
Division of Institutions
Policy and Procedure

Chapter: S
Section: .3000
Title: License Verification, Continuing
Education/Training, Credentialing
Issue Date: November 17, 2023
Supersedes: April 2011

I. PURPOSE

- A. To provide policy and procedure on continuing education and training requirements to remain credentialed and to maintain or enhance knowledge and skills. To ensure all nursing staff licenses, listings or certifications are current and being monitored for expiration.
- B. To establish a policy for North Carolina Department of Adult Correction (DAC) facilities to utilize qualified licensed independent practitioners (physicians, dentists), advanced practice professionals (physician assistants, nurse practitioners) and psychologists / licensed clinical social workers (LCSW) to provide adequate health care services to all offenders in a humane, cost effective, and timely manner.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Continuing Education (CE)

Educational programs which are awarded continuing education credits in accordance with licensing board.

- B. Health Care Professional

Staff who perform clinical duties, such as Health Care practitioners, nurses, licensed professional counselors, social workers, and emergency medical technicians in accordance with each health care professional 's scope of training and applicable listing, licensing, registration, certification, and regulatory requirements.

- C. In-Service Training

Training provided by the staff of Division of Institutions, Department of Adult Correction, Office of State Personnel, etc. This training may be formal or informal and may offer training hours through the Office of Staff Development and Training, but no Continuing Education credit is awarded.

III. POLICY

- A. ***If the facility provides health care services, they are provided by qualified health care staff whose duties and responsibilities are governed by written job descriptions, contracts, or written***

agreements approved by the health authority. Verification of current credentials and job descriptions are on file in the facility (5-ACI-6B-03).

- B. It is the policy of the DAC to ensure that licensed independent practitioners and advanced practice professionals meet established credentials, privileging, and performance standards in accordance with State and Federal laws and the American Correctional Association (ACA) Standards.
- C. Each Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Correctional Healthcare Assistant I and II (CHA I/CHA II) must have a valid professional license/listing recognized by the State of North Carolina.
- D. As a condition of employment, each employee who is required to maintain a license in accordance with this policy must complete an authorization to release any personnel information to the licensing board upon receipt of notice and/or in connection with an investigation involving practice issues. This authorization will be retained in the employee's personnel file.
- E. The facility Nurse manager is responsible for updating and maintaining all information for licensure/listing or certification of nursing staff. Professional license/listings shall be checked monthly by the nurse manager or their designee. In the month the nurse's license/CHA II listing expires, the nurse manager or designee will check the North Carolina Board of Nursing web site (NCBON.com) to verify renewal of registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and CNA II's. Nurse Aide I credentials may be verified at NC Department of Health and Human Services, NC Nurse Aide I Registry website: ncnar.ncdhhs.gov CHA II's must maintain both NA I and NAII listings.
- F. Under no circumstances will a Health Care Professional work with an expired or invalid license. In accordance with their job description, CHA II's may only perform medical records duties should their listing(s) expire. Performance of these duties is at the discretion of nursing leadership and will only be for the duration it takes to renew their listing. Any Health Care Professional who allows their license/listing to expire, will have a "Does not meet Expectation" entry noted on their NCVIP log. Nurse managers who do not adequately monitor license/listing renewal and a license/listing of their staff expires, will also have an "Does not meet Expectation" entry noted on their performance log.
- G. All certifications, competencies and credentials required of nursing staff will also be maintained and monitored.
- H. All additional Comprehensive Health Care professionals' licenses, listings or certifications will be verified and monitored for expiration by individual Section leadership or designee.
- I. **Written policy, procedure, and practice encourage employees to continue their education and, as authorized, provides administrative leave and/or reimbursement for employees attending approved professional meetings, seminars, and similar work-related activities (5-ACI-1D-22).** Health care providers and professional staff will be provided the opportunity for continuing education and/or in service training to promote their professional growth, prevent isolation, and

to maintain the necessary clinical skills and credentials. Continuing Education outside the department may be supported financially when funds are available.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Health Care Providers (physicians and physician extenders)

1. All physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, whether state-employed or contractual, must complete no less than 150 hours of practice-relevant continuing medical education (CME) every three years in order to maintain licensure. Documentation of training shall be maintained by the provider and should include a list of courses attended, the dates, and the number of hours for each health care provider.
2. Physician Extenders employed by the State of North Carolina are physician assistants or family nurse practitioners who perform medical acts under the supervision and licenses of a responsible physician or group of physicians. Physician Extenders are formally trained health professionals approved to practice by the North Carolina Board of Medical Examiners.
3. The relationship between the physician extenders and the responsible physician will be as outlined in 21 NCAC 32S .0213, et. seq. and 21 NCAC 32M .0101

B. Licensed Nurses

1. Continuing competence through continuing education is required by the N.C. Board of Nursing for all licensed nurses. At a minimum, the licensed nurse must obtain 15 contact hours of continuing education activities and 640 hours of active practice within the previous two years.
2. The N.C. Department of Adult Correction, Comprehensive Health Services, Department of Nursing Education is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by the North Carolina Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission of Accreditation.

C. Dentist

As a condition of license renewal, every dentist must complete a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education each calendar year. Courses allowed to satisfy the CE requirement must be directly related to clinical patient care. Dentists may receive a maximum of 10 hours credit per year for continuing education when engaged in affiliation with a federal, state, or county government agency whose operation is directly related to dentistry or dental auxiliaries.

D. ***All mental health staff receives 12 hours of continuing professional education or staff development in clinical skills annually (5-ACI-6B-13).***

E. Psychologist

As a condition of employment, every psychologist will obtain a minimum of 18 hours of continuing education credit (of which at least 9 hours must meet Category A requirements as defined by the NC Psychology Board) during each 2-year renewal cycle. Ethics training must be a part of the continuing education credits.

F. Social Worker

1. Licensed Clinical Social Workers must have 40 hours of continuing education credits approved by the North Carolina Social Work Certification and Licensure Board each two-year license renewal cycle. Of that 40-hour requirement, a minimum of four hours of continuing education must be focused on ethics during the two-year renewal cycle.
2. Social Worker II must have 12 hours each calendar year of approved in-service and/or continuing education credit.

G. Pharmacist

1. For annual pharmacist license renewal, the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy requires a pharmacist to obtain a minimum of 15 hours of continuing education (CE) each year and five of these hours are required to be “live” courses allowing for communication interaction during the continuing education.
2. The CE courses must be Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) or North Carolina Association of Pharmacist (NCAP) accredited courses.

H. Pharmacy Technician

1. A pharmacy technician shall register with the North Carolina Board of Pharmacy annually.
2. Based upon the responsibilities and duties of specific pharmacy technicians, certification by the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board (PTCB) may be required and shall be delineated in the job posting.
 - a) A certified pharmacy technician shall complete a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education during the 2-year recertification period including 1 hour in the subject of pharmacy law and 1 hour in the subject of patient safety.
 - b) CE hours earned must be in pharmacy technician specific subject matter as listed in the Pharmacy Technician Certification Examination Content Outline or offered by ACPE-accredited providers with the target audience designation “T” (technician-specific). A maximum of five CE hours from ACPE-accredited providers with the target audience designation “P” (pharmacist-specific) can be used toward the total 20 hours required.

I. Medical Record Professionals

1. Registered Health Information Administrators must have at least 30 hours of continuing education units every two years
2. Registered Health Information Technicians must have at least 20 hours of continuing education units every two years.

V. PROCEDURES

- A. Professional standards of some health care professionals require or encourage the acquisition of continuing education credits so that licensure or certifications can be renewed or maintained. It is the responsibility of each employee to obtain the credits needed for licensure and certification as required by the licensure, listing or certification governing body. The Division will assist the employee, when possible, in the acquisition of these credits.
- B. All Comprehensive Health Services health care personnel employed in prison facilities must have current certification in American Heart Association Basic Life Support Healthcare Provider (BLS-HCP) with AED component.
- C. Attendance at Institutions training sessions and OSDT-approved continuing education programs by any discipline shall be reported to the Facility Training Coordinator, who will input training into the Staff Training System. This will be a concerted effort with OSDT. Training profiles will be available via Facility Training Coordinators or the Nursing Education Director to all staff, supervisors, and discipline heads upon request for performance appraisals, credentialing, etc.
- D. See Standard Operating Procedure "Healthcare Practitioner Credentialing."
- E. Per Institutions policy [K .0100, Employee Training](#), all DAC employees are required to receive 40 hours of training each year, including specific required topics. This training may be in-service or continuing education. Clerical Support Staff are required to have 16 hours of training each year, as these employees have minimal offender contact.

VI. REFERENCES

- A. 5th Edition Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions

5-ACI-1D-22, 5-ACI-6B-03, 5-ACI-6B-13

- B. North Carolina Administration Code

[21 NCAC 32M .0101](#), [21 NCAC 32S .0213](#), [21 NCAC 46 .2201](#), [21 NCAC 46 .3301](#)

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