CME providers are expected to design activities with the intent of changing physician competence, performance and/or patient outcomes, as opposed to merely increasing knowledge. Objectives must be behavioral rather than instructional.

- **competence** (knowing how to do something; having the knowledge/ability to apply knowledge, skills and judgment in practice; new strategies one might consider putting into practice)
- **performance** (what one actually puts into practice)
- **patient outcomes** (patient health status)

**Tips for Writing Good Objectives**

- Objectives should address these questions:
  - What should the result of the educational activity be for participants?
  - What should the participant be able to do after attending the activity?
- Make sure that objectives are measureable and relate directly to reducing the identified practice gap
- State what the learner might do differently (behavioral change) because of what has been learned
- Use verbs which allow measureable outcome and thus can then be used in the evaluation process

**VERBS that can used to measure changes in COMPETENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analyze</th>
<th>Compare</th>
<th>Design</th>
<th>Differentiate</th>
<th>Evaluate</th>
<th>Plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assess</td>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>Develop</td>
<td>Distinguish</td>
<td>Formulate</td>
<td>Recommend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**VERBS that can used to measure changes in PERFORMANCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apply</th>
<th>Diagnose</th>
<th>Examine</th>
<th>Integrate</th>
<th>Manage</th>
<th>Prescribe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counsel</td>
<td>Employ</td>
<td>Incorporate</td>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Perform</td>
<td>Utilize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Avoid words or phrases such as think, understand, know, appreciate, learn, comprehend, be aware of, be familiar with, etc.

These are not measureable actions.

**Examples of Well Written Objectives**

- Critically review and analyze cases to improve quality and safety of patient care in management of hyperglycemia (competence)
- Manage patients diagnosed with ovarian cancer incorporating stage grouping, evidence-based evaluation management guidelines and clinical trial data (performance)
- Differentiate the clinical presentations of acute rhinosinusitis vs acute bacterial rhinosinusitis to develop treatment plans (competence)
- Diagnose possible life-threatening arrhythmias in adolescent athletes based on patient/family history, physical exam and ECG (performance)

Rev: June 2014