

Continuing Education Accreditors Award Joint Accreditation to Support Team-Based Patient Care

Institute for Healthcare Improvement and VHA are the first to receive joint accreditation as continuing education providers for health care teams
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The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME®), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) and the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) are proud to announce that they have jointly awarded accreditation to the **Institute for Healthcare Improvement** (IHI) and **VHA Inc.** (VHA).

The **Institute for Healthcare Improvement** and **VHA** are the first two organizations to receive this joint accreditation as providers of continuing education for health care professionals.

The ACCME, ACPE and ANCC have collaborated to reward organizations for offering team-focused education that improves patient care. This joint process decreases the administrative burdens for continuing education providers, as they can take advantage of one unified, streamlined process rather than obtaining three different accreditations. To be eligible for joint accreditation, an organization must already be accredited by at least two of the three accreditors, its mission statement must highlight health care team education and 25 percent or more of its educational activities must be designed by and for health care teams.

Joint accreditation offers an additional option — not a restriction — for continuing education providers. Organizations that are accredited separately can also produce education for health care teams, and organizations that are awarded joint accreditation can also produce education that is not team-related.

Accredited continuing education providers must meet rigorous standards for educational quality and independence - including the [ACCME Standards for Commercial SupportSM](#) [1]. With the joint accreditation initiative, the ACCME, the ACPE and the ANCC seek to assure the public that health care teams receive education that is designed to be independent, free from commercial bias, based on valid content and effective in improving the quality and safety of care delivered by the team.

The new health care reform law supports the value of team-based care, as do other national initiatives to improve health care delivery, safety and quality. The Institute of Medicine's seminal 2003 report, *Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality*, stated that health professionals need to "cooperate, communicate, and integrate care in teams to ensure that care is continuous and reliable."

"We congratulate the **Institute for Healthcare Improvement** and the **VHA** for this historic achievement," said Murray Kopelow, MD, ACCME Chief Executive. "We believe accredited continuing education for the health care team is a strategic asset to national quality and safety initiatives and contributes to improving health care professionals' performance and patient care."

According to Peter H. Vlasses, PharmD, DSc (Hon), Executive Director of ACPE, "This joint accreditation process is a 'win-win-win' for providers, accrediting organizations and health care professionals that will facilitate interprofessional learning and networking among health care providers, preserve high quality standards for educational program development, and improve efficiency of accrediting organizations. We encourage other qualified providers to pursue this opportunity to support team-based, patient care."

"ANCC has supported the work of the **Institute for Healthcare Improvement** and the **VHA** for

many years. We are confident that these exemplary organizations will set a strong standard for joint accreditation. We could not be more pleased that they have become the inaugural providers seeking joint accreditation," said director of ANCC's Accreditation Program Kathy Chappell, MSN, RN.

"IHI is particularly pleased to receive Joint Accreditation for Team Based Education from ACCME, ACPE and ANCC, since our programming emphasizes the importance of inter-disciplinary learning and improvement," said IHI Senior Vice President, Don Goldmann, MD. "ACCME, ACPE and ANCC have been visionary leaders in recognizing the contribution of collaborative learning to today's quality and safety challenges, especially in a health care environment where resources are not unlimited and can and must be used more efficiently and effectively."

"VHA takes its accreditation status very seriously because it's part of the intrinsic value we offer our members as we support their efforts to provide quality care to patients. The information they glean from our face-to-face, satellite TV and Web-based programming has a tangible impact on knowledge sharing across our network of clinicians," said VHA Executive Vice President Colleen Risk.

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About the ACCME

The Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education is a not-for-profit organization based in Chicago that is responsible for accrediting U.S. institutions that offer continuing medical education through a voluntary, self-regulatory system. The ACCME also has a system for recognizing state medical societies as accreditors for local organizations offering CME.

The ACCME's mission is to identify, develop and promote standards for quality continuing medical education that improves health care for patients and their communities. There are currently approximately 2,200 accredited CME providers in the United States, whose educational activities draw more than 17 million health care practitioner participants annually.

The ACCME's member organizations include the American Board of Medical Specialties, the American Hospital Association, the American Medical Association, the Association for Hospital Medical Education, the Association of American Medical Colleges, the Council of Medical Specialty Societies and the Federation of State Medical Boards of the U.S. Inc.

For more information, visit www.accme.org [2].

About the ACPE

Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) is the national agency for the accreditation of professional degree programs in pharmacy and providers of continuing pharmacy education. The mission of the organization is to assure and advance excellence in education for the profession of pharmacy. ACPE is an autonomous and independent agency whose Board of Directors is derived through the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy (AACP), the American Pharmacists Association (APhA), the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy (NABP), and the American Council on Education (ACE).

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About ANCC Accreditation

For more than 30 years, ANCC's Accreditation Program has recognized organizations that offer high quality continuing education for nurses. To become ANCC-accredited, organizations must meet a wide range of quality-based criteria that demonstrate their commitment to excellence in continuing nursing education, and thus, their commitment to excellence in the nursing profession. In addition to primary accreditation of organizations, the Accreditation Program also accredits individual

educational programs designed to validate nursing skills (or skill sets) through the Nursing Skills Competency Program (NSCP). The NSCP provides assurance for consumers, organizations, and regulating bodies that nurses are competent to perform an individual skill or set of skills. ANCC currently recognizes more than 300 accredited organizations.

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About IHI

The Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) is an independent not-for-profit organization helping to lead the improvement of health care throughout the world. Founded in 1991 and based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, IHI (www.ihl.org [5]) works to accelerate improvement by building the will for change, cultivating promising concepts for improving patient care, and helping health care systems put those ideas into action.

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About VHA

VHA Inc., based in Irving, Texas, is a national network of not-for-profit health care organizations that work together to set new levels of clinical performance, identify and implement best practices to improve operational efficiency and clinical outcomes and drive maximum savings in the supply chain arena. Formed in 1977, through its 16 regional offices, VHA serves 1,400 hospitals and more than 30,000 non-acute care providers nationwide. VHA was ranked by Modern Healthcare as the 7th best place to work in health care in 2009.

VHA

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