

# Practice Transition Accreditation Program™

## Summary of Criteria Domains

### ***Program Leadership***

The primary focus of this domain is the accountability and responsibilities of the **Program Director**. For a transition program to be eligible for accreditation, the program's director must hold appropriate credentials as identified in the PTAP Application Manual. The Program Director must hold a level of **authority** in the organization to ensure that the residency or fellowship program will maintain compliance with ANCC criteria. A commitment to the learning needs of residents/fellows by **evaluating data, advocating for resources, and engaging in executive support** must be exhibited by the Program Director. This individual also drives continual **quality improvement**, with the goal of positive quality outcomes for the participants as well as the whole organization through his or her leadership of the transition program.

### ***Organizational Enculturation***

At any level of experience, a nurse who is new to a practice setting needs to be acclimated to the **culture, values, and standards** of the practice setting. For the new graduate RN, this means learning what it is like to work in a hospital or other practice setting for the first time while working to solidify his or her nursing skills. Even the experienced RN or APRN who is transitioning to a new specialty or role requires an **orientation** to his or her new place in the organizational team. Different units and practice settings function in their own ways, and specialty skills need to be mastered while the RN is navigating a new role and new **scope and standards of practice**. For a residency or fellowship to achieve long-lasting success, the program needs to be closely aligned with the organization in which it is operationalized. The **mission, vision, and values** of the organization should be incorporated in the program's goals or outcome statements.

## ***Development & Design***

The Development & Design domain focuses on the **educational content** delivered to residents or fellows, and the **faculty and other team members** responsible for the content. A practice transition program must have a faculty infrastructure appropriate to ensure that residents/fellows receive content that is up-to-date, evidence-based, and appropriate to the clinical setting.

This domain also addresses how your program selects the **competencies** that will be evaluated for each resident or fellow. Competencies should be appropriate for the scope and standards of practice in the relevant clinical or specialty area.

## ***Practice-Based Learning***

A pivotal aspect of any transition program is the learning that takes place in the practice setting under the guidance of experienced healthcare professionals. This includes **time spent with preceptors and mentors**.

It is also important that residents and fellows know what is expected of them within defined timeframes of the program, and that they receive regular **feedback** on their progress toward goals. The PTAP criteria require that **incremental goals** be included for each resident/fellow, because they help determine whether the novice or advanced beginner can expect to reach the level of competency required by the end of the program.

Finally, the Practice-Based Learning domain emphasizes skills that residents will need in order to successfully develop into independent practitioners. These include **time management, stress management, communication, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making**.

## ***Nursing Professional Development***

Nurses know that participating in **lifelong learning** is essential to maintain skills and to keep up with the ever-changing world of health care. The Practice Transition Accreditation Program emphasizes fostering a commitment to continued professional learning from the very start.

Nursing Professional Development opportunities include **academic progression, certification, committee participation, publications and presentations, formal and informal leadership roles**, and many others.

## ***Quality Outcomes***

Quality outcomes measure the overall **impact** of the residency or fellowship program on the **value/benefit** to patients, clients, residents/fellows, and the organization or practice setting. It is important to use multiple **stakeholders** when identifying quality outcome measures for the program. Stakeholders can include preceptors and faculty, mentors, and executive leaders as well as residents and fellows. It is also important that outcome data collected by the program be shared with these stakeholders.

Tracking quality outcomes contributes to **continued improvement** by identifying needs for revising the program. It can also help you make a business case for resources if you can show measurable outcomes that result from the efforts and investment you put into your residents.

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