



# Frequently Asked Questions Preparation of the Continuous Improvement Progress Report (CIPR) Baccalaureate & Graduate Nursing Programs

## 1. What is the CIPR?

The CIPR is the report that *every* CCNE-accredited nursing program is required to submit at the mid-point of its accreditation term. The CIPR is one way that CCNE monitors accredited programs' continued compliance with the accreditation standards in between comprehensive on-site evaluations. All programs are required to address all four accreditation standards and each of the key elements within the standards in the CIPR. Programs are informed about the report and the submission deadline, as well as any areas (e.g., key elements) on which the report must focus, in the CCNE accreditation action letter.

## 2. Who reviews the CIPR and when will the program be notified of the outcome?

The CIPR is reviewed by the Report Review Committee (RRC), a standing committee of CCNE. Upon its review of the CIPR, the RRC formulates a confidential recommendation to the CCNE Board of Commissioners. The Board reviews the CIPR and considers the RRC's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The chief nurse administrator is notified of the Board's action in writing after the Board meeting.

## 3. When is the CIPR due to CCNE offices?

The CIPR submission deadline is identified in the most recent CCNE accreditation action letter. The deadline for most programs is either June 1 or December 1 of a specified year (the mid-point of the term of accreditation). CCNE sends a reminder email to the chief nurse administrator of the program whose CIPR is due several months in advance of the report submission deadline. The reminder notice is sent as a courtesy; the report is due on time even if the chief nurse administrator did not receive the reminder notice.

## 4. How can I access the most current template to use for preparation of the CIPR?

The CIPR template is available on the CCNE website at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/standards-procedures-resources/baccalaureate-graduate/progress-report>. Programs are required to use the template, which ensures that the correct set of accreditation standards is being used. Another advantage to using the template is that the program does not need to re-type the standards, key elements, and elaboration statements.

## 5. Where can I find procedures and guidelines for the CIPR?

Important information regarding the CIPR can be found in CCNE's *Procedures for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (amended 2014), under "Monitoring Program Performance" (pages 17-18) on the CCNE website at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/Procedures.pdf>. Possible recommendations and outcomes of the Board's review of the report are discussed in this section.

Guidelines for preparing the CIPR are available on the CCNE website at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/standards-procedures-resources/baccalaureate-graduate/progress-report>.

## 6. Which *Standards* should be used and where are they located?

The CCNE website clearly identifies which *Standards* document is in effect. Programs submitting reports must address the *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (amended 2013), and available on the CCNE website at <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/Standards-Amended-2013.pdf>.

Crosswalk tables provide additional assistance to programs and are available as follows:

- 2009 CCNE *Standards* and 2013 CCNE *Standards*  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/2009-2013-Crosswalk-Standards.pdf>
- 2013 CCNE *Standards* and 2012 NTF *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs*  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/Crosswalk-2013-Standards-and-2012-NTF-Criteria.pdf>

## 7. Which professional standards and guidelines must be addressed in the CIPR?

CCNE requires that baccalaureate and graduate pre-licensure programs in nursing demonstrate incorporation of *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008); that master's degree programs demonstrate incorporation of *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (AACN, 2011); that DNP programs demonstrate incorporation of *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2006); and that nurse practitioner programs demonstrate incorporation of *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* (NTF, 2012). These professional nursing standards may be accessed as follows:

- *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008)  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education-resources/BaccEssentials08.pdf>
- *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing* (AACN, 2011)  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education-resources/MastersEssentials11.pdf>
- *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* (NTF, 2012)  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education-resources/evalcriteria2012.pdf>
- *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2006)  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/dnp/Essentials.pdf>

## 8. What resources are available for understanding the revised *Standards*?

Learn what's new, what's changed, and how the revised standards impact nursing programs at the baccalaureate and graduate levels. The following webinar provides an overview of the revised standards.

- *Understanding the Revised CCNE Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (2013)*  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/webinars/2013/11/20/ccne-standards>

## **9. Can I simply refer to a section of our previous self-study when writing the CIPR?**

No. The RRC will not have a copy of the self-study submitted during the program's most recent accreditation review or any other previously submitted documents. The self-study also is out of date. The CIPR is a stand-alone report showing evidence of the program's continued compliance with all accreditation standards, including all key elements, since the last accreditation review. New and updated information must be provided, as appropriate. View the CIPR as an opportunity to identify improvements and changes, present action plans, and celebrate accomplishments since the last review.

## **10. What should be reported if there have been no changes since the last accreditation review?**

Regardless of whether a change has not occurred, please submit evidence demonstrating continued compliance. Use of "no change" as the only response to a standard or key element is insufficient to document that a program remains in compliance.

## **11. What is expected of a program that had a compliance concern when it was last reviewed for accreditation?**

When a compliance concern at the key element level was noted in the program's most recent CCNE accreditation action letter, the program must present information in the CIPR demonstrating that measures have been taken to ensure compliance during the accreditation period. The CIPR must contain sufficient detail so that compliance can be evaluated by the RRC and the Board of Commissioners.

## **12. Do I have to provide information about all of our nursing programs in the Program Information Form if the CIPR only addresses one program?**

Yes. This form must be filled out completely whether or not all of the nursing programs are addressed in the CIPR. Thus, even if the CIPR addresses only one program, information about all nursing programs offered at the institution must be provided on the form.

## **13. If a nursing unit has more than one CCNE-accredited program, is it necessary to provide evidence of continued compliance in each key element for all programs being addressed in the CIPR?**

Yes. In situations where data for the programs are distinct, such as key elements related to curriculum and student performance, clear evidence demonstrating compliance must be presented for *each* program addressed in the CIPR.

## **14. Are sample CIPRs available for review?**

No. CCNE does not provide sample CIPRs as these reports are not deemed public documents.

## **15. What is the required formatting for the CIPR?**

The font size must be a minimum of 10 and the program responses must be single spaced. The template includes the standard, key element, and elaboration statements; and these are not to be altered or deleted by those preparing the CIPR.

## **16. What is the page limit for the CIPR?**

The CIPR must not exceed 50 pages (the appendices are excluded from the page limit), unless otherwise negotiated with CCNE staff.

Well-selected appendices may be submitted in addition to the CIPR, if necessary. If any appendices are submitted, they must be submitted as a single document. The appendices, in total, must not exceed 25 pages, unless otherwise negotiated with CCNE staff.

### **17. Who should I contact if I have questions regarding the CIPR?**

Please contact Lina Trullinger, CCNE Associate Director, at 202-887-6791 x245 or [ltrullinger@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:ltrullinger@aacn.nche.edu).

### **18. How should the CIPR and appendices be submitted to CCNE?**

All reports must be submitted on or before the due date (but no sooner than 30 days before the due date) to ensure that the information provided is current. Email the program information form, completed report, and appendices (as a single document), if any, in PDF format to Renee Ricci, CCNE Accreditation Assistant, at [rricci@aacn.nche.edu](mailto:rricci@aacn.nche.edu). Please do not send hard copies to CCNE.