



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF A POLICY STATEMENT

Title of Policy Statement: Completion dates for continuing education in suicide assessment, treatment, and management or suicide assessment, screening and referral as it applies to advanced social workers, independent clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, certified counselors, certified advisers, and chemical dependency professionals.

Issuing Entity: Department of Health

Subject Matter: The Department of Health will accept any qualifying continuing education requirements related to suicide assessment, treatment, management, screening and referral taken after July 1, 2014 to meet the first training requirement required by RCW 43.70.442(2)(a).

Effective Date: July 18, 2014

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*Department of Health
Office of Health Services Quality Assurance*

Policy Statement

Revised – 10/18/11

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Number:
DOH-HSQA-2014-001

References: RCW 43.70.442, chapter 246-809 WAC, chapter 246-810 WAC, chapter 246-811 WAC

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Supercedes: N/A

Approved By: Shannon Marshall

The Department of Health (department) will accept any qualifying continuing education (CE) related to suicide assessment, treatment, and management or suicide assessment, screening and referral that was taken after January 1, 2014 to meet the first training requirement as it applies to advanced social workers, independent clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, mental health counselors, certified counselors, certified advisers, and chemical dependency professionals. .

RCW 43.70.442 requires the following suicide training once every six years for certain professions regulated by the Secretary of Health:

- a) Six hours in suicide assessment, treatment and management for advanced social workers, independent clinical social workers, marriage and family therapists, and mental health counselors. This includes providers in retired active license status.
- b) Three hours in suicide assessment, screening and referral for certified counselors, certified advisers, and chemical dependency professionals. This includes providers in retired active license status.

Providers must complete the first training during the first full CE reporting period after January 1, 2014. However, many providers completed this training after January 1, 2014, but before the beginning of their first full CE reporting period.

If the department interprets the law as not accepting training completed between January 1, 2014 and the beginning of the first full reporting period after January 1, 2014 toward meeting the mandatory training requirements, providers will be penalized for being proactive.

The goal of this legislation is to educate providers on issues related to suicide. The sooner providers are educated on the topic, the sooner they can provide better care to the citizens of this state. It does not further the goal of the legislature or the mission of the department to penalize providers for receiving potentially life-saving education too early based on CE reporting schedules.

The department believes the intent of this training requirement was to encourage providers to meet the training requirement as soon as possible. This supports the department's mission to work with others to protect and improve the health of all people in Washington State. Therefore, the department, on behalf of the Secretary of Health, will accept any qualifying training that was taken after January 1, 2014 to meet the first training requirement even if the training did not occur during the provider's first full CE period.