

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. When and how frequently, do I need to enter data into the NARS web-based interface?

A. An Approved Provider may decide what process works best for their Unit in regard to how often they enter their activity data into NARS. What is required is that all data for the reporting year must be entered and attested to by January 31 of the following year. For example, 2021 reporting year activity data must be entered and the PNP must have completed the online attestation by January 31, 2022.

Q. I thought the Nurse is the target audience in all NCPD activities we provide? Why are others listed? I would not plan a program w/o the Nurse being the target audience? Please clarify.

A. Many of the education departments that Approved Provider Units are a part of provide education for a variety of professions. While the ANCC/Midwest MSD criteria requirement are specific to nursing, it is understandable that the education may be valuable to other healthcare providers. Interdisciplinary events are highly encouraged to promote the fact that we all work together toward one common favorable patient outcome. Therefore, the target audience may also include students, or other healthcare professions as well.

Q. If the educational events are occurring in consecutive days can we have a start and end time to encompass all the offerings or do they still need to be listed as separate entries?

A. When you have a repeat activity, each offering of that activity, no matter if it is offered twice in the same day, on consecutive days, once a week, or once a month, is a separate activity ID and entry into NARS.

Q. We offered “Let’s Talk Stroke” twice in a live lecture mode. Offered May 9 and repeated May 16. What is the start date for the 2nd program when we give it a few times during the year knowing we use the same end date for all? Would the 2nd iteration of the program have a start date that the 2nd program was given on or the date the very 1st iteration in 2019 it was given.

A. 1st time offered - start date would be May 9, end date would be May 9; 2nd time offered - start date would be May 16, end date would be May 16. They would need separate/unique Provider Activity numbers.

Also, make sure you don’t confuse course types. Once a **live** event is offered - it only lasts that one day; the event start and end dates are the same. If the event is repeated - it again is only offered on the one day it is presented; the event start and end dates are that same date.

However, an event offered online, may first be opened on Jan. 2, 2021 (start date) but is available for anyone to take the same course until Dec. 31, 2021 (end date). It is technically available more often during the reporting year.

Q. Provider Activity ID – Could we keep it simple and use a number such as 2021-1, 2021-2, etc.?

A. That is totally up to your Approved Provider Unit, as long as the number does not repeat.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

In the case of a repeat activity, the Approved Provider Unit could add another dash and another letter, or number, etc. For example, 2021-1-A or 2021-1-15, or 2021.1.01. It just needs to be consistent so everyone in the Approved Provider Unit understands the system you have decided upon.

Q. Will the Provider Activity ID be required to be listed elsewhere such as the certificate of completion?

A. No. The Provider Activity ID is solely for the purposes of reporting in the NARS system. The ANCC needs the number to help distinguish between different activities, and each time they are offered.

If your Approved Provider Unit sees value in listing the number in other areas such as in the registration system, on certificates, etc., to assist staff in identifying one activity from another, it is perfectly fine to use it. But there is no requirement to do so.

Q. Does the Provider Activity ID need to be disclosed to participants?

A. No. It is simply for the purposes of the NARS reporting.

Q. In the NARS materials we see that ALL activities need to have a unique number (Provider Activity ID). For classes such as PALS/BLS/PEARS, etc. do they need to be grouped/bundled together with the same number root and then additional unique identifier such as:

- PALS June 8th 1001.1 OR 1001
- PALS June 20 1001.2 OR 1002

A. What you assign for the unique Approved Provider Activity ID – is totally up you and your Approved Provider Unit. There are no rules or regulations – other than *each activity has to have a unique ID*. If it helps your APU to group them – go for it.

For example, because I have to enter class data into a permanent database courses are numbered and then each time it is offered it is a different section number.

- LS100 = BLS Provider Course
- LS100.01 BLS on 6/6/17 at 8:30 am
- LS100.02 BLS on 6/6/17 at 12:30 pm

That way we know at a glance that any course roster, etc. marked LS100 is a BLS Provider Course.

Whatever system works try it out. There has been nothing said that we must continue using the same system next year – they are using this unique identifier to separate out offerings so that numbers are not duplicated. For example, if I had 2 BLS classes on 6/6/19 both at 8:30 am but in different locations – listing it twice without a unique identifier would have one wondering is this the same class, just entered twice?

Q. To accommodate the different shifts our APU already offered programs at different times this year and we assigned a course code to them; however, we did not include a .01, or .02 at the end so they all have the same course code number. If the participants are audited by their state board of nursing

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

would this become a discrepancy if the numbers were different in the activity planning file and what was listed on their certificate?

A. The Provider Activity ID is for the purposes of the NARS reporting system only. It is not necessary to disclose it to learners or list it on the certificate; it is an internal number completely and should not impact anything with the state board of nursing.

Q. Can we recycle the provider activity numbers each year? For BLS CPR we have a number for registering on line – so can we start over each year? Or should we continue on with the numbers?

A. It should be fine to recycle the provider activity numbers since they are different reporting years.

Q. Just to clarify, we put activity #'s on our certificates. Example: Compassion Fatigue Class is #93. It's offered many times throughout the year, so in NARS, I will write 93.1, 93.2, 93.3, etc. for each activity offered (each date); but the activity number on the certificate will always be 93. Does that sound right?

A. That is correct – it is an internal Approved Provider Unit policy if activity numbers are on certificates – what you type of numbering system you utilize there is up to your APU. What needs to be reported into the NARS system is a specific Provider Activity ID for each time an event is offered.

Q. If we have already offered a course more than one time this year, do we need to go back and assign each session a different number now?

A. If the offerings occurred after January 1, 2021, yes you will need to assign each activity a unique number. Unless the Approved Provider Unit sees value in including the number within their paperwork or elsewhere in their files, the number will only serve the purpose of completing the NARS reporting. There is a spot on the NCPD Activity Planning Guide to include the Activity#. If the APU wishes to re-visit the Activity Planning Guide for each of the activities offered this year so far and add the Activity# that is fine, but it is not required. Moving forward, for consistency and organization, it may help the APU to record the activity number on the NCPD Activity Planning Guide to document the activity number that was assigned in addition to their provider approval number.

Q. What about Provider Activity IDs that have already been issued on certificates? For example, an APU already has an Activity ID in place and they printed those on certificates.

A. That is perfectly fine that these have been listed if that is your internal process. For the purposes of the NARS reporting, you would just need to ensure that each offering is assigned a unique ID. If you offered one activity multiple times but each offering has the same Activity ID, you would need to add another numbering/lettering sequence to the ID already in place, to account for the different offerings. Each offering is considered a separate activity in the NARS system and must have a unique ID number assigned.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. Since our new Provider Approval number did not go into effect until February 1st, do we record programs from the February 1st date or the January 1st date, even though there will be a different Provider Approval number?

A. The Provider Approval number you were issued by the Midwest MSD has nothing to do with the NARS system, and you should not be using it for your Provider Activity ID number. The Provider Approval number is the number designating that your Unit has met criteria to continue to provide continuing nursing professional development. We do not recommend that you use this number to identify the specific educational activities you provide, or include the number in the numbering sequence you select for your individual offerings. The Provider Activity ID is some type of a numbering system the APU develops that works for the types of events they are providing.

Q. So to be clear, a program ID can be 164 on all certificates, but on NARS, we will report it as 164.1, 164.2, etc., correct?

A. Yes. There are a number of Approved Provider Units that do not list the Activity number on their certificates. Just realize this is your own internal process and is not required. It is required that you list your Provider Approval number on certificates to demonstrate the approval you achieved through the Midwest MSD.

Q. What is meant by Providership?

A. There are two choices for how an educational activity is provided – direct or joint. A directly provided activity is one that is planned, implemented and evaluated by the Approved Provider Unit. Joint Providership is planning, developing, and implementing an educational activity between two or more organizations or agencies.

Q. What kind of NCPD activity types can be reported in NARS?

A. Below is a list of the different NCPD activity types that can be reported in the NARS system. Refer to the document, *Types of Educational Events* found on the Midwest MSD website for additional definitions and examples.

- Course
- Regularly Scheduled Series
- Internet Live Course
- Enduring Material
- Internet Activity (Enduring Material)
- Journal based NCPD
- Manuscript Review
- Test Item Writing
- Committee Learning
- Performance Improvement
- Internet Searching and Learning

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

- Learning from Teaching

Q. How is a Course defined?

A. A *course* is a live NCPD activity, where the learner participates in person. A course is planned as an individual event.

If a course is held multiple times for multiple audiences, then each instance is reported as a separate activity.

Q. How is an enduring material defined?

A. An *enduring material* is printed, recorded, or computer presented NCPD activity that may be used over time at various locations and which, in itself constitutes a planned activity. In an enduring material the provider creates the content.

Enduring materials should be reported in NARS for each year in which they are active, either for the entire year or any part thereof. For each year that you provided the activity, please report the number of learners (nurses or other learners) who successfully completed it during that year. Also report any commercial support received related to the activity for that year. Do not report cumulative data for an activity spanning multiple years.

Q. How in an internet enduring material defined?

A. An *internet-enduring material* activity is available when the nurse participant chooses to complete it. It is “enduring”, meaning that there is not just one time on one day to participate in it. Rather, the participant determined when he/she participates. Examples include online interactive educational modules, recorded presentations and pod-casts.

Internet enduring material activities should be reported in NARS for each year in which they are active, either for the entire year or any part thereof. For each year that you provided the activity, please report the number of learners (nurses and others) who completed it during that year, as well as any commercial support received for the activity during that year. Do not report cumulative data for an activity spanning multiple years.

Q. How is a journal-based NCPD activity defined?

A. A *journal-based NCPD activity* includes the reading of an article (or adapted formats for special needs), a provider stipulated/learner directed phase (that may include reflection, discussion, or debate about the material contained in the article(s)) and a requirement for the completion by the learner of a pre-determined set of questions or tasks relating to the content of the material as part of the learning process.

Q. If an event is offered live (in person) and also live streamed via the intranet – is it a Course (C) or and Internet Live Course (IL)? At this point it is only available in real-time.

A. This should be listed as a course.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. Is the main point regarding Regularly Scheduled Series (RSS) that it is planned as a series, offered multiple times? APU's are struggling if the series topics change each month – they are planning it as a series, but are under the impression when designating an RSS for CME purposes that every session of the series need to be interrelated and geared toward the same identified outcome.

A. Even though the topic changes each month it still falls under the category of regularly scheduled series because of the way it is planned and offered on a regular basis.

Q. When developing Grand Rounds, what if topics are not similar and the schedule is not regular? Should we document those as a Course or an RSS (Regularly Scheduled Series)?

A. If you are holding the sessions every now and then and there is no set schedule for the session for example, it is not offered every Thursday of the week or first Tuesday of the month, then the activity should be listed as a course. If there is a regular schedule to the activity, i.e., weekly, monthly, quarterly, it doesn't matter if the topics change each month, this activity would be an RSS (Regularly Scheduled Series).

Q. If there is a live event that is being offered simultaneously by a learning management system or broadcast through a live-stream service to a distant audience is this considered two separate events?

A. If the event is live and there are individuals in the audience, it is a course. The distance audience is part of the same event. If there is not an in-person audience and the event is being live streamed and is only being held on that particular night, and participants can only view it that particular night, it would be considered an internet live course. If you record it and make it available for individuals to access at a later date, then the activity becomes a separate event and is designated as an internet activity enduring material.

Approved Providers must think about the different delivery formats for the activities they provide. Many providers are expanding their reach for the educational activities they provide by offering activities live and then recording the activity, developing an enduring activity and providing it using their learning management system. Please know, the live program becomes one event and the recorded program becomes a second event, both in the activity documentation that is maintained as well as in the NARS system.

Q. I'm doing an activity that does not fit into any of the categories – it's a blended activity with some live and some enduring. There is no category for this type! What do I do??

A. If any portion is live with an in-person audience then it is a course. If it is live with only an internet audience (offered one time, on one specific date & time) it is an Internet Live Course.

Even a flipped classroom format - study materials first done at home, and possibly on-line - then a classroom/workshop format - would be considered a course.

Q. What about an event that has a live audience and also an audience at an off-campus site attending live; and the live activity is not offered again?

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

A. The default is that it is a course. An internet live course is live, but there are no bodies gathered somewhere participating in a conference setting. If you have live bodies participating in the activity gathered together, whether you are streaming it live or not, then the activity would be categorized as a course.

Q. If a course is held live and streamed to another location, is this listed as a course?

A. This would be considered a course because learners are participating in person. It is available on a certain date at a certain time, in real time; some participants are there live and others viewing from afar.

Please know that each APU should do their best to classify each course based on the information in front of them. As things evolve and we learn more about the differences between each type, APUs may classify things differently down the road. There will be no penalties. Ultimately the contact hours will be listed, the number of participants will be provided, and other such details, which are key elements of the reporting.

Q. What about a live event that is teleconferenced to other locations – live at the same time?

A. If there are bodies in a room this is a course. It doesn't matter if the activity is teleconferenced or shown live over the internet to other audiences it is considered a course. Technology will continue to evolve and the APU may run into additional questions. The key is to try and be consistent with your classification of activities and reporting.

Q. If we host a program and have attendees in one venue, but also broadcast via Skype in real time to another location, how would this be classified? It has both live bodies and virtual attendees.

A. This type of format is occurring more and more. If the activity is a live event, and it is only being offered on that date and time, it would be classified as a course. If you were to take this program and make it available on the internet or learning management system, and is no longer live but recorded, this is a totally different educational activity that requires a separate activity file and separate listing NARS since the activity has now become an enduring activity, or an internet live enduring material. At the time the event is live and there are bodies in the chairs – then it is a course.

Q. Hours of instruction versus contact hours – When you have breakout sessions, would it be safe to say that the hours of instruction would be larger than the number of contact hours?

A. If there are breakout sessions, participants would not be attending the two different courses offered at the same time, it comes down to the total number of hours of instruction. Even though the time frame is from 1:00 -2:00 p.m. and there are three sessions offered during this time frame, the hours of instruction would be the 60-minute hour.

Q. Hours of Instruction – What about required pre-work and/or required tests or post-work that are required to meet the successful completion requirements that are not done in a classroom?

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

A. We are assuming that you have a defensible way of documenting how many hours it takes to complete these ‘outside-the-classroom’ activities, through a pilot study or other method. And therefore, this would be included in the total number of hours of instruction.

The key is that for any of the required pre- and post-work (time not spent in the classroom; activities required to meet successful completion requirements) the APU needs to quantify through a pilot study or similar method, how much time is spent on each of those activities and include that in the hours of instruction. The APU needs to be able to defend why they allocated that amount of time to that part of the educational event, and of course record it on the Educational Planning Form. If the APU is providing contact hours for these additional activities, then they need to be included in the overall hours of instruction.

Q. When we get to the number of nurses who completed the activity it stresses ‘completed’. For our larger conferences, we award credit by each session completed, so how will we report this? For instance, a 5-hour conference, but an individual only stayed for 3 of the 5 sessions and was awarded only 3 hours of credit.

A. This is a great question. It comes down to what the successful completion requirements are to receive credit, that is what is meant by ‘completing’ the course. Even though you may have nurses who have received a varying number of contact hours, they have still met the successful completion requirements; assuming of course that it is allowed for nurses to participate in 3 out of the 5 sessions as outlined in this example. The number of contact hours awarded is the maximum number of contact hours participants could achieve. Therefore, when you are entering the total number of contact hours for the activity, you would enter the maximum number of hours awarded, rather than varying numbers based on what was issued to learners.

Q. If you have 6 hours of instruction but you allow 0.5 contact hours for completion of the evaluation, would the total hours of instruction be 6 but the contact hours be 6.5?

A. Evaluation time is considered part of the instruction time and therefore should be included in the total hours of instruction. Many times, completion of the evaluation is part of the successful completion requirements. To demonstrate completion of the course they would need to participate in that segment of the educational activity. What you would not include would be the welcome, meals, break times, etc.

Q. Where do you list participants who attend but do not meet successful completion requirements?

A. They are not recorded in the NARS system. You can keep this information internally, but it is not reported to ANCC.

Q. Currently our APU records the number of nurses who complete the activity, as well as the number of non-nurses. For the nurse’s group, successful completion is often completing the evaluation. Therefore, nurses who do not complete the evaluation do not receive credit. Do they count the

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

number of nurses who did not complete the evaluation (those who did not meet the successful completion requirements) as ‘Other Learners’? How do we utilize the ‘Other Learners’ field?

A. The ‘Other learners’ field is where you identify the category of other potential learners at the activity i.e., students, radiology technologists, nutritionists. It is a field where you would be listing the names of the other professions in attendance. This is not a place where you would enter in the number of nurses who did not complete the activity.

Q. If an organization having an annual conference invites us to plan and provide contact hours, is this recorded on the NARS report as in-kind support? No money was exchanged between the organization and our Approved Provider Unit, and the activity was free to learners.

A. The in-kind support column is only to be used and completed if the agency providing the support was a commercial interest organization. If you are working with an association, then they would not be a commercial interest organization. We are no longer reporting sponsorship received. Therefore, the APU would not need to record anything in this field.

Q. If an Approved Provider Unit is part of an Educational Department that also awards CME, should they leave field "# of AMA PRA Category 1 Credits designated" at zero - as the CME Provider should be reporting this data for the same reporting year. I don't want to be duplicating data.

A. Yes, the Approved Provider Unit can leave that field blank. We do not want to duplicate CME numbers that are being reported in the PAORS system.

Q. If an Approved Provider Unit plans a course and is responsible for the nursing continuing professional development (NCPD) and another group takes responsibility for the continuing medical education (CME) do we list them as a joint-provider?

A. The APU must determine exactly how the event is being planned and whether the group responsible for the CME is functioning as a joint-provider or not. It comes down to the planning process. As a jointly-provided activity, everyone must be at the table, working together to plan the activity. The two groups cannot plan their ‘portions’ of the activity in silos separate from one another.

Do realize that on the NARS system there is a section asking for the number of CME credits provided, but please leave this section blank. Even though your APU may also do CME, the CME credits are being recorded and reported using the PAORS system.

Q. Later this year our Grand Rounds (RSS) which in the past has only been done in person, is moving to WebEx. When I enter the format as RSS it requires a location. What should I use – or does this become an Internet Live program?

A. Because there is still a live audience in the main location from which the WebEx is broadcast, it remains an RSS. Use the location of the main event in the system.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. If we cancelled an activity during the year should the activity still be listed in NARS?

A. Only enter into NARS those activities that were held, do not put in activities that were scheduled but then cancelled.

Q. We have an enduring material activity that began in July of 2020, but will not end until July 2021, do I leave it open and close it out in July 2021?

A. Activities that are offered over the course of multiple years, such as Enduring Materials, should be reported in NARS for each year in which they are active, regardless of whether they are active for the entire year or just a part of one.

For each year that you provided the activity, you will report the number of learners (nurses or others) who completed during **that year**. Do not report cumulative data for an activity spanning multiple years.

So, for this activity, it would have a start date of July X 2020, and an end date of Dec. 31, 2020 and then a new activity (same name) would have a start date of Jan. 1, 2021 and an end date of July X, 2021.

Q. I believe I have my NARS complete except for the outcomes level CE box. Do I need to complete this? It lets me close the activity without completing that box.

A. The NARS system was modeled after the PAORS and Pharmacy systems which request this information, as they plan education based on specific competencies.

Nursing does not require this (at this time), and therefore it is not required to answer this section in NARS.

Q. I am working on our NARS worksheet and had a quick question – do we count APRNs and midwives as nurses or other?

A. APRN's, Certified Nurse Midwives, Certified Nurse Anesthetists and all other advanced practice nurses are all entered as Registered Nurses.

Q. We had a program that awarded 1.0 nursing contact hours for those who attended the 1 hr. program, and 1.5 nursing contact hours for those who stayed for the program and the optional 30-minute skills practice. I would assume when entering them into NARS I put them as 2 separate lines. Correct?

A. Not if they are considered the same event – there are many events that have multiple options in the total number of contact hours an individual can achieve. For example, a conference where a learner can attend anywhere up to 5 sessions, but maybe they only attend 3 – so they only get the 3.0 contact hours.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

I can understand where it gets confusing because you want to accurately report the number of people who successfully completed, but if those who completed just the one-hour program met the requirements to receive a certificate (for the 1.0 contact hour) then they are lumped into the total.

Q. On the NARS it has the # of contact hours. If I lump them together do I put 1.0, 1.5? Can this field be left blank on NARS?

A. Best practice is to always list the highest number of contact hours that can be achieved for that event. This field cannot be left blank.

Q. We have a new activity that we started offering just this fall that is a blended learning format. There is an enduring material e-learning course that is 30 minutes in length and a live 30-minute hands-on training component. We have not used this blended format previously, so it is causing us a few questions with how to indicate this in the Activity Planning Guide and NARS.

First, what activity type to we indicate for a blended learning event (both EM and live hands-on training combined)? Would this default to a course since you can only enter one type?

Next, we were hoping to count in the NARS database as one entry and each successful completion of the blended format would be documented collectively at the end of the year. However, since there is a 30-min live component, too, and varied training dates with the live component, do we need to list all of the live dates in the APG and count each offering as a separate entry in NARS? Maybe we are over thinking this. Perhaps we can list the training dates in the APG but only enter this once in NARS for all successful completions (EM plus live course).

A. Because there is a live-in person component to the learning event it is considered a course.

So, every time the live in-person session is held it is recorded in NARS as a separate event. The recorded session is a requirement of successful completion for the entire event and not a separate program.

Q. The Outcomes Based CE Credit drop down was not shown in the NARS webinar that is on the Provider Forum. Are we to enter this or is it optional? Sorry if I missed this somewhere.

A. The Outcomes Based CE drop down was not part of the initial NARS rollout and was not in the version that was available when the webinars were produced. It is not necessary to complete this section.

Q. If we offer a different type of contact hours, (i.e., CME) are we to list it in the field titled "Contact Hours Offered"? I saw this Q/A below in the NARS FAQs on the forum and I started second guessing entering AMA PRA Category 1, since we also have CME reported through our same department.

A. If you are already entering ACME data into PAORS, you should not enter it also into NARS, as that is duplicating the data. NARS is specifically looking to collect data regarding nursing continuing professional development.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. Do we list the number of physicians who completed the activity if we are not reporting # of CME hours? Should we include physicians in with other learners and leave physicians blank since CME reports this, too?

A. If CME is reporting the number of physicians, please leave it blank in NARS. This section is for interprofessional events that are not necessarily planned for CME.

Q. If 100 RNs attended a program, we are only concerned about the number of RNs that completed successfully— (if successful completion in this example means attend the whole thing and return the eval). They all stayed the whole time, but only 80 returned the eval- then only 80 get a certificate and “80” is entered into NARS. Right? So, what do you do when it’s a multidiscipline audience- techs, therapists, chaplains, etc.---they all stay the entire time, and all return the eval- there’s no way to know which evals are from nurses? And they all want a certificate- even if they are not nurses. I don’t want to put inaccurate info on the NARS.

A. With interprofessional events unless you ask demographic information at registration or on the evaluation survey – you really cannot accurately sperate them out.

If the event is not overly large, you can ask what discipline they are from at the time they register, or on the sign in sheet (if in person) or on the evaluation survey and try to separate them out that way – but that is not the expectation. It is not meant to be labor intensive, only provide some detail as to who you are serving.

Q. I thought I read where our internal ID number was supposed to be listed, but on the ANCC NARS, it says optional next to that box.

A. If you do not enter one the system generates one for you. Many APU’s already have their own numbering system and so this allows them to ensure each program is entered if they use their own numbering.

Q. What type of information should be included in the “Description of Content” field”?

A. “Description of Content” is an **optional** field for a description of the information and topics that were discussed during the NCPD activity. There is no specified format for this field, although it is limited to 2500 characters. If your organization produced an abstract for the activity, it is possible to copy and paste it into this field. If you did not produce an abstract you could include the written outcomes of the activity, or simply describe the content in your own words. In the future, this information may assist ANCC and its providers in demonstrating the value and scope of NCPD. However, it is optional to include.

Q. How do I report activities that are available for more than one year?

A. Activities offered over the course of multiple reporting years – such as Enduring Materials – should be reported in NARS for each year in which they are active, regardless of whether they are active for the entire year or just part of the year.

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

For each year that you have provided the activity, you will report the number of learners (nurses and/or other learners) who completed during *that year*, as well as the commercial support related to the activity *for that year*. Do not report cumulative data for an activity spanning multiple years.

As an example, if a provider offers an enduring internet material activity that was launched on July 1, 2020 and remains available through December 2021, and they are reporting on a calendar year, then they should:

1. Report one activity in Reporting Year 2020 with a start date of July 1, 2020 and an end date of December 31, 2020. Then another activity in reporting year 2021 with a start date of **July 1, 2020**. (start date remains the same).
2. For each year, calculate and report the attendance during that year only. Do not count attendance for both years when reporting for 2021.
3. For each year, calculate and report the commercial support received or incurred during that year only. If the activity received monetary commercial support, report the amount of support received in the year in which it was received. In subsequent years, for the Questions “Commercial Support received”, answer “yes” and type zero in the “Monetary Amount Received” field.

Q. How do I report Commercial Support for an activity?

A. The following items are required to be completed regarding commercial support received for an NCPD activity:

1. Commercial Support Received? – indicate “Yes” or “No” whether commercial support was received for this activity.
2. Support Source: complete this field for each commercial supporter for your activity. Select a name from the drop-down box, or, if the commercial supporter for your activity does not appear in the drop-down, type the supporter’s name into the text field.
3. Monetary Support Received – use this field to indicate the amount of monetary support received from **each** commercial supporter.
4. In-Kind Support Received: use this field to indicate the nature of any in-kind support received from each commercial supporter.

Q. How do we report in-kind support?

A. Report any in-kind (non-monetary) commercial support received for an activity by indicating the nature of the in-kind support. You *should not estimate* the dollar value of in-kind support. The following are the options in NARS to describe the nature of in-kind support:

- Durable equipment
- Facilities/Space
- Disposable supplies (non-biological)
- Animal parts or tissue
- Human parts or tissue
- Other

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. How do I copy activities in NARS?

A. If you provide the same activity in multiple locations (for example an update course) or provide the same activity year after year (for example an annual meeting), you can save time entering data about these activities by using the copy function in NARS. The copy function allows Approved Providers to select an existing activity and create a new activity that contains the same data for the following fields:

- Activity type
- Activity Title
- Provider Activity ID (if applicable)
- Hours of Instruction
- Contact Hours
- Designed to change competence?
- Changes in competence evaluated?
- Designed to change performance?
- Changes in performance evaluated?
- Designed to change Patient Outcomes?
- Changes in Patient Outcomes evaluated?

Once you copy the activity, you may modify all of the above fields in the new activity record, if needed. You must still enter the Reporting Year, Activity Date, and Activity Location (if applicable) for the new activity in order to be able to save it in NARS.

To copy an existing activity in NARS, visit the View Activities screen, select the applicable Reporting Year from the drop-down list, and find the activity that you want to copy on either the Open or Closed tab. Click on the copy button next to the activity. A dialogue box will appear that will require you to select a Reporting Year for the new activity. Select a Reporting Year and click Continue. The new activity record will appear. You will need to enter the Activity Location (if applicable) and the Activity Date in order to save the new activity in NARS.

Q. Is it possible to delete an Activity in NARS?

A. You cannot delete an activity from a Reporting Year in which you have already **provided an Attestation**.

However, as the year is progressing you can delete activities. For example, if an activity is planned and you have started to input the information, and then the activity is canceled. It can be deleted.

Q. Do we enter data for an activity if no one shows up?

A. The ultimate purpose of NARS reporting is to compile data regarding the number of nurses and other healthcare providers impacted by education. Therefore, you may want to keep track of events planned and scheduled for which there was no attendance as an internal policy (it would be beneficial

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

to determine the cause of non-attendance for the APU). However, these events should not be recorded in NARS.

Q. What is the difference between 'open' and 'closed' activities?

A. An important concept in the web-based interface version of NARS is that of 'open' and 'closed' activities.

Open activities are those that have a minimum set of data entered for them (see list below). Once data for these activities is entered, the activity is 'open' and is saved into the database.

Closed activities are those for which all NARS required information has been entered. Once all required fields for an activity contain data, NARS considers the activity 'closed'.

'Open' and 'closed' does not refer to the life of the activity and does not mean that the activity is necessarily complete or no longer being provided by the APU.

Once an activity is 'closed', the APU may still make changes, corrections, additions, etc., during that Reporting Year.

Q. What data are Approved Providers required to enter into NARS to open or close an activity?

A. The following fields are required to establish, or "open" an activity in NARS:

1. Activity type (e.g., Course, Enduring Material, etc.)
2. Activity Title
3. Activity Start Date
4. Activity Location (If a Course or RSS)
5. Reporting Year

The following fields are required to complete, or "close" an activity in NARS.

1. Providership (Direct or Joint)
2. Hours of Instruction
3. Designed to Change (Competence, Performance or Patient Outcomes)?
4. Changes in (Competence, Performance or Outcomes) evaluated?
5. Number of nurses who completed the activity
6. Number of other learners who completed the activity
7. Commercial Support received (Yes/No)
 - a. If yes, total amount of commercial support dollars received and/or if in-kind support was received
8. Competencies addressed
9. Name(s) of Joint Providers (joint provided activities only)
10. Name(s) of commercial support organizations and the monetary amount received from each
11. Number of contact hours awarded

NARS Frequently Asked Questions

Midwest Multistate Division

2021

Q. What is the “Attestation” section in the Program Summary Tab?

A. Each year, ANCC collects, summarizes, and publishes information about the NCPD enterprise. At the conclusion of each Reporting Year, an Approved Provider is required to submit information about their activities that took place during that year.

To complete this reporting process APU’s are required to attest that their data entry for the current Reporting Year is complete – as an indication to the ANCC that organization data is ready to be included in the information that ANCC compiles. After all activities for the Reporting Year are completed and Closed, an Approved Provider must attest that its NARS data reporting is complete for that Reporting Year by clicking on the button at the bottom of the Program Summary tab that says, “I Attest that Data is Complete for the [current] Reporting Year”.

Once this button is clicked the APU will no longer be able to add or modify activity summary data for that Reporting Year.

Q. How do I close out the Reporting Year and submit everything to ANCC?

A. When an Approved Provider Unit has **completely finalized** the Reporting Year data (all events ending by December 31) the Approved Provider Unit will be asked to attest to that Reporting Year data. **This is the final step that needs to be completed on or prior to January 31.** At this time the APU is validating that all of the data is correct and finalized.

To complete this reporting process, APU’s are required to attest that their data entry for the current Reporting Year is complete – as an indication to the ANCC that the organization data is ready to be reviewed and included in the information that ANCC compiles and publishes about the NCPD system each year. After all activities for the Reporting Year are completed and Closed, an Approved Provider must attest that its NARS data reporting is complete for this Reporting Year by clicking on the bottom of the Program Summary tab that says, “*I Attest that Data is Complete for the [current] Reporting Year.*”

Once this button is clicked, APU’s will no longer be able to add or modify activity data for that Reporting Year.