**Steps for Success:** Planning Nursing Continuing Professional Development Activities

1. **Start early!** Submit your application 40+ calendar days BEFORE your event, which is also cost effective: <https://www.aorn.org/education/education-for-individuals/credentialing/cne-approval-process>
2. Applications must be submitted and approved **BEFORE** the activity date.
3. Assemble your team:
   1. Create a new application; you will be assigned as the Nurse Planner/Key Contact.
      1. To meet criteria, one (1) Nurse Planner & Key Contact shall hold a BSN or higher in nursing, an unrestricted nursing license, and have previous experience planning educational activities. The Nurse Planner & Key Contact is the person who will receive all communication from the AORN Approval Unit.
      2. You may act as the Nurse Planner & Key Contact as long as you meet above qualifications.
   2. There must be a minimum of two members on the application planning committee (eg, another RN, speaker, administrative assistant). One of the two is the Nurse Planner & Key Contact role; another with the role of planning committee.
   3. One of the planning committee must be selected as the **Content Expert** (eg, speaker, Nurse Planner).
4. Read the ***NEW!*** AORN and ANCC criteria instructions for how to submit an application on the website.
5. Some points of discussion at your planning meeting can include:
   1. Address **a professional practice gap** (ie, Has there been a change in a standard of care or is there a new standard of care? Is there a problem in practice? Is there an opportunity for improvement in practice?) Describe what is currently happening and what is missing in practice, and the desired state after an RN attends this activity.
   2. Address an **educational need** (knowledge, skills, and/or practices).
   3. **Why are** you planning this program?
   4. What **data have been collected** or identified to support the committee’s decision to provide this nursing continuing professional development activity?
      1. Examples of data (ie, the supporting evidence as to why you are presenting this topic) include survey results or a literature review of the topic to be presented.
   5. What is the **desired learning outcome** for the nurses attending the event?
6. Select a **presentation based on the RN learners’ needs,** including one or more of the following:
   1. Identification of a professional practice gap;
   2. Identification of an educational need;
   3. A list of peer-reviewed articles or evidence-based websites you used to determine the need for this topic;
   4. Member requests, program evaluations, survey;
      1. Include how the needs assessment was conducted, a summary statement of the data collected from the learners, and how the committee decided to provide this activity.
   5. Quality and outcome data;
   6. Trends in literature, law, and healthcare; or,
   7. New nursing knowledge.
7. Develop a learning outcome based on your Needs Assessment data. Please read the instructions and enter information in the text boxes below.
   1. Discuss, “At the end of the presentation, the perioperative RN will gain knowledge in (topic)” or “The perioperative RN will be able to (do what?).”
   2. Discuss “How will this activity enrich the RN’s contributions to quality nursing care?”

* Written as a statement
* Reflects what the learner will be able to do after participating in the educational activity.
* Must be observable and measurable.
* Addresses the educational needs (knowledge, skills, and/or practices) that contribute to the professional practice gap.
* Achieving the learning outcomes results in narrowing or closing the professional practice gap.
* A minimum of one outcome must be entered.

# Examples:

* Upon completion of the activity, the perioperative RN will have knowledge of best practices for the prevention of RSI and will transfer the knowledge into practice.
* Upon completion of the presentation, you will have knowledge of best practices for radiation safety and will transfer the knowledge into practice.

1. Identify an outcome measurement (ie, a quantitative statement as to how the outcome of this activity will be measured). For example, “As a result of attending this event, 70% of the nurses who completed the evaluation will identify they will make a change in their nursing practice.”

After the event, the Nurse Planner/Key Contact can obtain data from the completed evaluations completed to determine if the outcome measurement was achieved.

1. Select your **Presenter** based on their:
   1. Clinical expertise, professional achievements, work experience, education
   2. Experience in presenting the content
2. Discuss with the Presenter:
   1. Learning Outcome
   2. Content to be presented (i.e., each topic to be discussed related to achieving the learning outcome)
   3. Outcome Measurement
   4. Evidence-based resources for the content
   5. Length of program
   6. Request the presenter’s demographic information. Discuss with the presenter about their expertise in the content to be presented. Ask about the presenter’s job title, name of company, work history relevant to the topic being presented, and other presentations on the same or similar topic. This information will help you when you complete the application and can write a few phrases that lend credence to the presenter’s expertise in presenting this topic.
   7. Teaching Methods/Learner Engagement Strategies: Examples include lecture format, case scenarios, role play, and five to ten minutes for a question/answer period.
3. Evaluate the presenter for a presence or absence of a financial relationship and commercial interest related to this topic. For assistance, the instructions on the CE Approval webpage have detailed information to review.
4. Submit the online application.
   1. The Nurse Planner/Key Contact should state their “Planning Expertise” (i.e., your familiarity or expertise in ANCC criteria). Example: “I have expertise in planning nursing professional education development activities and using the ANCC contact hour criteria.”
   2. Part of the application will ask how you determined your learners’ need for this activity. You will also be asked to provide the data to support the needs assessment. For example, this information can be uploaded to the online application as a word document.
   3. Complete the auto-generated flyer that is part of the application.
   4. Include any flyers, brochures, and marketing materials. Information should include the date, time, and location of the presentation, title of the presentation, speaker, the provider of the activity (eg AORN Chapter Name, State Council Name), the number of pending contact hours, the learning outcome statement, disclosures, criteria for successful completion, the ANCC and AORN statements, and a contact name and email address.
   5. Credit card payment – Please note: no refunds once payment is submitted.
5. Waiting for the Approval email
   1. The regular review process is 3-4 weeks and rush reviews are available (see fee schedule).
6. Approved applications
   1. The Nurse Planner/Key Contact will be notified via email.
   2. The Nurse Planner/Key Contact can print your certificates and evaluations.
   3. All applications are approved for two (2) years. This means the education activity can be presented multiple time within two (2) years as long as the same presenter and the same content are presented. The key contact is responsible to submit the post activity report each time.
7. After the Event: It is the Nurse Planner/Key Contact’s responsibility to submit the post activity report online, which includes a summary of evaluations and comments.

# About the Committee who reviews the applications:

Your application is reviewed by AORN colleagues on the Continuing Education Approval Committee (CEAC) and the AORN in-house team; together, this group is the AORN Approval Unit. CEAC members have specific criteria they must follow when reviewing an application. These criteria are dictated by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's (ANCC) Commission on Accreditation. Failure to comply with reviewers' requests could jeopardize contact hour approval for this activity. Failure on the reviewer’s part to ensure complete application files could jeopardize AORN's accreditation from ANCC.

You may be asked to provide more information or clarify information before the final approval. The Nurse Planner/Key Contact will be notified. The status is called “Pending Approval” and it is to ensure AORN has the required information for AORN and ANCC criteria before contact hours are approved.

For more information and for technical assistance, please email: [approvalunit@aorn.org](mailto:approvalunit@aorn.org).