

Best Practice Recommendations for Writing Practice Gaps

A Practice Gap is "the difference between health care processes or outcomes observed in practice, and those potentially achievable on the basis of current professional knowledge."

1. Conduct a Needs Assessment

- **Needs Assessment Purpose:**
 1. *Systematically* gather information, then utilize this information to formulate and determine instructional (educational) solutions to *close the GAP* between what the audience *does know or do* vs. what the audience *should know or do*
- **Needs Assessment Process:**
 1. Identify resources to identify needs
 - Needs can be **PROVEN** (based on objective data sources) or **INFERRED** (based on new treatments, technology, organizational changes) or **VERBALIZED** (based on requests from your team, patient surveys, committee notes), such as ...
 - Professional Organization or Subject Matter Expert Recommendations
 - Department or System Leadership
 - Other Departments on the Team, i.e. nursing, pharmacy
 - Quality or Audit Data
 - M&Ms/Case Conferences/Sentinel Events
 - Journal Articles or New Research
 - Request from a team member
 2. Determine the target audience
 3. Identify WHY the audience needs this education
 - Determine what YOUR team is doing now that is not up to date with recommended practice
 4. Determine the intended impact of the education
 - End results

2. Write the Practice Gap

- A Practice Gap is the *WHY* of the education
 - Is expressed negatively
 - Is a problem that indicates an educational need on the part of your learners
 - Is something that your learners don't know or do, that they should know or do
 - Calls for review, updating, improvement, or correction
 - Adversely affects your learners' current practice of medicine and their patients' care
- A Practice Gap has 3 sections
 1. Current standard
 2. Current or ideal practice
 3. Type of gap (competence, performance, patient outcome) the activity seeks to close.
- Example
 - Failure of physicians to understand newer diagnostic tests and procedures can result in delays in diagnosis. Lack of knowledge and skills in Endobronchial Ultrasound can result in high failure rate of lung biopsy. Failure to utilize EBUS for lung biopsy can result in high procedure-related complications.