Category 1 CME for Preceptors

Background

AAPA’s 2013-2015 Strategic Plan includes a commitment to grow the PA profession. With the number of accredited PA programs on the rise, access to clinical training sites and preceptors is widely recognized as one of the rate limiting steps to growth of the profession. In short, more preceptors equal more PAs. AAPA is excited to collaborate with PAEA to increase the number of preceptors and ultimately grow the profession.

In a 2011 PAEA survey of more than 11,700 clinically active PAs, 63% of respondents identified the potential ability to earn Category 1 CME as the most important benefit of precepting. In response to this research, and in light of the self-reflective nature of clinical teaching, AAPA’s Professional Education Commission has approved the following process for individual PA programs to be able to award AAPA Category 1 CME credit for clinical teaching.

Process

1. ARC-PA accredited, PAEA member programs may submit an application for annual approval to award AAPA Category 1 CME Credit for clinical teaching activities.
   - Applications will be accepted via AAPA’s Online Request Management System (RMS) http://cmeapproval.aapa.org/
   - There is a $200.00 annual fee for PA programs to participate.

2. AAPA staff will review and approve applications submitted by PA programs. Once approved, PA programs may award Category 1 CME credit and certificates to eligible PA preceptors.

3. At the end of the clinical year, approved PA programs must submit a follow-up reconciliation including details regarding Category 1 CME credits awarded to PA preceptors.

4. AAPA’s CME standards must be followed at all times.
Eligibility requirements

- Eligibility is limited to ARC-PA accredited PA programs.
- Only PA programs that have submitted an application and received approval are authorized to award AAPA Category 1 CME credit for precepting.
- Eligibility for AAPA Category 1 CME credit is currently limited to preceptors who are practicing PAs.
- Preceptors must be fully licensed to practice at the clinical site where the training will occur.
- Preceptors must disclose any relevant financial relationships with ACCME-defined commercial interests to PA students.
- All other AAPA CME Standards apply.

To register with AAPA’s RMS, you’ll need:

- Organization Legal Name
- Organization Mission Statement
- Organization Type (ARC-PA Accredited PA Programs)
- Tax ID # and signed W-9 form
- Contact First Name, Last Name, E-mail address
- Organization Address
- Primary Phone #
- Username (created by primary RMS account-holder)
- Password (created by primary RMS account-holder)
- Indication regarding any additional CE/CME accreditations held by the organization

To submit an application, you’ll need:

- Clinical year start and end dates

Details needed for each type of rotation (ex. Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, etc.) include:

- Type of rotation (dropdown menu provided w/“other” option)
- Clinical setting (dropdown menu provided w/“other” option) – Select the description that most accurately describes the clinical setting for this rotation type. If none of the available options accurately describe the clinical setting for this rotation type, select “other” and use the open text box to enter your own description of this clinical rotation type.
- Duration of rotation (dropdown menu provided w/ other option)
- Estimated number of preceptors who will participate in this rotation. This estimate should reflect the total number of preceptors necessary to accommodate the program’s enrolled students for the academic year for this rotation type.
Estimated number of students who will participate in this rotation – This estimate should reflect the total number of students over the course of the academic year anticipated to participate in this rotation type.

Rotation learning objectives for students. This may be uploaded as a supporting document.

Rotation learning objectives for preceptors. Sample Preceptor learning objectives are available to use as is or may be customized for each rotation. These may be uploaded as a supporting document.

Awarding Credit:

• Approved PA programs may award 0.5 AAPA Category 1 CME credit for each two (2) weeks of clinical teaching.

• If a preceptor has more than one student at a time, that preceptor may be awarded an additional 0.25 CME credit for each additional student for each two weeks of teaching.

• PA programs must receive a completed evaluation form from the PA preceptor prior to awarding Category 1 CME credit.

• The evaluation form may include a self-report and attestation of the number of weeks the preceptor taught as well as the number of students precepted. The form must be completed and submitted by the preceptor requesting credit.

• For purposes of credit calculation, a week is defined as 40 hours of precepting.

• Sample credit calculation formula:
  Total credits awarded = (Number of Weeks)*(0.25+ 0.125*(Number of additional students)

• Credit calculation examples:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Number of Weeks</th>
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• A maximum of 10 Category 1 CME credits per calendar year may be awarded to each preceptor.

Reconciliation:

In order to satisfy obligations as an approved provider of AAPA Category 1 CME credit to PA preceptors, approved PA programs must submit a follow-up reconciliation at the conclusion of the clinical year. PA programs that fail to submit the required follow-up reconciliation items within 90 days of the conclusion of the clinical year will be flagged as overdue. PA programs with overdue follow-up reconciliations are ineligible to submit additional CME applications until
the overdue follow-up reconciliation has been completed. The follow-up reconciliation consists of the following elements:

- Total number of credits awarded to all preceptors
- Total number of preceptors who were awarded credit
- Rotation and Preceptor CME Summary, a provided Excel template
  - This excel spreadsheet is intended as a tool to keep a running total of credits awarded, in aggregate, for all preceptors for the entire clinical year.
  - The template allows for one preceptor per row, all columns are required, and the column “Total number of CME credits awarded” will calculate automatically after all values have been entered.
  - The calculation will round to the nearest quarter credit and will not exceed the maximum number of Category 1 CME credits (10) that may be awarded to any single preceptor in a given year.
  - Programs may replicate this spreadsheet to accommodate their needs provided all data elements and calculation logic is preserved.
  - Programs may also elect to maintain separate documentation for tracking the individual clinical rotations that each preceptor requests credit for during the clinical year.

- Summary of Evaluations for each clinical rotation – Approved PA programs are required to submit an aggregate summary of all preceptor evaluations received for each type of rotation. We ask that programs NOT submit copies of each individually completed evaluation.

Frequently Asked Questions:

**Q:** Our PA program uses shared clinical sites where preceptors may have students from multiple programs at any given time. How do we determine the number of students precepted and award credit appropriately to avoid any preceptor “double dipping” and receiving credit from multiple institutions?

**A:** The evaluation form submitted by the preceptor may contain a self-report and attestation indicating the number of weeks and students precepted. This attestation may affirm that credit is only being requested from a single PA program for the number of weeks and students they are self-reporting. As is consistent with other types of CME activities, this process relies on the professionalism of PAs to request credit commensurate with their participation.

**Q:** Our clinical sites may elect to use multiple preceptors for a given student during any single rotation. How do we determine the number of weeks precepted to award the appropriate number of credits in this scenario?

**A:** PA programs should communicate to their preceptors that preceptors should only request credit for the time they have actually spent precepting the student. If a colleague is precepting the student and the original preceptor is not actively involved in clinically teaching that student for a given time period, the original preceptor should not request credit for that time. Forty (40) hours of direct precepting is equivalent to one week of precepting.
Q: Does the date I submit my application impact the accreditation period?

A: You are encouraged to submit your application as soon as you have all the required information gathered, and no less than 21 days prior to the start of the clinical year in order to avoid a rush fee. You will be asked for the beginning and end dates of your clinical year within the application. The accreditation will then apply any 12 consecutive months that you designate as your clinical year.

Q: Why is there a maximum of 10 credits per year that may be awarded for precepting?

A: The new NCCPA certification maintenance process requires that 20 credits be completed via PI-CME and/or Self-assessment during each two year CME cycle. This effectively reduces the number of traditional Category 1 CME credits required for other activities per two year cycle to 30 credits. Traditional Category 1 CME activities serve the important purpose of translating new science into knowledge that can be applied in practice. Precepting, while a valuable self-reflective learning activity, does not achieve this purpose and as such should not replace traditional Category 1 CME activities altogether. Therefore, the 10 credit maximum per year for precepting was established to allow preceptors to participate in multiple kinds of Category 1 CME. The maximum allows preceptors to claim up to 20 credits of Category 1 CME for precepting during any two year cycle while preserving a minimum of 10 credits for traditional Category 1 CME. This recognizes the importance of both types of activities.

Q: I am an individual preceptor, can I apply for Category I CME credit directly without going through the PA program?

A: PA preceptors cannot directly apply to AAPA for Category 1 CME credit associated with your clinical teaching activities. Please contact the PA program that schedules your students and request that they award eligible preceptors with credit.

Q: Who do I contact if I have questions?

A: Please contact AAPA CME Services with questions via email at cmeapproval@aapa.org or by phone at 703-836-2272.