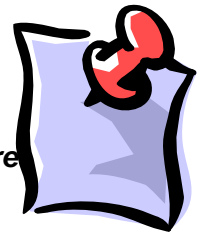


MEMORANDUM

TO: Providers of Mental Health Continuing Education

FROM: Kris Chiles, Section Administrator
For the Board of Examiners in Mental Health Practice

RE: ***Changes in Continuing Education Program Approval Procedure***



Effective September 1, 1996, the Board of Mental Health Practice no longer approves continuing education offerings, but may accept as continuing education for licensure and certification renewal, learning experiences as set out in the following attachments, provided they are planned and conducted for mental health practitioners, marriage and family therapists, professional counselors, or social workers, and if they are related to mental health practice.

Continuing education offerings for individuals *who hold a social work certificate, but are not licensed as a mental health practitioner*, must relate to the practice of social work.

As a provider, you will **not** submit an application to this office for approval as you have in the past; it will be your responsibility to assure the program meets the criteria set out in this memorandum [which are excerpts from the Regulations Governing the Licensure of Mental Health Practitioners, and Associated Certificates in Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work - Title 172, Chapter 94]. If you would like a copy of the entire set of regulations, please contact our office.

In regards to advertising your program and advising practitioners that the program meets the continuing education requirements, if you have determined the continuing education program meets the approval criteria set out in this memorandum, you may indicate on your brochures "this program meets the criteria of an approved continuing education program for mental health practice" or in the case of programs whose content is only social work related, "this program meets the criteria of an approved continuing education program for social work" (this language can be modified).

If you should have any questions in regards to this change in procedure or wish to review objectives of a program to assure it meets the approval criteria, please contact Cindy Kelley, Credentialing Specialist, for assistance at (402) 471-4905.

To renew a Mental Health Practice License, the licensee must have obtained 32 hours of continuing education within the renewal period (September 1 of even-numbered years) and of these 32 hours, at least 2 hours MUST relate to ethics.

revised: 04/05

Department of Health and Human Services Regulation and Licensure
Credentialing Division
PO Box 94986
Lincoln, NE 68509-4986
402-471-2117

The following information is intended to provide the definitions of mental health practice and social work, and subsequently the criteria for approval of a continuing education program/offering.

Scope of Practice - Mental Health Practitioner

Mental health practice means the provision of treatment, assessment, psychotherapy, counseling, or equivalent activities to individuals, couples, families, or groups for behavioral, cognitive, social, mental, or emotional disorders, including interpersonal or personal situations; and includes the initial assessment of organic mental or emotional disorders for the purpose of referral or consultation.

Mental health practice does not include:

The practice of psychology or medicine;

Prescribing drugs or electroconvulsive therapy;

Treating physical disease, injury, or deformity;

Diagnosing major mental illness or disorder except in consultation with a qualified physician or licensed clinical psychologist;

Measuring personality or intelligence for the purpose of diagnosis or treatment planning;

Using psychotherapy with individuals suspected of having major mental or emotional disorders except in consultation with a qualified physician or licensed clinical psychologist; or

Using psychotherapy to treat the concomitants of organic illness except in consultation with a qualified physician or licensed clinical psychologist.

Scope of Practice - Social Worker

Social work practice or the practice of social work means the professional activity of helping individuals, groups, and families or larger systems such as organizations and communities to improve, restore or enhance their capacities for personal and social functioning and the professional application of social work values, knowledge, principles, and methods in the following areas of practice:

Information, resource identification and development, and/or referral services;

Preparation and evaluation of psychosocial assessments and development of social work service plans;

Case management, coordination, and monitoring of social work service plans in the areas of personal, social, or economic resources, conditions, or problems;

Development, implementation, evaluation, and/or administration of social work programs and policies; Supportive contacts to assist individuals and groups with personal adjustment to crisis, transition, economic changes, or a personal or family member's health condition, especially in the area of services given in hospitals, health clinics, home health agencies, schools, shelters for the homeless, shelters for the urgent care of victims of sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, or domestic violence, nursing homes, and correctional facilities;

Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent charitable and religious organizations; the clergy; governmental agencies; hospitals; health clinics; home health agencies; schools; shelters for the homeless; shelters for the urgent care of victims of sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, or domestic violence; nursing homes; or correctional facilities from providing supportive contacts to assist individuals and groups with adjustment to crisis, transition, economic change, or personal or a family member's health condition if such persons or organizations do not represent himself/herself to be social workers;

Social casework for the prevention of psychosocial dysfunction, disability, or impairment; and

Social work research, consultation, and education.

Social work practice does not include:

The measuring and testing of personality or intelligence;

Accepting fees or compensation for the treatment of disease, injury, or deformity of persons by drugs, surgery, or any manual or mechanical treatment whatsoever;

Prescribing drugs or electroconvulsive therapy; and

Treating organic diseases or major psychiatric diseases, except by an individual seeking to fulfill postgraduate requirements for licensure under the supervision of a licensed professional as provided in Neb. Rev. Stat. 71-1,312.

An individual who practices within the confines of this section shall not be required to be licensed as a mental health practitioner or certified as a social worker as long as he/she does not represent himself/herself as a mental health practitioner or as a social worker.

**CRITERIA FOR AN APPROVED CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM
(Mental Health Practice, Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work)**

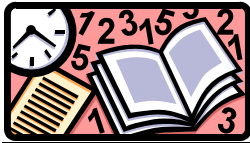
Programs acceptable for continuing education credit for mental health practice are described below:

(also includes the associated certificates of Marriage and Family Therapy, Professional Counseling and Social Work if the practitioner holds a license as a Mental Health Practitioner - if the practitioner holds only a social work certification, the content of the program must relate to social work practice and not include psychotherapy, counseling, etc)

1	Courses, clinics, forums, lectures, training programs, seminars, satellite or other electronic interactive programs that pertain to mental health. ➤ Programs relating to an associated certificate in social work must relate to the scope of practice in social work as defined on page 3 of this memorandum.
2	College courses from a graduate program clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling, or social work.
3	Multi-disciplinary programs relevant to the individual's practice setting.
4	Educational/training videos clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling, or social work.
5	Practicums clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling, or social work.
6	Publications/articles written by a licensee and/or certificate holder that enhance the maintenance of skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling or social work. Such publications/articles written by a licensee and/or certificate holder must be published in a refereed professional journal, or be a chapter of a book or an entire book.
7	Home study programs clearly related to maintaining skills necessary for the safe and competent practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, professional counseling, or social work.
8	If only for social workers, Micro/Macro social work practice and research.

Examples of non-acceptable subject matter for continuing education credit includes, but is not limited to the following:

1	Association business meeting or delegate report.
2	Leadership training provided through associations.
3	Business technology, techniques and management.



Criteria for Acceptable Continuing Education Programs. A continuing education program must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for continuing education credit:

1	<p>The program must be at least sixty (60) minutes in duration. Continuing education credit is calculated utilizing clock hours, ie: 60 minutes = 1 credit hour, 1hr & 15 minutes = 1.25 credit hours, 1hr & 30 minutes = 1.5 credit hours, and 1hr 45 minutes = 1.75 credit hours, and so forth.</p> <p>Academic hours for mental health practice, marriage and family therapy & professional counseling are calculated as follows: One semester hour of graduate academic credit will constitute fifteen (15) continuing education credit hours. One semester hour graduate credit audited will constitute eight (8) hours of continuing education. One quarter hour of graduate academic credit will constitute ten (10) continuing education credit hours. One quarter hour graduate credit audited will constitute five (5) hours of continuing education. One trimester hour of graduate academic credit will constitute fourteen (14) continuing education credit hours. One trimester hour graduate credit audited will constitute seven (7) hours of continuing education. An individual teaching a college/university course may also earn continuing education as defined in this section.</p> <p>Academic hours for social work: One semester hour of academic credit will constitute five (5) continuing education credit hours. Quarter hour credits shall be converted at two-thirds the weight of a semester credit. A certificate holder may earn up to thirty (30) of the thirty-two (32) continuing education hours through formal college/university credits within a biennial renewal period. An individual teaching a college/university course may also earn up to thirty (30) of the thirty-two (32) continuing education hours within a biennial renewal period.</p> <p>LMHP - Academic credit must be graduate level for persons holding a mental health practice license (LMHP). CMSW/CSW - Undergraduate or graduate level courses are acceptable for persons holding a certificate as a master social worker (CMSW) or social worker (CSW).</p>
2	The program's objectives must relate to the practice of mental health and/or the associated certificate.
3	Presenters of programs must be qualified by education, experience or training.
4	<p>Programs must be open to all mental health practitioners licensed by Nebraska who meet the training and educational pre-requisites for the program. Employment can not be considered as a pre-requisite;</p> <p>Programs relating to an associated certificate in social work must be open to all social workers certified by Nebraska who meet the training and education pre-requisites for the program. Employment can not be considered as a pre-requisite.</p>
5	Program provider must have a process for monitoring and verifying attendance.

Presenter Credit. A presenter may receive continuing education credit for the initial presentation during a renewal period. Credit will not be given for subsequent presentations of the same program.

Continuing Education Certificate of Completion. Each provider of a continuing education program shall furnish to each person completing the program a certificate of completion.

Presentation of the certificate shall constitute evidence that the person complied with all requirements of the program and did complete the program. Each certificate shall include the following:

1	Program title;
2	Name of the participant;
3	Provider's name;
4	City, State and Location of the program;
5	Date the program began and ended; and
6	Number of hours received by the licensee and/or certificate holder.

Program Monitoring. The provider shall employ a reliable system to monitor the physical presence of participants throughout the entire program. If a participant chooses not to participate in the entire program, the certificate of attendance shall reflect the participant's actual hours of attendance.

Criteria for Home Study Programs. A home study program must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for continuing education:

1	The home study program's objectives must relate to the enhancement of practice/skills of mental health, marriage and family therapy, or professional counseling.
2	If only for social workers, home study programs relating to an associated certificate in social work must relate to the enhancement of practice/skills of social work.
3	The provider must be qualified by education, experience or training.
4	The provider must employ a system to monitor knowledge obtained by the licensee and/or certificate holder completing a home study program, such as, but not limited to a final examination or program evaluation.
5	Home study programs may accumulate up to twenty (20) hours of continuing education per biennial renewal period; if for social workers only, home study programs may accumulate up to fifteen (15) hours of continuing education per biennial renewal period.

Criteria for Publications/Articles. A publication/article must meet the following criteria to be accepted for continuing education credit:

1	The publication/article objectives must relate to the enhancement of skills/practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy, or professional counseling.
2	If only for social workers, the publication/article objectives relating to an associated certificate in social work must relate to the enhancement of skills/practice of social work.
3	The publication/article must be already published or accepted for publishing in a refereed and/or reviewed professional journal, as a chapter of a book or as a book.
4	Publications may accumulate up to twenty (20) hours of continuing education per biennial renewal period.

Criteria for Educational/Training Video Programs. An educational/training video program must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for continuing education credit:

1	The educational/training video program's objectives must relate to the enhancement of practice/skills of mental health, marriage and family therapy, or professional counseling.
2	If only for social workers, the educational/training video program's objectives must relate to the enhancement of practice/skills of social work.
3	The provider must be qualified by education, experience or training.
4	The provider must employ a formal system to monitor and verify the use of the educational/training video.
5	Certificate holders may accumulate up to ten (10) hours of continuing education within a biennial renewal period utilizing educational/training videos.

Criteria for a Dissertation. A dissertation must meet the following criteria to be acceptable for continuing education credit:

1	The dissertations objectives must relate directly to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of mental health, marriage and family therapy or professional counseling;
2	If only for social work, the dissertation objectives must relate directly to the theory or clinical application of theory pertaining to the practice of social work.
3	Certificate holder must be qualified by education, experience or training.
4	Dissertations may accumulate up to thirty-two (32) hours of continuing education per biennial renewal period.

Approval of Practicums. A practicum must meet the criteria specified on PAGE 4, under "Criteria for Acceptable Continuing Education Programs", to be acceptable for continuing education credit.

Social Work Certificate holders may accumulate up to six (6) hours of continuing education within a biennial renewal period by supervising a social work practicum.

National, Regional, and International Sponsored Programs. Programs sponsored by national, regional, or international mental health practice associations or associations directly related to enhancing mental health practice, will be acceptable for continuing education credit. Sessions must be professionally oriented and approved by that association for continuing education. Only the number of hours indicated as approved by the sponsoring organization would be acceptable for renewal.

Marriage and Family Therapy: Programs sponsored by national, regional, or international marriage and family therapy associations or associations directly related to enhancing marriage and family therapy practice, need not apply for approval. Sessions must be professionally oriented and approved by that association for continuing education. Only the number of hours indicated as approved by the sponsoring organization would be acceptable for renewal.

Professional Counseling: Programs sponsored by national, regional, or international professional counseling associations or associations directly related to enhancing professional counseling practice, need not apply for approval. Sessions must be professionally oriented and approved by that association for continuing education. Only the number of hours indicated as approved by the sponsoring organization would be acceptable for renewal.

Social Work: Programs sponsored by national, regional, or international social work associations or associations directly related to enhancing social work practice, need not apply for approval. Sessions must be professionally oriented and approved by that association for continuing education. Only the number of hours indicated as approved by the sponsoring organization would be acceptable for renewal.

Denial of Continuing Education Programs. At the time of renewal the board shall deny a continuing education program on any of the following grounds:

- Program content or the presenter's qualifications fail to meet requirements specified in the regulations - Title 172, Chapter 94 (excerpt in this memorandum).
- If the programs' objectives do not relate to the practice of mental health, or to the associated certificate for which the continuing education is being requested.
- Failure to meet the requirements of an approved program as set out in the regulations - Title 172, Chapter 94 (excerpt in this memorandum); and
- Failure to reflect participant's actual hours of attendance upon the certificate issued.

Should the board determine to deny a continuing education program, the Division will send to the applicant by either certified or registered mail to the last address of record in the department, a notice setting forth the reasons for the determination. The denial shall become final thirty (30) calendar days after the mailing of the notice unless the applicant within such thirty- (30) day period, shall give written notice to the department of a desire for hearing. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 84, Article 9 and 184 NAC 1 of the Rules of Practice and Procedure for the department. The applicant may re-submit the program for re-evaluation.