

COUNCIL ON CREDENTIALING IN PHARMACY
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ACCREDITATION OF ORGANIZATIONS, SITES
OR PROGRAMS IN PHARMACY

The provision of leadership, guidance, public information and coordination regarding the development and application of accreditation standards for the pharmacy profession are integral components of the Council on Credentialing in Pharmacy (CCP) vision and mission statements. The *CCP Guiding Principles for Accreditation of Organizations, Sites or Programs in Pharmacy* are intended as guidelines for the development or assessment of new and established accrediting organizations (or systems of accreditation) serving organizations¹, sites or programs in pharmacy.

The Guiding Principles are based upon The Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA) “Member Code of Good Practice” (adopted March 21, 1995). This document is a companion piece to CCP’s *Guiding Principles for Certification of Individuals in Pharmacy*.

The following definition is used in this guideline and is adapted from the **CCP Resource Paper “Credentialing in Pharmacy”**: *

Accreditation: is the process by which a private association, organization or government agency, after initial and periodic evaluations, grants recognition to an organization, site or program that has met certain established criteria.

Accreditation is to be differentiated from “certification” which is a voluntary process by which a non-governmental agency or an association grants recognition to an *individual* who has met certain predetermined qualifications specified by that organization.

* *CCP documents are posted at www.pharmacycredentialing.org.*

An accrediting organization serving organizations, sites or programs in pharmacy should adhere to the following guiding principles:

1. Pursues its mission, goals, and objectives, and conducts its operations in a trustworthy manner.

- Focuses primarily on educational, training or operational quality (as applicable), not narrow interests, or political action, or educational trends.
- Demonstrates respect for the complex interrelationships involved in the pursuit of excellence by individual organizations, sites or programs.
- Exhibits a system of checks and balances in its standards development and accreditation procedures. Includes input from a broad range of stakeholders.

¹ The term “organization” is used in a broad sense and includes, for example, institutions, corporations, universities, colleges, schools, and health-systems.

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- Avoids relationships and practices that would provoke questions about its overall objectivity and integrity.
- Analyzes criticism carefully and responds appropriately by explaining its policies and actions and/or making changes.

2. Maximizes service, productivity, and effectiveness in the accreditation relationship.

- Recognizes that teaching, training, learning, operations, or systems - not accredited status - are the primary purposes of organizations, sites or programs.
- Respects the expertise and aspirations for high achievement already present and functioning in organizations, sites or programs.
- Uses its understanding of teaching, learning, operations, or systems and the presence of local expertise and aspirations as a basis for effective and accurate evaluation at individual organizations, sites or programs.
- Keeps the accreditation process as efficient and cost-effective as possible by minimizing the use of visits and reports, and by eliminating, whenever possible, duplication of effort between accreditation and other review processes.
- Works cooperatively with other accrediting bodies and or regulatory bodies to avoid conflicting standards, and to minimize duplication of effort in the preparation of accreditation materials and the conduct of on-site visits.
- Provides the organization, site or program with a thoughtful diagnostic analysis that assists the organization, site or program in finding its own approaches and solutions, and that makes a clear distinction between what is required for accreditation and what is recommended for improvement.

3. Respects and protects organizational, site or program autonomy.

- Works with issues of organizational, site, or program autonomy in light of the commitment to mutual accountability implied by participation in accreditation, while at the same time, respecting the diversity of effective organizational, site or programmatic approaches to common goals, issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- Applies its standards and procedures with profound respect for the rights and responsibilities of organizations, sites or programs to identify, designate, and control, where applicable: (a) their respective missions, goals, and objectives; (b) educational, operational or philosophical principles and methodologies used to pursue functions implicit in their various missions, goals, and objectives; (c) specific choices and approaches to content, policies, and procedures; (d) agendas and areas of study pursued through scholarship, research, and policy development; and (e) specific personnel choices, staffing configurations, administrative structures, and other operational decisions.
- With respect to organizations, sites and programs, recognizes the ultimate authority of each community for its own policies while maintaining fundamental standards and fostering consideration of evolving needs and conditions in the profession and the communities it serves.

4. Maintains a broad perspective as the basis for wise decision making.

- Gathers and analyzes information and ideas from multiple sources and viewpoints concerning issues important to organizations, sites, programs, professions, publics, governments, and others concerned with the content, scope, and effectiveness of its work.
- Uses the results of these analyses in formulating policies and procedures that promote effective teaching, learning, systems or operations that protect the autonomy of organizations, sites and programs, and that encourage trust and cooperation within and among various components of the larger community.

5. Focuses accreditation reviews on the development of knowledge and competence.

- Concentrates on results in light of specific organizational, site or programmatic missions, goals, objectives.
- Deals comprehensively with relationships and interdependence among purposes, aspirations, curricula, goals and objectives, operations, resources, and results.
- Considers techniques, methods, and resources primarily in light of results achieved and functions fulfilled rather than the reverse.
- Has standards and review procedures that provide room for responsible experimentation and encourage innovation.

6. Exhibits integrity and professionalism in the conduct of its operation.

- Creates and documents its scope of authority, policies, and procedures to ensure fair and consistent governance, decision making and implementation.
- Exercises professional judgment in the context of its published standards and procedures.
- Demonstrates continuing care with policies, procedures, and operations regarding due process, conflict of interest, confidentiality, and consistent application of standards.
- Presents its materials and conducts its business with accuracy, skill, and sophistication sufficient to produce credibility for its role as an evaluator of quality.
- Is quick to admit errors in any part of the evaluation process, and equally quick to rectify such errors.
- Maintains sufficient financial, personnel, and other resources to carry out its operations effectively.
- Provides accurate, clear, and timely information to the education community, the professions, and the public concerning standards and procedures for accreditation, and the status of accredited organizations, sites or programs.
- Corrects inaccurate information about itself or its actions.

7. Has mechanisms to ensure that expertise and experience in the application of its standards, procedures, and values are present in members of its visiting teams, commissions, and staff.

- Maintains a thorough and effective orientation, training, and professional development program for all persons involved in the accreditation processes, appropriate to their roles and responsibilities.
- Works with organizations, sites or programs to ensure that site teams represent a collection of expertise and experience appropriate for each specific review.
- Conducts evaluations of members of its visiting teams, commissions, and staff that involve responses from organizations, sites or programs that have experienced the accreditation process.
- Conducts evaluations of criteria and procedures that include responses from reviewers and those reviewed.