



Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs
Position on Clinical Site Acquisition
Adopted May 2023

POSITION STATEMENT

The Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA) expects program administrators to acquire and maintain clinical site access in a fair, ethical, and cooperative manner that meets the COA's Standards and complies with the Accreditation Policies and Procedures as well as applicable state and federal laws, including antitrust laws.

Rationale

The COA recognizes as the number of accredited nurse anesthesia programs increases, and new and existing programs expand clinical resources, both opportunities and concerns related to program integration to a common clinical area will arise. The COA acknowledges programs' concerns related to clinical experiences, learner access, and programs' reputations. The COA has no authority or influence over a clinical site's decision to establish a relationship with a nurse anesthesia program. The Council does not serve as an arbiter of disputes regarding shared clinical affiliations, except in cases related to potential non-compliance with Standards or policies.

Background

As a result of continuous growth in the nurse anesthesia profession and a resulting increase in the number of accredited programs and approved clinical sites, the COA has witnessed an increase in competition between programs for clinical experiences.

The COA has requirements and Standards for clinical experiences. Nurse anesthesia programs independently establish and maintain relationships and agreements with clinical sites to ensure adequate experiences to meet the COA's requirements. Clinical sites independently choose to establish agreements with particular nurse anesthesia program(s). The COA is not involved in these decisions. When multiple programs establish a relationship with the same clinical site, the COA would encourage the programs to develop avenues of professional communication and cooperation that mitigate negative impacts to programs, clinical preceptors, learners, and other stakeholders. Programs should also act in a manner that complies with applicable federal and state law, including antitrust laws.

Professional communication and cooperation in the establishment of shared clinical sites affords opportunities that can benefit the programs and clinical sites. Programs engaged in a shared clinical site may experience increased student enrollment, positive student-to-student interactions, and shared development of clinical policies. Clinical sites may also benefit from hosting multiple

programs, such as through increased recruitment, schedule flexibility, and increased networking opportunities with programs sharing the site.

The COA's Standards and the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology *Code of Ethics for the Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist* support interprofessional collaboration, communication, and cooperation in the clinical environment. The COA believes a strong educational foundation for the profession requires respectful collaboration between programs and clinical sites.