Welcome to the latest Administrator Certification Section (ACS) Insider! Our goal is to share timely and relevant information about issues that affect the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) certified facility administrators and training vendors.

Please review and share this ACS Insider with members of your organization, as well as with others interested in vendor or administrator certification information. We look forward to continuing to publish the Insider quarterly to strengthen partnerships with vendors and administrators.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS EDITION INCLUDE:

- Legislation and Regulations Update
- ACS Summer Activities
- Important Updates and Information for Administrators
- Tips and Tools for Training Vendors
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and Best Practices

LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS UPDATE

We will report on any bills that may directly affect the ACS in the Insider. The text of proposed, pending, and prior legislation can be viewed at www.leginfo.ca.gov/bilinfo.html. Summaries of prior years’ chaptered legislation related to Community Care Licensing are available at www.ccld.ca.gov/PG3063.htm.

As noted in prior issues of the Insider, the ACS is in the process of updating applicable sections of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) to align with recently enacted legislation and to clarify existing requirements. We anticipate holding a 45-day written public comment period and a public hearing on the proposed changes this summer, so watch for further notice of these activities on the ACS and CDSS websites, and sign up to receive direct e-mail notice of this and other CDSS public hearings at http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/ord/PG656.htm. The proposed changes are planned to take effect January 1, 2016 to coincide with last year’s legislative changes.
ACS SUMMER ACTIVITIES

- To improve the consistency of the administrator testing process, ACS staff are now proctoring the exams at all Regional Offices across the State. As a result of the change, the times and dates for tests given at several locations have already changed. Course vendors are cautioned not to provide exam dates to students as misinformation has led to many examinees showing up at the wrong date or time. Vendors should refer students to the ACS website for the current schedule. See additional information on exams in the Tips section below.

- The ACS Advisory Committee (ACSAC) met in March to continue its work of reviewing and revising the Core of Knowledge for Residential Care for the Elderly (RCFE) administrators, and to discuss the changing content of RCFE Initial Certification Training Programs (ICTP). The current draft of the new 80-hour RCFE ICTP Core of Knowledge is now posted on our website. The ACSAC met again in May to review and revise the Adult Residential Facilities (ARF) Core of Knowledge. The updated RCFE and ARF Core of Knowledge charts will be included in the updated regulations package available for review this summer.

- The ACS staff have been monitoring vendors’ administrator training courses. Some general observations are that while most courses are being conducted as approved many vendors are not maintaining all the records required (which is necessary to allow confirmation of administrators’ course completions, for example). See the Tips and Tools section of this and future issues of the Insider for more information resulting from these reviews.

IMPORTANT UPDATES AND INFORMATION FOR ADMINISTRATORS

- ACS cannot accept any “walk-ins” of applications, fees or other materials. The applicable ACS mailing address, fax and phone number are listed in the information on the ACS website at http://www.ccdl.ca.gov/pg471.htm.

- When submitting a new or renewal application, administrators should always include their current address, e-mail and phone number(s) to ensure ACS staff can contact them if needed and mail notices and certificates to the correct location.

- Administrators are reminded that the renewal application (LIC 9215) must be submitted with certificates of completion from 40 CEUs taken during the current two-year certificate term (and with no more than half the units taken on-line). See the ACS website for the applicable regulations and forms, and for information on which other agency’s courses are no longer acceptable.

- Assembly Bill (AB) 40 (Chapter 659, Statutes of 2012) and Senate Bill 1051 (Chapter 660, Statutes of 2012) changed abuse reporting requirements for ARF and RCFE licensees and their staff effective January 2013. While these bills did not change the fact that a mandated reporter is responsible to report known or
suspected incidents of dependent adult or elder abuse, they did create four separate reporting standards (depending on the facts) which mandated abuse reporters are required to follow regarding clients in long-term care facilities. In some cases the bills shortened the previous mandatory reporting timeframes, and AB 40 also defined the term “serious bodily injury.” For a detailed summary, see http://www.ccdl.ca.gov/res/pdf/13APX-03.pdf and for reporting forms see www.cdss.ca.gov/cdssweb/entres/forms/English/SOC341.pdf.

TIPS AND TOOLS FOR TRAINING VENDORS

- Vendors are reminded to submit requests for course approvals at least 30 days (and preferably at least 60 days) before the proposed course date. Given the frequent need for revisions (to include adequate detail in the course outline), as well analysts’ current monitoring schedules, ACS cannot guarantee approval of requests submitted in shorter timeframes.

- On a related note, new courses should be well thought out and developed before submitting them to ACS for review and approval. Vendors should not submit outlines with little detail and/or statements that the course will be fleshed out after approval. ACS will not approve incomplete course requests.

- Recent monitoring visits have found course segments being taught by unapproved instructors. Vendors are reminded that any changes or additions to course instructors (including “guest speakers”) must be approved by ACS before the instructor teaches all or a portion of a course. Use form LIC 9140A (available on our website) to request a change.

- Vendors who conduct ICTPs are reminded that a minimum of ten (10) hours of instruction must be provided by an instructor with at least four (4) years' experience in California as a facility administrator within the last eight (8) years, and with a record of administering facilities in substantial compliance. Where good faith efforts to employ an instructor who meets these criteria are unsuccessful, vendors may apply to the ACS for a waiver of this requirement before offering the ICTP. For more information on this topic, vendors should contact their assigned analyst.

- Vendors are reminded that ACS-approved Continuing Education Training Program vendor numbers and course numbers are only applicable to the courses approved for administrator certificate holders as approved (i.e., the course content and hours as approved by ACS). If vendors want to offer a variation of the course (e.g., shorter version) for administrators, they are reminded to seek ACS approval and a different course number for that variation. If vendors want to offer a variation of the course for another audience (e.g., direct care staff), the certificate for that variation should not include the ACS course number as it’s not a course approved for administrators.
• All RCFE ICTP vendors are reminded to submit their updated **80-hour RCFE ICTPs** for use beginning January 1, 2016 to ACS for review in plenty of time (i.e., soon!) to have them fully approved before that date. The updated draft Core of Knowledge chart including the several newly legislated topics is available in the Vendor Information section of the ACS website. The updated ICTPs will be processed in the order received. The existing 40-hour RCFE ICTPs expire 12/31/15.

• To **keep students engaged** and actively learning, vendors are encouraged to use a variety of tools to educate (e.g., small group exercises, role-playing, videos, guest speakers, hypothetical questioning) and also to implement housekeeping rules such as no cell phone usage or sleeping during the course.

• The use of **videoclips** or other media is encouraged when helpful to illustrate specific points in ICTPs or continuing education courses, but, if used, such media must be explained as part of the course outline submitted for ACS approval. Vendors must document how the video or other media supplements, complements, and enhances the lesson material in order for ACS to approve it as part of the approved course hours.

• Vendors are cautioned against using “**practice tests**” (for administrator certification) in their courses. ACS is finding that some vendors have been claiming such tests include questions from the current administrator certification exams but this is not generally the case and often the questions are not very good (i.e., don’t reflect current regulations and/or aren’t clearly written) so are likely more confusing than helpful to potential administrators. ACS recommends that any end-of-course tests be designed to measure completion of the vendor’s own course objectives, not try to mimic the administrator certification exam.

• Regarding the administrator exams, vendors are also cautioned **not** to provide **exam schedules or instructions** to their ICTP participants as incorrect information is causing confusion for examinees. For example, some vendors have apparently told ICTP participants that they would not be able to review study materials once inside the testing facility but this is not true. Also, some examinees have been incorrectly advised to bring two copies of their ICTP certificates to the exam while others have been told not to bring their ICTP certificate and photo identification (id) to the exam when in fact the ICTP certificate and a photo id are required. So vendors are advised to simply refer ICTP participants to the ACS website for exam information.

• Vendors are required to **maintain course records** (including course rosters, schedules, descriptions/outlines, course evaluations, instructor lists and qualifications) for at least three years after the course. (See regulations on our website for complete current requirements.) Recent monitoring visits have found many records missing or hard to locate. A tip for maintaining clear records is to keep a folder of the hard copy of the course records stored in a consistent manner (e.g., at central or regional office, as applicable), and to scan a complete copy of
each course’s records and save it in a clearly named electronic file on the computer system at the vendor’s main office.

- AB 1856 of 2012 and AB 663 of 2013 added the topic of **Cultural Competency** and sensitivity for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) communities to the statutory Core of Knowledge for Group Home, ARF and RCFE administrators so all ICTP vendors should now be including the topic in their ICTPs. The current Core of Knowledge Guidelines showing the shifts in hours to cover this topic are available on the [ACS website](http://acs.ca.gov).

Some further resources for LGBT sensitivity training information which some vendors have found helpful include:
- GLAAD’s website at [www.glaad.org](http://www.glaad.org)
- PFLAG’s website at [www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)
- Statement on the Care of LGBT Older Adults by the American Geriatrics Society: *Equality, Education, Research, & Respect Guide New AGS Recommendations for Care of Older LGBT Adults*.
- LGBT Aging Center at [http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=574](http://www.lgbtagingcenter.org/resources/resource.cfm?r=574)

**SUMMARY**

If you have any questions, suggestions, or best practices to share, please call Robert Bayles at (916) 654-5859 or the ACS main line at (916) 653-9300 or email [Admincertinfo@dss.ca.gov](mailto:Admincertinfo@dss.ca.gov). You can also visit the main CCLD website at [http://www.CCLD.ca.gov](http://www.CCLD.ca.gov) for CCLD office locations, laws, regulations, Information Releases or to learn more about licensing services in general.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by*

PAMELA DICKFOSS  
Deputy Director  
Community Care Licensing Division

Attachment
From Administrators:

Question: My address and phone number have changed. How do I notify ACS?

Response: ACS recommends administrators always include their current address and phone number(s), and also an e-mail address, when submitting their initial or renewal applications. If your address or phone number changes in between application cycles, submit the change to ACS by emailing it to Admincertinfo@dss.ca.gov or leaving a voicemail with your name, certificate number, and the change, at (916) 653-9300.

Question: My name has changed. How do I notify ACS?

Response: To request a name change, submit a written request including a copy of the applicable name change document (e.g., marriage license or dissolution of marriage/ name change) and copy of a photo ID (e.g., driver’s license) that reflects the new name.

From training vendors:

Question: When do I need to submit an updated course outline for an existing (previously approved) course? I understand ACS is more frequently requesting updates.

Response: ACS recommends considering the following questions to determine when a course may need to be updated rather than simply renewed: 1) Have there been any changes in the related laws or regulations on the topic? 2) Has there been a change in technology related to the topic? 3) Have there been changes to the topic itself (e.g., when new information is available related to a medical condition or other healthcare topic)? 4) Has the course not been updated in over five (5) years? If the answer is “yes” to one or more of these questions, submit a new course request (LIC 9140) and the updated course outline to your vendor analyst.

Vendor Best Practices Observed:

- Course instructors communicate information to students in a clear and understandable way and encourage students to ask questions throughout the course.
- Instructors check-in with each student (and small group, where applicable) on a consistent basis to ensure course reading materials are understood.
- Courses start and end on schedule!