American Association for Respiratory Care

CRCE Policies, Operational Requirements and Criteria
for the Approval of an Educational Activity

Updated January 2007

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ABOUT AARC CRCE®

CONTINUING EDUCATION DEFINED

The purpose of the AARC's Continuing Respiratory Care Education (CRCE) is to accredit continuing educational programs for respiratory therapists. The criteria for accrediting programs are established by the AARC and reflect the continuing education requirements of the Respiratory Care State Boards throughout the United States of America.

"Continuing Education" means the variety of forms of learning experiences as described below. These learning experiences are meant to enhance the knowledge of the respiratory therapist in the practice of respiratory care in direct and indirect patient care.

Educational activities are planned, organized, efforts, either provider-directed or learner-directed and aimed at accomplishing educational objectives.

One CRCE contact hour is defined as 60 minutes of learning activity. One (1) CRCE contact hour is the minimum awarded. Time to complete the examination is allowed. Examinations are required only for learner directed (nontraditional) programs. The AARC makes the final determination of the number of contact hours awarded.

ACCEPTABLE SUBJECT CONTENT FOR CRCE APPROVAL

Acceptable courses and programs shall meet the following criteria:
The content of the course or program shall be relevant to the scope of practice of respiratory care. This includes:
- All areas of clinical practice addressed by the RRT®, CRT®, RPFT®, CPFT®, RPSGT®, AE-C® and NBRC Neonatal/Pediatric Specialty Examination content outlines.
- Emerging technology and its application in the delivery of respiratory care
- Courses and/or programs may be accredited if the content of the course or program is not directly related to clinical practice but relates to the following:
    - Education, supervision, and management
    - Health care cost containment or cost management
    - Preventative health services and health promotion
    - Medical ethics and legal aspects of health care
    - Patient Safety
    - Bioterrorism and emergency preparedness

CONTINUING EDUCATION vs. INSERVICE EDUCATION

Continuing education programs must consist of learning experiences designed to strengthen and expand the knowledge and skills of respiratory therapists involved in respiratory therapy practice, education, administration and research.

In-service education for activities that fulfill assigned general responsibilities specific to the expectations of employers will not be approved for CRCE contact hours. Examples of these activities includes sessions covering general institutional policies and procedures and orientation to the facility

TYPES OF ACTIVITES/PROGRAMS

Provider-Directed (Traditional)

A **provider-directed** (traditional) educational activity occurs when the learner and provider interact in real time. They need not be in the same place but they must be able to communicate either verbally or in writing with each other during the time the learning activity is occurring. The provider determines pace of the program and schedules the activity. Contact hour credit awarded is based on the time allocated for the exchange of information between the presenter and the learner. Examples of provider directed activities include but are not limited to live lecture educational sessions that are part of conventions, courses, seminars, workshops, lecture series, and distance learning activities such as videoconferences and audio conferences in which the learner can interact with the provider. The accreditation fee varies depending on the number of contact hours requested. A post-test is not required for provider-directed learning activities.

Learner-Directed (Non-Traditional)

A **learner directed** (non-traditional/independent study) is conducted by the learner at his or her own pace. The instructor does not interact with the learner in real time. The number of contact hours awarded is determined by the AARC and is based on the estimated average time required to complete the learning materials and the post-test. Examples of learner directed activities include but are not limited to studies of videotapes, audiotapes; archived web casts, pod casts or teleconferences; monographs or the content of journals listed in Index Medicus. As with provider-directed programs, a flat fee is charged to review and administer the program. In addition there is a fee to review the course learning materials. The charge for programs being reviewed for the <u>first</u> time is determined by the number of contract hours awarded for the program. When the same program (with no or only minimal changes) is submitted in subsequent years, a flat one-hour fee will be charged. Programs with major changes will be charged the same as programs being accredited for the first time. Satisfactory completion of a post-test is required to meet the requirements of all learner-directed courses.

SUBMISSION DATES

Applications for new courses

To assure that participants receive a certificate of completion with the correct course number, educational activities submitted must clear review prior to the first date of presentation. **No retroactive recognition will be granted.** In order to have full advantage of the review process, application data must be received at the AARC office at least 30 days prior to the initial presentation of the program. Applications received after the 30-day deadline will be assessed a late fee and will not be reviewed until payment for the late fee is received. Applications received less than 15 days prior to the initial offering of the program may be returned without review at the discretion of the AARC.

Applications for repeat programs

To assure that participants receive a certificate of completion with the correct course number, forms for repeat programs must be provided to the AARC at least 15 days prior to the date of the program. Course sponsors are encouraged to submit known repeat dates and appropriate fees with the original application.

Partial Credit

Only <u>traditional</u> programs may approved to allow partial credit to participants if requested by the course sponsor. This means that CRCE contact hours can be awarded for attending specific sessions within the entire program. It is incumbent upon the course sponsor to report only the total hours of sessions actually attended by each participant.

Legibility of application

The application and all materials must be typewritten or computer-generated. **Handwritten applications will not be reviewed and will be returned**.

FEES:

There is a fee for reviewing applications and maintaining records of programs. The fee must be submitted with the application. Applications submitted without the appropriate fees will be returned. The fee schedule below is reviewed and updated annually.

FEE TABLE (effective January 1, 2007)

Type of Program	Not-For Profit	For Profit
Provider Directed (Traditional)		
First Program Date (by contact hours)		
1.0 - 3.0 hrs.	$55	$110
3.1 - 8.0 hrs.	$60	$115
8.1 – 13.0 hrs.	$65	$120
13.1 – 21.0	$75	$130
21.1 – 31.0	$85	$140
Greater than 31 hrs.	$100	$155
Subsequent Program Dates*	$10	$20
Late Fee (programs received less than 30 days prior to the event)	$35	$35
Learner Directed (Non-traditional)	$55	$110
Materials review fee (initial submission – first year)	$10/ approved credit hour	$20/approved credit hour
Materials review fee (previously approved course with <u>no or very minor</u> changes)	$10 regardless of credit hours approved	$20 regardless of credit hours approved
Materials review fee for previously approved course with <u>substantial</u> updates	$10/ approved credit hour	$20/approved credit hour
Late Fee (programs received less than 30 days prior to the event)	$35	$35

Not-for-profit providers must provide their Federal ID number

Fees for AARC State Societies

Only provider-directed programs (traditional programs) sponsored by AARC State Societies are exempt from application fees. However, a late fee will be charged if the application is submitted within 30 days of the program date. The current state society president must verify that their State Society sponsors the program. The AARC will make the final determination regarding waiving the fee.

Refunds

Fees paid for application review are **not refundable.**

Check Return Fees

A fee of $125.00 will be assessed for a check returned from the bank for any reason.

Method of Payment

Payment, which must be submitted with the application, may be paid by check, money order, or Visa, MasterCard and American Express credit cards.

LENGTH OF APPROVAL PERIOD

Programs are accredited for the current calendar year. Thus, a program submitted anytime within in a given year is accredited for that calendar year only. Applications for the next calendar year can be made after September 1st and must state that they are for the next calendar year. Program sponsors wishing to have approved programs continue into subsequent years must submit a new application each calendar year.

PROGRAM INTEGRITY

To ensure that all educational activities are free from bias, all presenters must declare vested interests.

In the event that any form of commercial support is provided for an educational activity, the course sponsor will maintain control of the educational content and disclose to the learners all financial relationships or lack of, between the commercial supporter and the provider or presenters. **Exhibitors who purchase exhibit space only are of no concern with regard to program integrity. No special notices of these exhibitors need be provided to the program participants**.

- Funds from a commercial source should be in the form of an unrestricted educational grant to the provider of the educational activity and must be acknowledged in printed material and brochures.
- Learners must be made aware of the nature of commercial support of all educational sessions.
- Educational activities that present research conducted by commercial companies will be designed and presented with scientific objectivity.
- Learners will be informed of any off-label use of a commercial product that is presented in educational activities. Off-label use refers to using a pharmaceutical agent for a purpose other than the purpose for which it was approved by the FDA.
- The approval status for an educational activity granted by the AARC does not expressly or implicitly confer AARC endorsement of the activity's content.

CORRECT vs. INCORRECT TERMINOLOGY REGARDING AARC CONTINUING EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

When referring to continuing respiratory therapy education the term "contact hours", not "CEU" (continuing education unit), must be used. CEU (10 contact hours) is a specific standard of educational achievement used to meet the criteria of the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).

CHANGES TO AN APPROVED ACTIVITY

If a significant change is made to the objectives, content and/or time frames of an approved educational activity, a new application must be submitted with the appropriate fees. Examples of significant changes could be a change in objectives or content and changing the time frame for an activity.

If a presenter/content specialist is changed but the same objectives, content, and time frames are maintained, the provider need not submit a new application but must inform the AARC in writing and submit a Biographical Data Form for the new presenter/content specialist.

ADVERTISING/PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

So that the AARC can verify that the program is being promoted as described in the application, the applicant must provide any flyer/brochure, memo/letter, email messages and the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of all websites where the program is being promoted. These materials may be provided either in hard copy or electronic format

The following language may be used in promotional materials prior to program approval:

"Application has been made to the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) for continuing education contact hours for respiratory therapists"

The following language may be used in promotional materials after program approval has been received:

> **This program has been approved for XXXX contact hours Continuing Respiratory Care Education (CRCE) credit by the American Association for Respiratory Care, 9425 N. MacArthur Blvd. Suite 100 Irving TX 75063**

COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

If copyrighted durable materials are to be a component of a non-traditional course, the sponsor must provide evidence that written permission has been obtained to use these materials. A copy of a letter provided by the publisher of the copyrighted materials will suffice as evidence. This letter must be included in the application.

COURSE LOGS

Course sponsors must submit a log (report) of all participants (both AARC members and nonmembers) who successfully complete the course. The course log, included in the approval packet sent to the course sponsor after approval, must be completed after presentation of the program and returned to the AARC. Course logs for **traditional** programs must be submitted within 30 days after the last day of the course. For **non-traditional** courses which run continuously throughout the calendar year, course logs

should be submitted periodically. However, no more than 2 months must elapse before the sponsor submits the required information for those who have successfully completed the course requirements. This is necessary to facilitate the posting of contact hours earned on the web-based transcripts of AARC members who complete these sessions.

COURSE CERTIFICATES

A certificate of completion containing specific information (identified in the application) must be provided to each participant who completed the course requirements. Typically this certificate is provided at the conclusion of the activity but not later than 30 days after the conclusion of the activity. Non-traditional course certificates must state that the course is non-traditional.

RENEWAL OF APPROVAL

Once the calendar year approval period expires, the application and supporting documents must be resubmitted as a new application. There is no special procedure for "renewals".

MAINTAINING RECORDS

The course sponsor is required to maintain a record that includes the amount of CRCE awarded to all participants.

ACTIONS TAKEN AFTER THE REVIEW

Following the review by the AARC, an activity is *Approved, Deferred or Disapproved.*

APPROVAL

If approved, the sponsor will receive notification, which includes instructions, the approval number and number of contact hours, within 15 days after the approval process is completed.

DEFERRAL

If deferred, the sponsor's notification will include specific instructions on how to meet the criteria for approval. The revised/additional materials will be evaluated by the AARC. No additional fees will be charged when additional information is requested.

DISAPPROVAL

If a program is disapproved, the AARC will provide an explanation in writing to the course sponsor within 15 days after the program is reviewed.

RESUBMISSION

Previously disapproved programs can be resubmitted as new applications. The program application must be accompanied by the requisite program review fees and the original offering dates may have to be changed to allow time for normal review process.

REVOCATION

Under circumstances where AARC has reasonable grounds to believe information has been falsified or misrepresented on an application, it may disapprove the application or revoke the approval if approval has already been given. Additionally, the AARC reserves the right to refuse to review applications submitted in the future by course sponsors who submit false documents or falsely advertise their courses as having been accredited by the AARC.