



The ACHA Program Planning Timeline

We are frequently asked why the program planning process takes nearly a year to complete and why completing the Program Submission Form and Presenter/Co-Presenter Disclosure Forms thoroughly and in a timely manner is important. Below is a quick "Behind the Scenes" view of the key stages of the planning process. Following that is some additional information that expands on the timeline.

JUNE

- The Call for Programs site is built and launched.
- The General Meeting Evaluation from the recently completed meeting is conducted.

JULY-SEPTEMBER

- The Program Planning Committee (PPC) meets monthly to discuss needs assessment data, continuing education (CE) considerations, and the submission review process.
- An open call for submission reviewers goes out to all members.

SEPTEMBER

- The Call for Programs deadline is typically the third week in the month.
- PPC members are given access to the submissions.

OCTOBER

- The section program planners work in conjunction with CE Advisors in Practice Area Groups to review submissions.
- A standard rubric is used to determine those that best meet the needs expressed by members.
- The Community Engagement Group begins discussions.
- The Call for Posters deadline is in late October.

NOVEMBER

- Practice Area Groups make their final selections.
- The PPC meets at the host hotel for 1 ½ days of thoughtful discussion and collaboration. Selected programs are finalized and placed into timeslots. A great deal of time is spent trying to avoid duplication of topics or presenters within timeslots.
- Section planners-elect begin the review of posters.

DECEMBER

- The CE Committee reviews all selected sessions and begins assigning credit as applicable.
- All primary program presenters are notified about the status of their submission.

JANUARY

- The CE Committee meets in early January and finalizes credit. Their goal is always to maximize the amount of credit for each session.
- All poster primary presenters are notified about the status of their submission.
- Production begins on the Preliminary Program.

FEBRUARY

- For several types of credit, ACHA staff must submit an application each year. Some of these applications require us to submit information collected on the Program Submission Form and Presenter /Co-Presenter Disclosure Forms. If we do not have complete information from presenters and co-presenters, we cannot apply for credit for those sessions.
- The Preliminary Program is posted to the ACHA website.

MARCH

- A call goes out for anyone interested in volunteering as a presider or facilitator.
- ACHA sends out the Room Usage Survey to gauge approximate number of attendees in each session and assigns meeting rooms based on these estimates.
- Program and Poster Abstract Books are posted to the ACHA website.

APRIL

- The Early Bird deadline for registration is typically in mid-April.
- ACHA receives final approval for the CE applications submitted in February.
- The final Meeting Program and Planner are produced.
- Development begins on the meeting app.

MAY

- All meeting materials are ordered, printed, packed, and shipped to the host hotel.
- The meeting app is finalized.
- It's time for a great meeting!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Submission Review

We typically receive about 250 program proposals, and the PPC will review the de-identified submissions using a standard rubric. In addition to PPC members, we conduct an open call for session reviewers and encourage members to participate, as this is a great way to contribute to the meeting and learn more about the program planning process. One thing that makes the ACHA Annual Meeting so relevant is that the programming is *developed by, selected by, and conducted by* our members.

2. Practice Area Groups

Section planners and CE Advisors work collaboratively in Practice Area Groups. Each Practice Area Group is allotted a maximum number of sessions according to the percentage of that group's membership in ACHA and attendance at past ACHA Annual Meetings. The groups are broken down as follows:

- **Administration** – Administration, Nurse Administrators, and Health and Well-Being Executive Leadership section planners and planners-elect
- **Clinical Services** – Clinical Medicine, Advanced Practice Clinicians, Nursing, and Pharmacy section planners and planners-elect, plus CE Advisors for medicine, nursing, and pharmacy
- **Health Promotion and Well-Being** – Health Promotion section planner and planner-elect, plus CE Advisor for CHES/MCHES
- **Mental Health** – Mental health section planner and planner-elect, plus CE Advisors for psychology, counseling, and social workers

3. The Rubric

All planners are asked to use the same rubric for assessing the de-identified program submissions. With this rubric, they rate each submission on the following components:

- Does this session address health disparities in their institution or across college students?
- Is the practice gap relevant for the intended audience?
- How well does the session's content relate to the practice area's needs or priorities?
- How well does this session include and describe relevant theory, best practices, evidence-informed strategies, or relevant data and/or research related to the topic?
- Are the learning objectives and presentation format (e.g., lecture, small group, etc.) conducive to learning about this topic?
- What kind of experience do the presenter(s) have related to the topics covered in this session?
- How much does the session help increase members' knowledge and skills?

4. Community Engagement Group

During October, we recruit members from institutional member schools in the state where the meeting will be held to participate in the Community Engagement Group. The group works in conjunction with the PPC, with the goal of supporting the local community through initiatives aligned with ACHA's organizational values.

5. Pre-Conference Workshop Review

The ACHA Vice President leads the pre-conference workshop selection group to review workshop submissions and identify gaps where additional workshops may be needed. The ACHA President, President-Elect, PPC Chair, and PPC Chair-Elect assist in this process.

6. Poster Selection

The PPC Chair-Elect works with section planners-elect to review and select posters. Each poster submission is reviewed by two planners-elect, with the PPC chair-elect making the final decisions based on how many posters we have capacity for within the meeting space.

7. The PPC Meeting

The Program Planning Committee (PPC) meets at the site of the upcoming meeting for an intense 1 ½ days to build the framework for the spring meeting. The planners come to the meeting with programs tentatively selected and scheduled in the four Practice Area Groups they represent (Administration, Clinical Services, Health Promotion and Wellness, and Mental Health). The group reviews the selections from a number of perspectives:

- Are there needs/gaps that were high on your list that remain unaddressed by programming?
- Are there any programs that can be enhanced or combined so that they are stronger or more multidisciplinary?
- Are there any unselected programs that would meet an identified need if they were enhanced?
- What programs do you have that support the meeting theme?
- Do we have variation in school representation? Small schools? Large schools? Private? Public?
- How does the big picture look in terms of balance in session topics?

They spend a considerable amount of time going through each time block to make sure there is content appropriate for each Practice Area Group. To facilitate this process, we use large post-it wall charts – one for each time block of the meeting – and the session titles are printed on color-coded strips of paper that can be moved around as needed. This helps the committee see at a glance if all disciplines have adequate programming.

It is an extremely collaborative process, full of rich discussion and thought. Following the meeting, the group will reach out to invited speakers to help fill the gaps in program content that were identified during the meeting. Everyone who submitted a program proposal will be emailed in mid-December about the status of their submission.

8. The Continuing Education Committee

ACHA's Continuing Education Committee takes the reins in December. The committee (made up of representatives for each credit discipline) reviews all 150+ selected sessions in December and makes their final credit decisions in January. The goal of the committee is always to maximize the credit available to meeting attendees, based on their credit type's specific criteria. Meeting attendees can expect 18-24 available credits, depending on their discipline.

ACHA offers credit in the following disciplines:

- CME for physicians and physician assistants
- AAFP for family physicians
- CNE for nurses and nurse practitioners
- CHES and MCHES for certified health education specialists
- PsyCE for psychologists
- NBCC for certified counselors
- NASW for licensed social workers
- ACPE for pharmacists

9. Key Logistics and Support for ACHA Presenters

As the meeting approaches, all educational sessions are confirmed and scheduled, with presenters now focused on preparing their presentations. It's time to shift our attention to the logistics. To ensure every session runs smoothly, it's essential to provide speakers with the necessary support and ensure the room size and equipment are suitable.

- **Presiders and Facilitators**

All meeting registrants receive an email seeking volunteers to serve as presiders and facilitators. These vital roles help ensure sessions run seamlessly and provide presenters with the assistance they need. Volunteering in these positions is an excellent way to get involved with ACHA!

- **Room Size**

The Room Usage Survey asks which sessions registrants plan to attend during each time block of the meeting. While completing the survey doesn't guarantee a seat, it provides valuable information to help us allocate each session to an appropriately sized room.

- **AV Equipment**

In mid-March, staff sends an email to all primary presenters, asking them to fill out an Audio/Video Equipment Request form. This form provides presenters with details about the equipment available in the rooms and gives them the opportunity to make additional requests. While we may not be able to fulfill every request, our goal is to communicate with presenters so they are well-prepared to work with the equipment we can provide.

10. What Makes ACHA More Than a Conference?

While this work takes place throughout the year, in the spring we finalize many of the non-CE elements of the meeting – those enhancements that make ACHA much more than a typical educational conference.

- **Meetings, Networking, and Discussion Groups**

Take the first step in getting more involved in ACHA by attending a section, affiliate, or coalition meeting or networking sessions or by attending one or more of the special interest group discussions.

- **Exhibit Hall**

ACHA's bustling Exhibit Hall has it all! Meet representatives from a variety of companies showcasing their health and wellness-related resources and solutions to support your operations. Don't forget to enter the raffle for your chance to win great prizes!

- **Wellness Activities**

Join colleagues for a morning yoga session, seated massage in the Exhibit Hall, or the Fun Run/Walk/Roll – or take advantage of the Yoga Room for a self-guided session at your convenience.

- **Mentoring Sessions**

Whether you're an emerging leader looking to connect with a mentor, or a more seasoned veteran wanting to make an impact on someone newer to the college health community – ACHA's one-on-one mentoring program is for you!

- **ACHA Celebrates!**

Join us at ACHA Celebrates! -- an awards ceremony featuring the ACHA and ACHF Award Recipients and Fellows. The ceremony follows the Opening Reception, where we will enjoy light appetizers while networking with colleagues in a fun and informal atmosphere.

- **Newcomers' Orientation**

While enjoying a light breakfast, seasoned ACHA meeting attendees will facilitate small group discussions to assist first-time meeting attendees navigate the meeting.

- **Reflection Room**

Escape from the chaos of the meeting in this quiet space meant for solitude and reflection. The space will be equipped with some basic supplies to help you relax and unwind.

- **Rising and Current Volunteer Leader Coffee Hour**

ACHA always welcomes emerging leaders in ACHA and offers this morning networking event to connect current leaders with those wishing to become more engaged in the association.