How to develop a Needs Assessment for CME:

**Format:**
Needs Assessments should be a 100-200 word abstract covering the top-level statistics of your course content, and should highlight gaps in the current practice that will be “bridged” by the learning objectives your course will cover. Cite published evidence for each factual statement and clinical recommendation in your Needs Abstract, and include these in a Reference list at the end.

**Evidence Sources**
When writing a CME needs assessment, here are some possible questions for thought. National data sources and PubMed references are usual. Better needs assessments also strive to include local or Institutional data on epidemiology, practice gaps, or best practices compared to current practice.

**A. Epidemiology:**
- What is the latest epidemiology data in your targeted disease state?
- How much has patient volume in this disease state increased/decreased at NYU Winthrop over the past 5 years?
- Can we compare this to a national patient volume or incidence (increase/decrease)?

**B. Mortality/Morbidity**
- 5-year survival: use of your clinical recommendations, compared with other interventions?

**C. Burden of Disease:**
- Social/Personal/Financial effects of the disease on patients
- Prevention: use of your clinical recommendations, compared with other interventions
- Cost Savings: use of your clinical recommendations, compared with other interventions

**D. Other Patient Outcomes:**
- Outcomes including shared decision making, use of care teams, family interventions

**E. Other potential Data Sources**
- Surveys (including survey of past activity participants, a survey of general membership, or of a key audience)
- Board of Director and/or Committee Meeting Minutes
- Expert Opinion
- Evaluation Results/Reports from Other Educational Activities
- Informal Discussions/Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Consensus Conferences
- Epidemiological Data
- New Advances in Clinical Treatments
- Government Reports
F. Examples of Needs Assessment for CME:

Below is a 2-page PDF. Double-Click the image to see all pages, with Examples highlighted.

Conducting a CME Activity Needs Assessment

What is a needs assessment?

A CME activity needs assessment (sometimes called needs analysis) is performed prior to developing CME activities to determine what health care providers need. Needs assessments enable you to identify and measure gaps between what is and what ought to be, from which program goals and objectives can then be identified. Conducting an assessment is a way to collect information that can be used to decide what type of educational information will be perceived as relevant and useful. An assessment enables a conversation to take place that questions what skills and knowledge is required to be more effective.

Why is needs assessment important?

Research has shown that educational activities based on learning needs are more effective in delivering sustainable educational outcomes for participants. The needs assessment process is an important first step in the development of any educational activity because we might think we already know what the needs are, but usually our knowledge is based on impressions, or experiences of limited situations or observations of only a few persons who may not be representative of the population we are concerned with. Needs assessment data is also important because it facilitates your ability to plan, make better informed decisions, set priorities about your program development and improvement needs. Needs assessment should be conducted as a first step in planning an educational activity and identification of needs provides the basis for writing activity objectives.

How do you conduct a needs assessment?

There are many sources of information that can be used for conducting a needs assessment. A quality CME needs assessment establishes that health care providers' learning needs from a number of different perspectives and may also address different types of need. The following are examples of needs assessment data sources that can be used:

- Surveys (including survey of past activity participants, and survey of general membership of a key audience)
- Board of Director and/or Committee Meeting Minutes
- Expert Opinion
- Evaluation Results/Reports from Other Educational Activities
- Informal Discussions/Interviews
- Focus Groups
- Consensus Conferences
- Epidemiological Data
- New Advances in Clinical Treatments

Links to Web Sites with data that can be used for needs assessment:

- www.rochman.org
- www.fda.gov
- www.fhi.org
- www.ahrp.org

http://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:R6bbB-P2rT6sJwww.ahrp.org/abo...&hl=en&client=safari&cforce=1&gl=us&follow_REDIRECT=1&bav=on.2,or.e_.&bvm=bv.51219171,d.eCg