

## Arizona Physical Therapist Continuing Competence Requirements

The rules that describe continuing competence activities (Article 4 in the board's administrative rules, A.A.C. R4-24-401–R4-24-303) establish 3 categories of activities that can fulfill the requirement for license renewal, which is 20 hours during each 2 year compliance period. A compliance period begins on September 1<sup>st</sup> of even-numbered years and ends on August 31<sup>st</sup> of the following even-numbered year. At least 10 contact hours must be from Category A, up to the entire 20 contact hour requirement. No more than 10 hours may be utilized from a combination of Category B and/or Category C activities. Because of the variety of conversions used to determine CEU's by different organizations, the rules require "contact hours" rather than "CEUs" as the measurement of continuing competence activities.

What distinguishes Category A activities is that they are approved for contact hours by one of the following: 1) an accredited medical, PT or health care education program; 2) a national or state medical, PT or health care association, or a component of the association; or 3) a national medical, PT or health care specialty society. This category includes continuing education courses, PT clinical specialty certification coursework, PT clinical residency coursework and post-graduate PT education from an accredited college or university. Each 60 minutes of instruction equals 1 contact hour. The rules state that no more than half of the hours from Category A can be obtained from non-clinical coursework or activities.

Categories B and C include a variety of activities that have not been approved for contact hours by any of the Category A approval organizations. Category B includes study groups (with a minimum of 3 people), self-instruction (which may be directed by a correspondence course, video, internet or satellite program), and attendance at in-service education programs. These activities must relate to the practice of physical therapy, and there is a 5 contact hour maximum for any of the sub-categories within Category B. Category C activities include teaching or lecturing, practice management (e.g. ethics, administration, law, reimbursement, etc), and publications. There is a 5 contact hour maximum for any of the sub-categories within Category C. No more than 5 hours may be obtained from non-clinical coursework. The description of each of these sub-categories in the rules contains the conversion for determining contact hour value (see R4-24-402 for specifics).

The board does not pre-approve any activities for continuing competence credit. A licensee can determine the acceptability of a course or activity based on the descriptions contained in the rules, which can be accessed on the Board of PT web site at [www.ptboard.state.az.us](http://www.ptboard.state.az.us) under the Popular Links section. Excluded from credit for continuing competence activities are staff meetings, presentations or publications directed at lay groups, routine teaching as part of a job requirement, and regularly scheduled institutional activities such as rounds or case conferences. Board staff is available to assist licensees in understanding the requirements described in the rules.

Licensees will submit a signed statement to the board on their license renewal application affirming that they have obtained the required continuing competence hours for renewal of license. Licensees are not to send in their continuing competence documentation with their renewal application. Only those licensees who are randomly selected for audit will need to provide evidence of completion of the required activities. Notices of audit are sent via certified U.S. mail. Licensees are required to retain evidence of continuing competence activities for the preceding 2 compliance periods.