



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: NARS

### ABOUT NARS

The ANCC's Nursing Activity Reporting System (NARS) is a web-based portal designed to streamline and support the collection of program and activity data from Accredited Providers, Accredited Approvers, and Approved Providers (Providers approved by an ANCC Accredited Approver Unit). The ANCC uses the information in NARS to evaluate/support provider accreditation criterion which is a part of the educational design process for initial accreditation, reaccreditation, and progress report reviews (refer to chapter 4 of the provider/approver manual). In addition, the ANCC will use data from NARS to produce annual reports as a service to ANCC Accredited Organizations and other stakeholders. This system will replace the current Annual Reporting. All Providers and Approvers accredited directly by the ANCC are required to use NARS. Providers approved by a Constituent State Nursing Association (C/SNA) or Federal Nursing Service (FNS) (Approved Providers), should check with their Approver Unit for details.

Nursing Activity Reporting System (NARS)

### CONVERSION TERMS FOR DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY CHARACTERISTICS IN DATABASE TO ANCC TERMS

*Please read each activity type definition carefully and choose the best option to categorize your activity. Please note that some activities that are blended may need to be recorded as separate activities and this information is listed in each description.*

ACRONYM	CURRENT TERM	ANCC HELP TOOL
S	Synchronous	Live
A	Asynchronous	Enduring
B	Blended	Blended
ACRONYM	NARS TERM	ANCC HELP TOOL
<b>One of the following Activity Type Codes:</b>	<b>Code Key:</b>	
C	Course	<p>A course is a live educational activity where the learner participates in person. A course is planned as an individual event. Examples: annual meeting, conference, seminar.</p> <p>For events with multiple sessions, such as annual meetings, accredited (approved) providers report one activity and calculate the hours of instruction by totaling the hours of all educational sessions offered for CNE credit. To calculate the numbers of learners, accredited (approved) providers report the number of learners registered for the overall event. Accredited (approved) providers are not required to calculate participant totals from the individual sessions.</p> <p><u>If a course is held multiple times for multiple audiences</u>, then each instance is reported as a <b>separate activity</b>.</p>

<p>RSS</p>	<p>Regularly Scheduled Series</p>	<p>A regularly scheduled series (RSS) as a course that is planned as a series with multiple, ongoing sessions, e.g., offered weekly, monthly, or quarterly; <b>and is primarily planned by and presented to</b> the accredited (approved) provider's professional staff. <i>Examples include grand rounds, tumor boards, and morbidity and mortality conferences.</i></p> <p>Accredited (approved) providers report each RSS as 1 activity. In addition, accredited (approved) providers follow the following guidelines:</p> <p>The cumulative number of hours for all sessions within a series equals the number of hours for that activity and each nurse is counted as a learner for each session he/she attends in the series.</p> <p>For example: Nursing Grand Rounds is planned for the entire year as 1 series. Participants meet weekly during the year for 1 hour each week. The accredited (approved) provider reports the series as 1 activity with 52 hours of instruction. If 20 nurses participated in each session, total nurse participants would be 1,040 (20 nurses per session multiplied by 52 sessions) for that single activity.</p>
<p>IL</p>	<p>Internet Live Course</p>	<p>An Internet live activity is an online course available via the Internet at a certain time on a certain date and is only available in real-time, just as if it were a course held in an auditorium. Once the event has taken place, learners may no longer participate in that activity unless it is again presented on a specific date and time and is only available in real-time. If an Internet live activity is presented on multiple occasions, each event is counted as one activity. <b>Example: webcast.</b></p>
<p>EM</p>	<p>Enduring Material (Homestudy)</p>	<p>An enduring material is an activity that is printed or recorded and does not have a specific time or location designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines where and when to complete the activity.</p> <p>Sometimes, accredited (approved) providers <b>will create an enduring material from a live CNE activity</b>. When this occurs, ANCC considers the provider to have created <b>two separate activities</b> – one live activity and one enduring material activity. Both activities must comply with all ANCC requirements.</p> <p>Enduring materials can be available for less than a year, a year, or multiple years. Each enduring material is counted as 1 activity for each year it is available, whether it is active for the entire year or part of the year. The accredited (approved) provider reports the number of learners who participated during the year. Accredited (approved) providers do not report cumulative data for an enduring material activity spanning multiple years. When reporting the number of participants for an enduring material activity, the accredited (approved) provider should count all learners who completed all or a portion of the activity and whose participation can be verified in some manner. ANCC would not consider individuals that only received the enduring material activity but did not actually complete all or a portion of it to be participants.</p>
<p>IEM</p>	<p>Internet Activity Enduring Material</p>	<p>An Internet enduring material activity is an "on demand activity," meaning that there is no specific time designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines when to complete the activity. Examples: online interactive educational module, recorded presentation, podcast.</p> <p>Internet enduring materials can be available for less than a year, a year, or multiple years. Each Internet enduring material is counted as one activity for each year it is available, whether it is active for the entire year or part of the year. The accredited (approved) provider reports the number of learners who participated during the year. Accredited (approved) providers do not report cumulative data for an Internet enduring material activity spanning multiple years. When reporting the number of participants for an internet enduring material activity, the accredited (approved) provider should count all learners who completed all or a portion of the activity and whose participation can be verified in some manner. ANCC would not consider individuals that only downloaded or accessed the activity but did not actually complete all or a portion of it to be participants.</p>

JN	Journal-based CNE	<p>A journal-based CNE activity includes the reading of an article (or adapted formats for special needs), an accredited (approved) provider learner engagement strategy (that may include reflection, discussion, or debate about the material contained in the article (s), and/or 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.</p> <p>The ANCC does not consider a journal-based CNE activity to have been completed until the learner documents participation in that activity to the provider.</p> <p>Each article is counted as 1 activity. To calculate hours of instruction, the accredited (approved) provider specifies the amount of time required to complete the activity. The number of participants reported by the accredited (approved) provider equals the total number of individuals who completed the activity. Each participant is counted once, regardless of how many times they worked on the activity.</p> <p>For example, an accredited (approved) provider produces a journal that contains an article that is designated as a journal-based CNE activity. Twenty nurses read the article, reflect on the content, and complete questions related to the content of the article. The nurses spend 1 hour on this activity. The provider would report this as 1 journal-based CNE activity with 20 nurse participants and 1 hour of instruction.</p>
MR	Manuscript Review	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Manuscript Review as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.
TIW	Test Item Writing	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Test Item Writing as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.
CML	Committee Learning	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Committee Learning as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.
PI	Performance Improvement	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Performance Improvement as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.
ISL	Internet Searching and Learning	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Internet Searching and Learning as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.
LFT	Learning from Teaching	An accredited (approved) provider may operationalize Learning from Teaching as a provider directed, learner paced activity or as a learner directed, learner paced activity. Please contact ANCC (Accredited Approver) to operationalize.

**MORE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY TOPIC**

TOPIC	ANSWER
USER MANAGEMENT	

<p>Who can use NARS?</p>	<p>Individuals who are designated as a Primary Contact, Billing Contact and/or leader of an organization <b>Accredited</b> by the ANCC or an ANCC Approved Provider may access NARS with a unique login ID and password. Any of these individuals may add additional users to NARS via the "User Management" tab. <b>The maximum number of users per organization is five.</b></p> <p><b>APPROVER UNITS:</b> Accredited Approvers have the option of entering their Approved Providers activity information <b>OR</b> may grant access to their Approved Providers to upload their own activity data into NARS. <b>**Accredited Approvers are responsible for entering Individual Activity Applicant data into the NARS system. <u>Individual Activity Applicants should not log in to the NARS system.</u>**</b></p> <p><b>APPROVED PROVIDERS</b> (providers that are <i>approved</i> by an <u>Approver Unit</u>): Please note that not all Accredited Approvers have elected to grant Approved Providers access to NARS. Please contact your Accredited Approver Unit to for further instructions and to request your login information and details.</p> <p>Click here to download the most recent version of the <b>NARS User Manual [pdf]</b></p>
<p><b>OPEN AND CLOSED ACTIVITIES</b></p>	
<p>What is the difference between "open" and "closed" activities?</p>	<p>An important concept in NARS is that of "<b>open</b>" and "<b>closed</b>" activities.</p> <p><b>OPEN ACTIVITIES:</b> are those that <b>have a minimum set of data entered for them:</b> specifically, activity name, activity type, activity date, and, if applicable, location. Once these data about an activity are entered, the activity is "open", and is saved to the database.</p> <p><b>CLOSED ACTIVITIES:</b> are those activities for which <b>ALL NARS required information has been entered.</b> For example, in order for an activity to be considered "closed" by the NARS system, a provider must enter data about the hours of instruction, physician and other learner participants, providership, whether commercial support was received, and if it was, how much was received and from how many supporters. Once all required fields for an activity contain data, NARS considers the activity "closed".</p> <p><b>REMEMBER:</b> "Open" and "Closed" does not refer to the life of the activity and does not mean that the activity is complete or no longer being provided by the provider.</p>
<p><b>PROVIDER ACTIVITY ID</b></p>	
<p>What is the "Provider Activity ID"?</p>	<p>If your organization assigns an internal code or identifier to each of its CNE activities, you may enter it into this field.</p> <p>The Provider Activity ID field is optional when entering single activities using the NARS web page interface, <b>however, you will need to enter a value for this field in cases where your organization offers multiple activities in the same format on the same date.</b></p> <p>The Provider Activity ID is required for all activities included in batch upload files.</p> <p>The Provider Activity ID is a code or identifier that your organization creates. It is used in combination with the data in the fields Reporting Year, Activity Type, and Activity Date to uniquely identify your activity records. For this reason, providers <b>SHOULD NOT</b> use their ANCC or Accredited Approver-assigned provider ID number as a Provider Activity ID, since this number would be the same for all activities you provide.</p>
<p><b>REMS (RISK EVALUATION AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES)</b></p>	

<p>CNE in Support of REMS</p>	<p>The ANCC Accreditation Program supports the role of CNE as a strategic asset to US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Risk Evaluation and Mitigation Strategies (REMS), provided the proper controls are in place to ensure independence. The first REMS to incorporate CNE is the Extended-Release and Long-Acting (ER/LA) Opioid Analgesics REMS, approved by the FDA in July 2012. The centerpiece of the ER/LA Opioid Analgesics REMS is a prescriber education program about the risks of opioid medications as well as safe prescribing and safe use practices. The education is controlled, designed, and delivered by accredited continuing healthcare education providers.</p> <p>Specific activity related data are required for REMS activities.</p>
<p><b>BATCH UPLOAD ACTIVITIES</b></p>	
<p>What is a tab-delimited batch upload?</p>	<p>The tab-delimited batch upload enables providers to export multiple activity records at one time into NARS. The tab-delimited batch upload process originates with the use of an MS Excel template which closely mirrors the CNE Activity List used previously by ANCC accredited and approved providers to report activities for reaccreditation purposes.</p> <p>Organizations that already have their own CNE tracking system and have the ability to match the fields in this system to the fields in the template might elect to use this format. The tab-delimited format might also be a good choice for organizations that provide the same activity in multiple locations throughout the year. In this case, ANCC expects you to count each of these events as separate activities. Because the process originates with a Tab-Delimited Activity File Template, a simple way for you to enter many activities with similar data is to copy data from one row to another.</p>
<p>What is an XML file upload?</p>	<p>XML File Export: XML stands for eXtensible Markup Language, a Web standard that makes it easier for computer systems to exchange data over the Internet. In order to collect information in a manner that is consistent with the data communications standards being adopted by medical or nursing education content providers, NARS includes a data upload tool that accepts XML files formatted to conform with the Medical Education Metrics (MEMS) XML standard created by Medbiquitous. Providers that have CNE activity tracking systems that support exports to XML files may wish to explore this option for uploading data to ANCC. Some technical knowledge of your tracking system and XML may be required.</p>
<p>ANCC NARS XML File Upload Instructions</p>	<p>ANCC NARS XML File Upload Instructions [pdf]. <a href="#">click here</a></p>
<p>ANCC NARS Tab Delimited XML Template</p>	<p>ANCC NARS Tab Delimited XML template file for batch uploading to NARS for Annual Reporting [xls]. <a href="#">Click here</a></p> <p>Creating a Tab Delimited File Using the Excel File Template [pdf]. <a href="#">Click here</a></p>
<p><b>ANNUAL PROGRAM SUMMARY</b></p>	
<p>What is the significance of "Reporting Year?"</p>	<p>Annually, ANCC aggregates the activity data that is reported by providers and publishes an Annual Report that provides information to the CNE community about the size and scope of the CNE enterprise. The "Reporting Year" tells ANCC in which Annual Report the activity belongs. Most providers operate on a calendar year basis, and for these providers the Reporting Year is equivalent to the year of the Activity Date (For instance, Activity Date = September 1, 2010, and Reporting Year = 2010).</p> <p>However, certain providers, such as some hospitals and medical and nursing schools, operate on an academic year calendar, and may need to pay special attention to the "Reporting Year" field for each activity they enter. For instance, if a provider offers a Regularly Scheduled Series that begins September 1, 2010 and ends June 1, 2011, the Activity Date would be September 1, 2010, and the Reporting Year may be either 2010 or 2011, depending on how the organization chooses to aggregate their data for purposes of the Annual Report.</p>

<p>What do I need to know about the "Attestation" section of the Program Summary tab?</p>	<p>Each year, the ANCC collects, summarizes, and publishes information about the CNE enterprise. At the conclusion of each Reporting Year, a provider is required to submit information about their activities that took place during the year.</p> <p>To complete this reporting process, providers 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 CNE system each year. After all activities for the Reporting Year are completed and Closed, and the income and expense information on the Program Summary tab is verified, a provider must attest that its NARS data reporting is complete for this 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."</p> <p>Once this button is clicked, providers will no longer be able to add or modify activity and program summary data for that Reporting Year. If a provider finds that they do need to make any edits to this information after clicking the Attestation button, they will need to contact the ANCC program office at <a href="mailto:NARS@ana.org">NARS@ana.org</a></p>
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