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CHAPTER 7. EDUCATION IN REHABILITATION MEDICINE

7.01 STATEMENT OF POLICY

Education and training are essential to the maintenance of high standards of professional practice. Changing standards of practice, scientific advances, and improved technology necessitate continued professional competency. A program of staff development and continuing education planned and implemented by RMS (Rehabilitation Medicine Service) enhances the quality of care given to veterans and facilitates a program of continuous quality improvement. The content of these programs reflects current health care practice in the delivery of rehabilitation and the results of Quality Assurance activity.

7.02 CONTINUING EDUCATION/STAFF DEVELOPMENT

a. Continuing education is expected of every professional within RMS service. The scope of education will be influenced by:

- (1) Needs assessments,
- (2) Quality assurance and utilization review results,
- (3) Changing practice delivery, and
- (4) Other significant factors.

b. Personal continuing education plans should be formulated, reviewed and adjusted to meet changing needs.

c. RMS educational activities may be administered by:

- (1) RMEC (Regional Medical Education Center),
- (2) REP (Rehabilitation Education Program),
- (3) Educational institutions,
- (4) In-services,
- (5) Teleconferences,
- (6) Workshops,
- (7) Seminars,
- (8) Staff meetings,
- (9) Conferences, and
- (10) Grand Rounds.

d. The use of local controlled education funds is encouraged to assist staff in attendance at relevant continuing education programs. Tuition support money intended for recruitment and retention of occupational therapists and physical therapists should be sought, annually, through the Associate Chief Medical Director for Academic Affairs.

e. RMS staff should be authorized and encouraged to attend and actively participate in appropriate professional meetings.

f. Each RMS section is responsible for providing, on a regular basis, an in-service education program to staff which addresses scope of practice of that section.

g. RMS will provide an in-service training program for the medical center professional staff targeted to the medical center's mission, clinical rehabilitation service delivery, and the principles of continuous quality improvement.

7.03 TRAINING PROGRAMS

a. Residency programs in RMS established in VA facilities must meet criteria in accordance with VHA (Veterans Health Administration) Manual M-8, part I, chapter 2.

(1) The facility having a RMS Residency Training program must have a RMS bed service with diagnostic capabilities as required by the American Board of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation.

(2) Physician staffing patterns shall comply with Board requirements. Resident supervision and graduated responsibilities must follow VHA regulations and ACGME (American Council on Graduate Medical Education) guidelines.

(3) A minimum of two physiatrists must be employed at the VA (Department of Veterans Affairs) medical center in RMS before a Residency Training Program can be instituted.

b. Clinical training affiliations with RMS therapies may be provided at selected VA facilities in accordance with Office of Academic Affairs guidelines.

(1) Each section having a program should have at least 3 professional staff members with one designated as training supervisor by the chief of the section, with concurrence by the Chief, RMS.

(2) Prior to the establishment of a clinical training program, the educational institution should make a formal written request to VA medical centers for this affiliation.

(3) Officials at both the educational institution and VA medical center will co-sign a Memorandum of Affiliation establishing the training program at the medical center. The original document will be retained at the medical center with a copy to the affiliated university.

(4) All affiliated training programs in RMS are decentralized with the exception of:

(a) Funded Occupational Therapy programs, and

(b) Programs that are not accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting body, i.e., Educational Therapy and Manual Arts/Horticultural Therapy.

NOTE: A Kinesiotherapy non-affiliated training programs for qualified candidates may be established with the approval of RMS, VA Central Office (117B).

