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Texas Administrative Code

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(a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish minimum standards and guidelines for educational activities that may be used by EMS personnel to earn continuing education (CE) contact hours toward recertification or relicensure in accordance with §157.34 of this title, (relating to Recertification) and §157.40 of this title, (relating to Paramedic Licensure). The EMS continuing education consists of educational activities designed to promote and enrich knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes for the enhancement of professional practice, thus improving the quality of emergency medical services provided to the public.

(b) Local Credentialing and Authorization to Practice. Nothing in this section is intended to restrict the authority of EMS providers or medical directors to establish higher standards and requirements for continuing education activities that must be completed to acquire or maintain authorization to practice within a local or regional EMS system.

(c) Content requirements. Candidates at each certification level shall, at a minimum, accrue department-approved CE in the following content areas.

Attached Graphic

(d) Definitions. The following words and terms, when used in this section shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

(1) Accrediting agency--An organization approved by the department as having met predetermined criteria to approve programs and providers of EMS continuing education.

(2) Approved--Recognized as having met established standards and pre-determined criteria of the accrediting agencies which have been approved by the department. Applies to EMS continuing education providers and programs.

(3) Continuing Education Audit--Examination and verification of EMS continuing education contact hours claimed to have been successfully and timely completed by certified or licensed EMS personnel.

(4) Classroom instruction--Workshops, seminars, conferences, or short-term courses that an individual personally attends and which is directly related to one of the content areas noted in subsection (c) of this section.

(5) Clinical learning experiences--Faculty-planned and guided learning experiences designed to assist students to meet course objectives in the noted content areas of subsection (c) of this section and to apply EMS knowledge and skills in the direct care of patients. These experiences can include settings in laboratories, acute medical care facilities, extended medical care facilities, and participation in other

department approved health related activities. Practica approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board may also be considered a form of clinical experience under these rules.

(6) Contact hour--Fifty consecutive minutes of participation in a learning activity.

(7) Continuing education--Educational activities that are related to the content areas noted in subsection (c) of this section and are designed to promote and enrich knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes for the enhancement of professional practice, thus improving the quality of emergency medical services provided to the public.

(8) Continuing education program--An organized educational activity designed and evaluated to meet a set of behavioral objectives, which may be presented in one session, or a series of sessions, designed to enhance or elevate EMS knowledge and practice of certified or licensed EMS personnel.

(9) Credit course--A specific set of learning experiences offered at a regionally accredited institution of higher education for semester or quarter credit hours.

(10) Continuing Education Provider--An individual, partnership, organization, agency, or institution that offers EMS continuing education programs, courses, credit courses, classroom instruction, or other EMS educational activities.

(11) Course--An organized and specific set of learning experiences offered by an approved provider. Courses include credit and continuing education courses, short-term courses, organized clinical learning experiences and other coherent sequences of learning experiences, approved by the department.

(12) Self-directed study--An educational activity in which the learner takes the initiative and the responsibility for assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating the activity. Self-directed study may include program development, home study, electronically programmed instruction, and authorship.

(e) Types of Acceptable Continuing Education.

(1) In this section "approved educational activities" refers to workshops, seminars, conferences, short-term courses, credit courses or continuing education courses provided by accredited institutions of higher education, clinical learning experiences, individualized instruction, distributive learning courses, and other learning activities that are related to EMS or that enhance the professional EMS practice of the certified or licensed EMS personnel.

(2) Continuing education contact hours applied toward EMS recertification or relicensure may be earned by participating in approved educational activities that are offered or sponsored by:

(A) A continuing education provider, approved under subsection (f) of this section.

(B) A hospital or other health-care facility accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Health Care Organizations.

(C) A person, agency, entity, or organization approved by the department as an EMS continuing education provider.

(D) A person, agency, entity, or organization recognized by a national association or organization

representing members of the emergency medical services profession that has been approved by the department.

(E) A state or national organization in a related field such as medicine, nursing, respiratory care, and similar fields of health care practice that has been approved by the department.

(3) Developing, teaching or presenting activities defined in paragraph (1) of this subsection.

(A) Precepting students in the clinical or field internship phases of Initial education. Contact hours for precepting of students may be accrued only in Additional Approved Category content area.

(B) Participating in a self-directed study of an EMS related topic or issue that results in the participant making written findings and conclusions of the study which becomes published in an EMS related textbook, or in a state or national EMS related journal or magazine, or which results in the presentation of the findings and conclusions of the study in a department approved workshop, seminar, conference or class, and which is directed toward, or is applicable to, the EMS profession.

(f) Activities Unacceptable as Continuing Education. The following activities are not acceptable toward re-certification or re-licensure.

(1) Education incidental to the regular professional activities of EMS personnel such as learning occurring from experience or personal research which is not published.

(2) Orientation programs sponsored by employers to provide employees with information about the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, and physical facilities of a specific workplace.

(3) Meetings and activities such as in-service programs that are required as part of employment unless the in-service training is a type of acceptable continuing education under subsection (e) of this section.

(4) Organizational activity such as serving on committees, councils, or as an officer or board member in a professional organization.

(5) Institutions of higher education credit courses that are audited.

(6) Courses in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation or other instructional activities designed for lay persons, including first aid courses.

(7) Any experience that does not fit the types of acceptable continuing education defined under subsection (e) of this section.

(8) Any identical CE repeated more than once during the accrual period.

(g) Approval of Continuing Education Provider.

(1) No person, agency, entity, or organization shall offer continuing education for emergency medical services personnel unless the department has authorized that person, agency, entity, or organization to be an approved continuing education provider.

(2) A person, agency, entity, or organization seeking approval as a continuing education provider shall file an application with the department along with a nonrefundable fee of \$60 in accordance with the course approval process described in §157.32 of this title (relating to Emergency Medical Services Education Program and Course Approval).

(3) The applicant shall certify on the application that:

(A) all programs offered by the provider for EMS continuing education will comply with the appropriate criteria defined in subsection (h) of this section; and,

(B) the provider shall be responsible for verifying successful completion by a participant of each program and shall provide a certificate of completion to the participants.

(4) The department may require applicants for approval as continuing education providers to.

(A) Demonstrate they possess the financial, administrative, and educational resources necessary to provide the type(s) of educational activities proposed.

(B) Provide evidence that they are capable of designing and delivering educational activities that comply with the appropriate criteria defined in subsection (h) of this section.

(h) Criteria for Acceptable Continuing Education Activity.

(1) The following criteria have been established to guide EMS personnel in selecting appropriate programs and to guide providers of EMS continuing education in planning and presenting activities. The following criteria shall apply to all activities except those involving self-directed study concluding in a published writing or a presentation, as described in subsection (g)(3)(B) of this section.

(A) The program's content, teaching methodologies, and evaluation methods shall be based on written learning objectives which are specific, attainable, measurable, and descriptive of expected learner outcomes.

(B) The target audience shall be identified and there shall be evidence of program planning based on the needs of the potential target audience.

(C) Content shall be relevant to emergency medical services practice and/or health care, shall be related to and consistent with the program's objectives, and shall provide for the professional growth and/or maintenance of the certificant or licensee.

(D) Principles of adult education shall be used in the design and delivery of the program.

(E) There shall be documentation of the program developer's expertise in the content area.

(F) Learning experiences and teaching methods shall be appropriate to achieve the objectives of the program.

(G) Time allotted for each activity shall be sufficient for the learner to meet the objectives of the program.

(H) The program shall include activities to evaluate participant achievement of the program's learning objectives with clearly defined, stated criteria for successful completion.

(I) Participants shall complete a written evaluation of the program and instruction. State and/or National conferences may be exempt from this requirement.

(J) The continuing education provider shall timely furnish each participant with a written record of the participant's successful completion of the EMS educational activity. The record shall specify the name of the continuing education provider, the title, date and location of the educational activity, a description of the content area, the number of contact hours awarded, and the name of the organization granting approval.

(K) Program records of a continuing education provider shall be maintained by the provider for a minimum period of five years from the date of the program completion and shall include target audience, objectives, and documentation of instructor qualifications, teaching strategies and materials, evaluation instruments and results, and a list of names of participants.

(2) Classroom Instruction. In addition to the criteria listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection, programs consisting of or including a component of classroom or laboratory instruction shall meet the following criteria.

(A) The program shall be at least one contact hour in length.

(B) There shall be documentation of the instructor's expertise in the content area.

(C) A schedule of the program shall be provided which describes content with corresponding time frames.

(D) Facilities and educational resources shall be adequate to implement the program.

(3) Clinical Instruction. In addition to the criteria listed in paragraph (1) of this subsection, programs consisting of or including a component of clinical instruction shall meet the following criteria.

(A) There shall be documentation of a formal relationship between the program's provider and all facilities serving as sites for clinical instruction.

(B) Facilities used for clinical instruction must provide access to types of patients in sufficient variety and number to enable students to meet the program's objectives.

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