



## **THE ON-SITE VISIT**

(See also CAPTE Rules, Part 8)

### **The Self-study Report**

All programs with the pre-accreditation status of Candidacy and those programs at the end of an accreditation cycle that wish to maintain an accredited status must prepare and submit a *Self-study Report*. Information regarding the *Self-study Report* is provided in Part 8, Sub-Part 8A. The program will be contacted by the Accreditation Department regarding the format for the *Self-study Report*; the *Self-study Report* is due 60 days before the on-site visit.

### **The On-site Visit**

An on-site visit is a routine component of the accreditation process and is conducted by a team selected for the specific purpose of serving as an ad hoc committee of the accrediting agency. The on-site visit consists of an intensive series of conferences with administrative officials, faculty, and students of the program along with visits to selected program facilities. In cases of multi-campus programs, all locations will be visited. The primary purpose of the on-site visit is to provide a comprehensive view of the physical therapy education program in its particular environment.

In addition, the on-site visit provides a mechanism for verification and supplementation of the information included in the *Self-Study Report* submitted by the program. It also enables members of the on-site review team to gain insight into relevant data not conducive to the written word. The on-site visit allows and promotes dialogue among all levels of personnel involved in the education program, i.e., administrators, faculty, and students, and it provides a mechanism for consultation after the Exit Summary, if deemed appropriate. Included below are details about general responsibilities of the program director and the usual constituency of an on-site review team.

Planning for and completion of an on-site visit requires coordinated efforts among program personnel, members of Accreditation Department staff, and members of the on-site review team. The cost of the on-site visit is included in annual fees, so there is no additional cost to the institution for the visit.

### **Procedures for a Joint On-site Visit**

When scheduling the dates for an on-site visit, the physical therapy education program may consider the possibility of a coordinated visit with an institutional accrediting association or with several health programs, if these visits are scheduled in the same year. The Commission is aware of the effort experienced by institutions responding to multiple accrediting agencies and hopes by coordinating visits it is able to provide greater service to institutions and to physical therapy education programs.

### **General Responsibilities of the Program Director during the Accreditation Process**

#### **Prior to the On-site Visit:**

- A. Fulfill responsibilities related to completion and submission of *Self-Study Report* following current instructions and documents.
- B. Make reservations for the team at a hotel within a reasonable distance to the institution that has food service facilities or is within safe walking distance to food service facilities. Hotel rooms should be large enough so that the team can work comfortably at a table. Staff will advise the program of expense limitations. Communicate the hotel arrangements to the team members and Accreditation Department staff using the On-site Visit Travel Information Form. Inform the team if hotel bill will be direct billed to the program; this should **only** occur if it provides a cost savings. If the hotel bill will be direct billed, then the program should submit the bill to Accreditation for reimbursement.
- C. Plan on-site visit schedule and send to team members eight (8) weeks prior to visit. Ask for their response.
- D. Negotiate the final schedule with the team leader no less than six (6) weeks prior to visit.
- E. Provide the Accreditation Department and team members with a copy of the final schedule.
- F. Provide additional material when requested by the team leader; any additional material is to be uploaded on the Portal using the Upload Additional Material button under the Self-study Report grid.

#### **During the On-site Visit:**

- A. Provide a secure and private location for team to conduct interviews and where materials can be left safely. As much as possible all interviews should be held in the same room.
- B. Provide the team with a brief orientation to the program and familiarize them with any special arrangements regarding the visit. Provide insights deemed important that were not included in *Self-study Report* prior to time that team begins meeting with faculty and administrative personnel. This activity may occur the day or the evening before the first day of the site visit. All members of the team should be present.
- C. Provide additional, pertinent information requested for review on site (see list of required On-site Materials found in Instructions and Forms packet). Information can be provided in hard copy or digital format depending on the preferred format negotiated with the team leader. To facilitate the team's review, materials that can leave the campus should be brought to the hotel, preferably on Saturday but no later than Sunday morning.
- D. Complete and provide **both an electronic Word copy and paper copy** of the following 3 forms:
  - General Information Form (required even if no changes from info submitted in SSR);
  - Persons Interviewed Form (including the credentials and titles; for clinical education faculty identify the facility); and
  - Materials Provided On-site Form.

These documents are found in the Self-study Report Instructions and Forms document on the webpage for additional materials that is accessed from your home CAPTE Accreditation Portal page and **must be provided to the team leader at the start of the visit**. The electronic copy must be **one Word file** that contains all three documents. These forms become part of the Visit Report.
- E. Provide additional information (orally or in printed form) as requested or required by team throughout the site visit. Printed or written forms and information can be provided in hard copy or digital format depending on the preferred format requested by the team.
- F. Adapt the schedule to fit unforeseen changes and arrange with others for necessary modifications of individual schedules.
- G. Facilitate adherence to the schedule (verifying appointment times with faculty, students, and administrators as needed).
- H. Arrange for noon meal accommodation, preferably having lunch sent in. Lunch can be paid for by the team or if necessary, the program can submit the receipts to Accreditation staff for reimbursement.
- I. Introduce team to key personnel when team is visiting outside of program area.
- J. Supervise tour of teaching/program facilities.
- K. Arrange for transportation of team to additional campuses, if appropriate, and other program/institution resources.

### **Following the On-site Visit:**

- A. Distribute web survey of On-site Reviewer Assessment to appropriate faculty and administrators and encourage completion.
- B. If hotel bill was to be direct billed to the program, confirm with team that this occurred and send invoice, with a copy of hotel bill, to Accreditation Department.
- C. Review the Visit Report for accuracy of content. Submit the Visit Report with Institution Response on the CAPTE Accreditation Portal utilizing the electronic version of the report provided by the Accreditation Department. Upload on the CAPTE Accreditation Portal any additional materials requested by the team using the Upload Additional Materials button under the SSR grid on the program's home page of the Portal. Please name all additional documents appropriately (see specific instructions on last page of the Visit Report). Programs should wait until they receive the Visit Report before any documents are uploaded. CAPTE will consider this response and all additional materials prior to making an accreditation status decision if received in time.
- D. Complete the Critiques of the Accreditation Process.
- E. Submit a Compliance Report on schedule, if requested by CAPTE.

### **On-site Review Team**

An on-site review team usually consists of three members selected by staff in the Accreditation Department from the cadre of on-site reviewers. Each team is tailored specifically for the particular on-site visit. Factors considered in selecting members for a team include the following: type of institution, type of program, i.e., for the physical therapist or for the physical therapist assistant; type of expertise needed; and, geographic proximity. A member of the team is designated as the team leader for each selected team.

For a coordinated site visit that involves two or more accrediting agencies reviewing two or more specialized programs sponsored by a given institution, the team appointed might be modified according to the general format of that particular site visit.

The team selected for an on-site visit of an education program that does not yet have accreditation status will include persons who have had considerable experience as on-site reviewers.

### **Confidentiality**

All information and data associated with accreditation of a program is considered to be confidential and privileged information. Use or disclosure of all information obtained as a result of serving with any appointed or elected group or in an employed position involved in the accreditation process is not authorized and is considered to be breach of confidence.

**Preferred Schedule  
On-site Visit to a Physical Therapist Education Program**

The underlying philosophy of the following schedule is that there is value in hearing from students, clinical education faculty, graduates, and employers early in the visit so that the insights gained from those interviews can be used to enhance the interviews with faculty and others. The following schedule, while preferred, is subject to change based on its feasibility and the availability of the individuals to be interviewed.

**Suggested Schedule for CAPTE Visits**

Note: It is CAPTE's preference to have clinical instructors and students interviewed prior to faculty interviews. This allows the team to follow up on issues if any are identified by those groups. The program director creates a schedule that identifies specific times, allowing 10 minutes between interviews.

**Pre-Visit**

Program Director: Provides an electronic word document of the General Information Form, Person's Interviewed Form, and Materials On-site Form  
Team: Plans the visit; reviews on-site materials

**Sunday Afternoon**

1 hour: Program Director (review schedule, identify topics of consultative session, if scheduled)

1 hour: Clinical education faculty (CIs and CCCEs); program director and DCE/ACCE are not present; minimum of 5, must be representative of different practice settings. **For initial accreditation visits, additional individuals may be necessary to ensure a broad representation of clinical education instructors used throughout the curriculum and from a variety of practice settings**

1 hour: Established program: Recent Graduates  
New program: Advisory committee members, individuals instrumental in developing and evaluating the curriculum and implementing the program

1 hour: Established program: Employers of Graduates (minimum of 5)  
New program: (no employers at this point)

**Monday**

½ hour: Program Director  
½ hour: All Core Faculty, including program director. Faculty and team introductions; team leader provides overview of accreditation process, purpose and value of accreditation, and objectives of the visit

½ hour: President and/or Provost  
45 mins: Students enrolled in 1st year of program (6 to 10 students)  
15 mins: Break  
1 hour: Students enrolled in 2nd year of program (6 to 10 students)  
45 mins: Lunch, executive session for team  
1 hour: Students enrolled in 3rd year of program (6 to 10 students) **(PT Programs)**  
1 hour: Dean  
½ hour: Program director, if needed; discuss additional information needed, review next day schedule

**Tuesday**

- ½ hour: Program director, if needed
- 2-3 hours: Core faculty – individual core faculty, can be small groups of core faculty or 3 concurrent sessions with individual faculty, excludes program director. *Size of faculty will determine time needed and format of interviews (e.g., small groups for large faculty)*
- 15 mins: Break (between faculty interviews)
- 1 hour: Concurrent sessions:  
 Clinical education coordinator (DCE/ACCE) (without program director)  
 Associated Faculty  
 General education faculty **(PTA Programs)**
- 30 mins: Lunch
- 1 hour: Concurrent Sessions:  
 Support staff program  
 Student services personnel: Admissions, Financial Aid, Career Services, Tutoring-Testing Services, Library, etc. **(PTA Programs)**  
 Admissions Committee or Chair, if applicable **(PT Programs)**
- ½ hour: Program Director, if needed

**Wednesday (AM)**

- ½ hour: Program director, if needed to clarify findings/request additional information
- 2 hours: Executive session for team: to reach consensus on what to include in team's report; finalize summary; prepare presentation of exit summary
- ½ hour: Preview exit summary with program director
- 45 mins: Exit summary to institutional administrators, program director, and core faculty regarding overall findings
- 1 hour: Consultative session, if requested