

Helpful Tips for Completing the “Gap and Needs” Section

Background/Purpose: This is your opportunity to summarize why you are planning a CME activity. This should be a brief explanation to help the CME office and application review committee understand why this topic is important.

You can consider using the following template as a way to succinctly articulate the background/purpose of your activity:

This activity will specifically address practice inconsistencies in planning/execution/ provision of _____, and management of _____ and _____ in the _____ population. The goal is to ensure that health care providers have the knowledge and skills necessary for optimal delivery of care for patients with _____.

Example 1:	This activity will specifically address practice inconsistencies in the provision of guideline recommended treatment and management of exacerbations and hospitalizations in patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The goal is to ensure that health care providers have the knowledge and skills necessary for optimal delivery of care for patients with COPD.
Example 2:	Recently, CMS added a COPD hospital readmission measure to the Hospital Readmission Reduction Program. Health care providers managing patients admitted for COPD exacerbations do not always adhere to evidence-based guidelines for the management of these patients. This activity will review the latest recommendations as well as provide a model for integrating system based changes into clinical practice to address COPD readmissions.

Professional Practice Gap(s): CME activities must identify and address at least one educational gap. A professional practice gap is defined as the difference between health care processes and outcomes currently in practice and those potentially achievable.

Practice gaps can be general or specific. Typically, general practice gaps are appropriate for regularly scheduled series (i.e. grand rounds, journal club, M&M) since the individual topics of each session are likely unknown.) Alternatively, specific practice gaps are more appropriate for live courses and symposiums.

A professional practice gap can be articulated by completing the following sentence: A learner practice gap exists because learners currently . . .

Example 1:	A general practice gap for Internal Medicine Grand Rounds: Internal medicine providers at Northwestern need to understand medical innovations and develop strategies for implementing them into their practice.
Example 2:	A specific practice gap for a Critical Care Symposium: Intensivists are not routinely prescribing low tidal volume ventilation to patients with acute lung injury.
Examplet 3:	Practitioners managing patients with acute stroke only follow treatment recommendations 30% of the time. With optimal management, patient survival can be significantly improved. Physicians lack knowledge of new stroke recommendations and lack strategies for implementing these changes into their practice.

Needs Assessment: A needs assessment provides the information necessary to support the educational need for the activity. It should be data driven and should identify the cause of the professional practice gap. In other words, what data did you collect from your needs assessment that allowed you to articulate a professional practice gap or a need for the CME activity?

You will be asked to briefly summarize your findings in a statement of need (and include pertinent references).

This does not need to be a comprehensive literature review but should succinctly summarize the cause of your professional practice gap. For each method used to determine the educational need for the activity, you should briefly summarize your findings.

Example 1:	The ACGME recently approved changes to the common program requirements. Each training program is required to have a Wellness Committee involving faculty and trainees and a Program Wellness Plan. A survey of program leadership at our institution demonstrated that most programs lack the faculty expertise to effectively meet these requirements.
Example 2:	<p>Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death in the US (1). Despite this, tobacco use is undertreated related to other chronic conditions (2). The 2016 EAGLES trial was a landmark study which demonstrated but the safety and efficacy of tobacco cessation pharmacotherapy (3). However, discussion among pulmonary faculty and trainees identified inexperience prescribing FDA approved medications to assist with tobacco cessation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2014 Surgeon General’s Report, Table 12.4, page 660. 2. Bernstein SL et al. Am J of Pub Health 2013 3. Anthenelli et al. Lancet June 18, 2016