



## CONDUCTING A GAP ANALYSIS

### What is a Gap Analysis?

Basically a tool used to identify and define current health care issues. A gap analysis clarifies the discrepancy between current reality in health care and the desired or optimal health care situation and identifies an opportunity that may be addressed in a CPD intervention.

A gap analysis is a very thorough approach to determining that a gap does exist. It asks the following questions:

#### **BACKGROUND:**

- What is the subject?
- How do we know there is a need for change?
- What data supports this perception?
- Who is the target audience?

#### **CURRENT REALITY**

- What are the current practice behaviours of the target audience?

#### **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

- What are the specific outcomes desired?
- What should be happening that isn't?
- What is recommended best practice?

#### **ANALYSIS**

- What is the root cause of the gap?
  - Lack of knowledge?
  - Lack of skill?
  - Attitude toward need for change?
  - Actual gaps in performance or practice?
- What barriers exist that prevent change in practice?

**Questions? Comments? Suggestions?** Contact one of our Educational Consultants at [quicktips@utoronto.ca](mailto:quicktips@utoronto.ca)

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### Why Conduct a Gap Analysis?

A gap analysis requires significant resources and time leaving many program planners asking “why do it?” Certainly it is not something you do often or every time you are planning a program. A gap analysis provides a bigger picture and can offer information in order to build a long term plan or curriculum for CPD activities. It provides information you can keep going back to as new ideas for CPD arise.

### When to Conduct a Gap Analysis

A gap analysis often is conducted as one of the very first steps in preparation for an educational program. The gap analysis of health care issues will help focus the curricular goals, specify the appropriate target audience, help identify faculty, and inform the more specific needs assessment of the target audience.

### Steps in Conducting a Gap Analysis

- Step #1** *Identify/clarify what is currently happening with patients or health care professionals in a specific therapeutic area*
- Step #2** *Define the “Gold Standard” – or what is defined as Best Practices in this therapeutic area.*
- Step #3** *Clarify the gap/discrepancy between Step #1 and Step #2- these are the Health Care Issues. Are these gaps related to knowledge, skill, attitude or practices?*
- Step #4** *From the identified gaps or health care issues-decide on the curricular learning goals for your anticipated CPD endeavours.*

### Sample Template

See attached “Template gap analysis”.

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