performance-in-practice review for Joint Accreditation that were designated for **AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™**.

6. SUBMITTING MATERIALS FOR REVIEW

SUBMIT ONLINE USING HIGHTAIL

Joint Accreditation asks that you submit your materials electronically (1 self-study file, 9 individual activity files, and 1 AMA PRA credit file, if applicable) via the Joint Accreditation Hightail online application. Please follow the instructions below:

2. Select File: Either drag the file into the Hightail Uplink page or upload it (i.e., 'pick from your computer'). To upload, a pop-up window will appear that allows you to browse your computer to locate the file. Once the file is identified, click ‘Open.’

3. Please complete the fields on the page as indicated below:
   - Full Name: List full name of the individual who is responsible for the report. This person will serve as the contact person if Joint Accreditation staff experiences any issues with accessing the self-assessment report.
   - Email: List the email address for the individual who is responsible for the report.
   - Subject: The subject line should include the report type, provider name, and review cycle. (i.e. JA SS PharmRUs Cycle 1 or JA AF Hypertension Guidelines Cycle 1)
     
   JA = Joint Accreditation  
   SS = Self Study  
   AF = Activity File Title
   
   - Message: Please use this optional section to provide us with special instructions, passwords (if document is password protected), etc. to minimize any confusion regarding your report. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact info@jointaccreditation.org.

4. Once you've completed step 3, please click ‘SEND’ (Note: it may take 1-2 minutes to send your file depending on its size and the speed of your internet connection). Once the file has been sent successfully, you will receive an email confirming the transmission.

Please contact info@jointaccreditation.org if you have any questions.

The provider should retain a duplicate set of all materials at their offices for its own reference. Materials not submitted according to required specifications may be returned at the provider's expense. This may result in a delay in the accreditation review process, additional fees, and may impact the organization’s accreditation status. Particularly important format considerations are bookmarking, length of the self-study report, and pagination.

7. ACCREDITATION INTERVIEW

The interview offers opportunities for both the provider and the survey team. The interview allows the provider to: (1) discuss its CE program, overall CE program evaluation, and self-study report and (2) clarify information described and shared in the self-study report and activity files. The interview offers opportunities for the survey team to: (1) ensure that any questions regarding the provider's procedures or practices are answered and (2) ensure that the survey team has complete information about the provider's organization with which to formulate a report to the Joint ARC and the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC Governing bodies.

The Joint Accreditation survey team will not provide feedback on compliance, nor will it provide the organization with a summary of findings or an assessment of the expected outcome of the accreditation review. The organization’s compliance, findings, and the outcome of the accreditation review are determined by the governing bodies of the ACCME, ACPE, and ANCC based on the recommendations of the Joint ARC.
**Interview Formats**

The interviews are a dialogue directed by the survey team with staff of the provider. Interviews will last approximately 90 minutes, which provides ample time to verify, clarify, and amplify the self-study report documentation. The standard format for Joint Accreditation survey interviews is via conference call.

**Scheduling the Interview**

Interviews will be scheduled based on availability of the Joint Accreditation survey team in consultation with the provider.

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**8. Decision-Making Process**

Compliance findings and the outcome of the accreditation review are determined by the Joint Accreditors based on the data and information collected in the accreditation process. The Joint Accreditors will also consider data from monitoring issues, if such data are applicable to the provider. The data and information are analyzed and synthesized by the Joint ARC. The Joint ARC makes recommendations on findings and status which are forwarded for action by the Governing Boards of the ACCME, ACPE and ANCC, which provide decisions on Joint Accreditation twice per year (generally, in July and December).

This multi-tiered system of review provides the checks and balances necessary to ensure fair and accurate decisions. The fairness and accuracy of Joint Accreditation decisions are also enhanced by the Joint Accreditor's use of a criterion-referenced decision-making system. Accreditation decision letters are sent to providers via mail following the decisions of the three Governing Boards.
### Appendix 1. Menu of Criteria for Joint Accreditation with Commendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Critical Elements</th>
<th>The Standard</th>
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<tr>
<td>JAC 13</td>
<td>Accredited continuing education (CE) is enhanced when it incorporates the interests of the people who are served by the healthcare system. This can be achieved when patients and/or public representatives are engaged in the planning and delivery of CE. This criterion recognizes providers that incorporate patient and/or public representatives as planners and teachers in the accredited program.</td>
<td>☐ Includes planners who are patients and/or public representatives; AND ☐ Includes teachers who are patients and/or public representatives.</td>
<td>Attest to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities (but no less than two for small providers) during the accreditation term. At review, submit evidence for this many activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 14</td>
<td>The provider engages students of the health professions as planners and teachers in accredited IPCE and/or CE.</td>
<td>☐ Includes planners who are students of the health professions; AND ☐ Includes teachers who are students of the health professions.</td>
<td>Attest to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities (but no less than two) during the accreditation term. At review, submit evidence for this many activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC 15</td>
<td>The participation of IPCE professionals in their own continuous professional development (CPD) supports improvements in their CE programs and advances the IPCE profession. This criterion recognizes providers that enable their IPCE team to participate in CPD in domains relevant to the IPCE enterprise. The IPCE team are those individuals regularly involved in the planning and development of IPCE/CE activities, as determined by the provider.</td>
<td>☐ Creates an IPCE-related continuous professional development plan for all members of its IPCE team; AND ☐ Learning plan is based on needs assessment of the team; AND ☐ Learning plan includes some activities external to the provider; AND ☐ Dedicates time and resources for the IPCE team to engage in the plan.</td>
<td>At review, submit description showing that the plan has been implemented for the IPCE team during the accreditation term.</td>
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*Program Size by Activities per Term: S (small): <39; M (medium): 40 -100; L (large): 101-250; XL (extra-large): >250
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<td>JAC 16</td>
<td>The provider engages in research and scholarship related to accredited IPCE and/or CE and disseminates findings through presentation or publication. Engagement by jointly accredited providers in the scholarly pursuit of research related to the effectiveness of and best practices in IPCE and/or CE supports the success of the enterprise. Participation in research includes developing and supporting innovative approaches, studying them, and disseminating the findings.</td>
<td>□ Conducts scholarly pursuit relevant to IPCE and/or CE; AND □ Submits, presents, or publishes a poster, abstract, or manuscript to or in a peer-reviewed forum.</td>
<td>At review, submit description of two projects completed during the accreditation term and the dissemination method used for each.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 17</td>
<td>The provider advances the use of health and practice data for healthcare improvement. The collection, analysis, and synthesis of health and practice data/information derived from the care of patients can contribute to patient safety, practice improvement, and quality improvement. Health and practice data can be gleaned from a variety of sources; some examples include electronic health records, public health records, prescribing datasets, and registries. This criterion will recognize providers that use these data to teach about health informatics and improving the quality and safety of care.</td>
<td>□ Teaches about collection, analysis, or synthesis of health/practice data; AND □ Uses health/practice data to teach about healthcare improvement.</td>
<td>Demonstrate the incorporation of health and practice data into the provider’s educational program with examples from this number of activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 18</td>
<td>The provider identifies and addresses factors beyond clinical care (e.g., social determinants) that affect the health of patients and integrates those factors into accredited IPCE and/or CE. This criterion recognizes providers for expanding their IPCE and CE programs beyond clinical care education to address factors affecting the health of populations. Some examples of these factors include health behaviors; economic, social, and environmental conditions; healthcare and payer systems; access to care; health disparities; or the population’s physical environment.</td>
<td>□ Teaches strategies that learners can use to achieve improvements in population health</td>
<td>Attest to meeting this criterion in at least 10% of activities (but no less than two) during the accreditation term. At review, submit evidence for this many activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
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<td>JAC 19</td>
<td>The provider collaborates with other organizations to more effectively address population health issues. Collaboration among people and organizations builds stronger, more empowered systems. This criterion recognizes providers that apply this principle by building collaborations with other organizations that enhance the effectiveness of the IPCE program in addressing community/population health issues.</td>
<td>□ Creates or continues collaborations with one or more healthcare or community organization(s); AND □ Demonstrates that the collaborations augment the provider’s ability to address population health issues.</td>
<td>Demonstrate the presence of collaborations that are aimed at improving population health with four examples from the accreditation term.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 20</td>
<td>The provider designs accredited interprofessional continuing education (IPCE) and/or CE (that includes direct observation and formative feedback) to optimize communication skills of learners. Communication skills are essential for professional practice. Communication skills include verbal, nonverbal, listening, and writing skills. Some examples are communications with patients, families, and teams; and presentation, leadership, teaching, and organizational skills. This criterion recognizes providers that help learners become more self-aware of their communication skills and offer IPCE/CE to improve those skills.</td>
<td>□ Provides IPCE/CE to improve communication skills; AND □ Includes an evaluation of observed (e.g., in person or video) communication skills; AND □ Provides formative feedback to the learner about communication skills.</td>
<td>At review, submit evidence for this many activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 21</td>
<td>The provider designs accredited IPCE and/or CE (that includes direct observation and formative feedback) to optimize technical and procedural skills of learners. Technical and procedural skills that are psychomotor in nature are essential to many aspects of professional practice, and need to be learned, updated, reinforced, and reassessed. Some examples of these skills are operative skill, device use, procedures, physical examination, specimen preparation, resuscitation, and critical incident management. This criterion recognizes providers that offer IPCE/CE to help learners gain, retain, or improve technical and/or procedural skills.</td>
<td>□ Provides IPCE/CE addressing psychomotor technical and/or procedural skills; AND □ Includes an evaluation of observed (e.g., in person or video) technical or procedural skill; AND □ Provides formative feedback to the learner about technical skills.</td>
<td>At review, submit evidence for this many activities:* S: 2; M: 4; L: 6; XL: 8</td>
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<td>JAC 22</td>
<td>The provider creates and facilitates the implementation of individualized learning plans.</td>
<td>This criterion recognizes providers that develop individualized educational planning for the learner and/or healthcare team; customize an existing curriculum for the learner/team; track learners/teams through a curriculum; or work with learners/teams to create a self-directed learning plan where the learner/team assesses their own gaps and selects content to address those gaps. The personalized education needs to be designed to close the individual/team’s professional practice gaps over time.</td>
<td>- Tracks the repeated engagement of the learner/team with a longitudinal curriculum/plan over weeks or months AND - Provides individualized feedback to the learner/team to close practice gaps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 23</td>
<td>The provider demonstrates improvement in the performance of healthcare teams as a result of its overall IPCE program.</td>
<td>Research has shown that accredited IPCE can be an effective tool for improving healthcare teams’ performance in practice. This criterion recognizes providers that can demonstrate the impact of their IPCE program on the performance of teams.</td>
<td>- Measures performance changes of teams; AND - Demonstrates improvements in the performance of teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 24</td>
<td>The provider demonstrates healthcare quality improvement achieved through the involvement of its overall IPCE program.</td>
<td>IPCE has an essential role in healthcare quality improvement. This criterion recognizes providers that demonstrate that their IPCE program contributes to improvements in processes of care or system performance.</td>
<td>- Collaborates in the process of healthcare quality improvement; AND - Demonstrates improvement in healthcare quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAC 25</td>
<td>The provider demonstrates the positive impact of its overall IPCE program on patients or their communities.</td>
<td>Our shared goal is to improve the health of patients and their families. This criterion recognizes providers that demonstrate that the IPCE program contributed to improvements in health-related outcomes for patients or their communities.</td>
<td>- Collaborates in the process of improving patient or community health; AND - Demonstrates improvement in patient or community outcomes.</td>
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