

November 1, 2017

Commission Approves Revisions to ADA CERP Standard XIV.3: Required Minimum Length of CE Activities Reduced

At its October 12-13, 2017 meeting the Commission approved revisions to CERP Standard XIV.3. Under the revised Standard, the minimum required length for CE activities is now 15 minutes, reduced from the previous required minimum of one hour. In addition, credits may now be awarded in increments of 0.25 hours. Revised Standard XIV.3 has been incorporated into the [CERP Recognition Standards](#). The October 2017 of the CERP Standards is published at ADA.org/CERP. The change is effective immediately.

The reduced minimum length for CE activities is designed to offer providers flexibility in developing shorter courses when appropriate, and to designate credits that more accurately correspond to the length of the learning activity. The Commission believes that the shorter minimum accommodates new methods of delivering education in focused segments, and is in keeping with the evolving principles of effective adult learning. The shorter required minimum is also consistent with the standards of other accrediting agencies in the health professions.

In making this change, the Commission requested input from the communities of interest through an open call for comments. Responses to the proposed changes were strongly supportive.

When applying the revised Standard, the following information may be helpful to providers:

- CE activities designated for 0.25 credits must be at least 15 minutes in duration. Credit may not be offered for CE activities that are shorter than 15 minutes. Credits for activities longer than 15 minutes may be rounded to the nearest increment of 0.25, 0.5, 0.75 or 1.0. In instances where established regulation states that activities of 50-60 minutes shall be counted as one hour, then the provider should designate one hour.
- Providers may continue to issue credits in increments of one hour for CE activities that are of corresponding length. However, if a CE activity is 75 minutes, for example, then the activity must be designated for 1.25 hours.
- Providers developing courses for an audience in a particular jurisdiction which specifies CE reporting increments may wish to assist participants by offering CE activities that meet the requirements. This could include designing activities that conform to the specified duration, or bundling shorter CE segments into a package that meets the required minimum.
- All activities designated for CE credit, whether 15 minutes or longer, must meet all applicable CERP criteria, including formal learning objectives and learning assessment/evaluation mechanisms, qualified instructors, etc.

Answers to some frequently asked questions on the revisions are included on the following page.

Additional questions may be directed to Alejandro Lerma, CCEPR coordinator, at lermaa@ada.org.

ADA CERP Revised Requirements on Minimum Length for CE Activities and Designating Credits

FAQs

ADA CERP Standard XIV.3 states: *“Credit awarded to participants of a recognized provider's educational activity must be calculated as follows: (a) For all CE activities, 0.25 credit hours will be awarded for each 15 minutes of activity time, not including breaks, meals, registration periods or general business. No credit shall be awarded if the activity is less than 15 minutes in duration. . .”*

CE regulations in our state require that credits are reported in increments of one hour. How can our program comply with the revised CERP Standard?

If you offer CE activities primarily within one state, and that state specifies that CE must be reported in specific increments (whether it be 0.5 hour or 1 hour), you may wish to design courses that meet the minimum length requirement in that state. The revised CERP Standard does not require providers to offer CE activities that are shorter than one hour; it is intended to offer providers greater flexibility in developing a range of CE activities when applicable. Providers must always select educational methodologies and course duration appropriate to an activity's learning objectives.

If you offer CE activities to an audience from multiple jurisdictions with diverse CE regulations, and you offer activities of various lengths, you may wish to explore options permitting participants to bundle several activities. Credits earned by completing multiple CE activities could be reported in a transcript format.

Providers should also advise potential participants to check with their licensing boards regarding CE requirements. As with any other limits on CE subject matter or format established by local regulation, it is the responsibility of the individual dentist to report CE activities that satisfy those requirements.

Is an evaluation quiz required for a 15-minute video?

CERP Standards require that all CE activities, whether 15 minutes or multiple days in length, must include a mechanism that permits participants to assess mastery of the material, whether the educational objectives were met, and the overall effectiveness of the activity. For self-study activities, it is especially important to include a content-based assessment.

If a CE activity is 10 minutes long, can this activity be designated for 0.25 credits?

No. CE activities must be a minimum of 15 minutes. For live activities this means the instructional time must be at least 15 minutes, not counting registration periods, introductions or breaks. For self-study activities, it must take the average participant 15 minutes to complete all required elements of the activity, for example: watching a video and completing a quiz.

If a CE activity is 50 minutes long, can this activity be designated for 1 CE credit?

In most cases, the provider should round to the nearest quarter hour. For example, if an activity is 95 minutes long, it would be designated for 1.5 CE credits.

An exception to this is when a state's CE regulations define a credit hour as 50 minutes of instruction. A provider offering CE activities in that state may designate a 50-minute activity for one CE credit.

Are there any unique requirements for short format CE activities?

All CE activities must meet the CERP Recognition Standards and Criteria, including short format activities. For example, all CE activities must include published educational objectives, an evaluation/assessment instrument, disclosure of any commercial support, and disclosure of the instructors'/authors' relevant financial relationships. No CE activity, including short format activities, may promote proprietary products or services. Videos may not include advertising breaks; self-study publications may not include ads within the content pages of the activity.