

Fall 2015

## Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy

### Welcome to aPTitude & ProCert

Welcome to the current issue of the **aPTitude & ProCert** newsletter for vendors of physical therapy continuing competence activities! Periodically we will provide important system and program updates, and share guidance for purposes of helping you reach prospective learners and achieve certification of your continuing education courses and conferences.

### Coming Soon – aPTitude & ProCert System Enhancements for Vendors

FSBPT initiated work on a project that will bring an improved user experience for continuing competence activity vendors using **aPTitude**. These enhancements are scheduled to release in two phases: in the fourth quarter of 2015 and then in early 2016. Many of the changes are in response to feedback and suggestions that activity vendors have submitted to FSBPT.

One component of the project will make managing your activities in **aPTitude** – publishing, hiding, claiming, and tracking through the **ProCert** submission and review process – more streamlined and much easier.

Another focus of the project will be to simplify specific components of the **ProCert** submission process. We also envision introducing some changes that will minimize the potential for certain content omissions and errors that negatively impact the certification outcome and the Continuing Competence Unit (CCU) score.

Speaking of feedback and suggestions, we encourage all continuing competence activity vendors to respond to our **aPTitude & ProCert** user satisfaction survey. Please look for the survey invitation in your email in the next few weeks. FSBPT values your perspective and ideas as they pertain to this system and as we engage you in our efforts to promote competence and public protection.

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### Three New ProCert Accepting States

**ProCert** certification of continuing education courses and conferences recently expanded to 25 states (or U.S. jurisdictions) for purposes of meeting PT/PTA continuing education and licensure renewal requirements. The most recent additions are Hawaii, Michigan and Mississippi (effective July 1, 2016).

The complete list of states are as follows: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Delaware, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Wisconsin. Several more states are updating their laws to accept ProCert certification in the future.

Learn more about **ProCert** [here](#), or [contact FSBPT Continuing Competence Staff](#) for more information.



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### Standards Review: Submitting a Successful Course to ProCert

The **ProCert** Guidance Document for Vendors (versions for [continuing education courses](#) and for [conferences](#)) are the most essential resource to prepare a successful submission, providing the vendor with the information needed to submit a complete course proposal. Recent reviews of both initial course submissions and re-certifications indicate a few standards that are only partially addressed by some vendors, thus resulting in credit lost. Following are two common errors found in submissions:

#### Standard 6: Content Analysis - Required

*[One goal of **ProCert** is to create a reproducible, objective system of evaluating content that is comparable for all activity types. Content is scored based on the topics covered by the activity, the level of coverage, the emphasis given to each of the categories of learning demand (reflective of the depth of the material), and the total time involved in the activity.]*

For the purpose of assigning Learning Strategy and Level of Learning Demands, activities are defined in *Appendix E: Level of Learning Demand*: content, as either “In-person Activities” or “Distance Activities”. Any activity which is delivered through the internet is considered a “Distance Activity” This can be synchronous e-learning, where the participant is watching the activity while it takes place, or it can be asynchronous in which the activity has been pre-recorded and is being broadcast at a later time or in an on-demand (DVD) mode. Vendors are reminded to choose the correct designator for the Learning Strategy in Standard 6.

#### Standard 13: Assessment: Value Added;

##### **Specifically 13d: The activity objectives are mapped to the assessment**

This criterion has a two part requirement to gain acceptance. The

vendor must up-load documentation that demonstrates 1. Content areas related to each objective and 2. Individual item numbers or total number of items from the assessment that relate to each objective.

Reviewers consistently see a mapping of the assessment to the objectives but not the connection between the agenda items (content areas) to the objectives for the course. Vendors are reminded to address both elements of this item.

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### **ProCert and aPTitude By the Numbers**

Below are some **aPTitude** and **ProCert** utilization statistics as of October 31, 2015:

**ProCert** certified activities: 2,571

Activity vendors awarded certification: 124

Activity vendor-claimed accounts in **aPTitude**: 403

Licensees registered in **aPTitude**: 22,143

States/U.S. Jurisdictions currently accepting **ProCert**: 25

States/U.S. Jurisdictions pursuing regulation change or adoption to accept **ProCert**: 10

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### **Life Cycle of a ProCert Review - The Basics**

Welcome to our newsletter series on the Life Cycle of a **ProCert** Review. In this multi-part series, we will present **ProCert** and the review process in a manner which you may not have considered before. First, let's start with the basics – What is **ProCert**? Why was it developed?

The FSBPT mission is to protect the public by providing service and leadership that promote safe and competent physical therapy practice. As an extension of the 53 US jurisdiction licensure boards, our membership, the Federation was charged with creating a comprehensive continuing competence certification program to evaluate activities in a comprehensive and objective fashion. This evaluative process was to be one component of a larger overall continuing competence initiative of the FSBPT. Research began, a committee was formed, stakeholder input was solicited and considered, and **ProCert** was born.

[ProCert](#) is a method of evaluating continuing competence activities against a comprehensive set of standards (the [FSBPT Standards for Continuing Competence](#)). These standards are broken down into those that are required, a hybrid (required + value added), and purely value added. The review process is a consensus model with multiple reviewers providing checks and balances at all levels. Step by step Guidance Documents are provided to vendors as an instruction manual for the **ProCert** application. Volunteer **ProCert** reviewers are trained extensively in the application of the guidance documents.

Among the many benefits of **ProCert** certification are the following:

- Awards are currently accepted in **25 US Jurisdictions**
- Awards are granted based on the quality of the activity as submitted by the activity vendor
- Review process is a consensus model
- Reviewers receive extensive initial and ongoing training
- Every submission to **ProCert** is granted 1 free re-evaluation
- **ProCert** usage includes attendance verification in **aPTitude**
- **ProCert** certification status is immediately updated within **aPTitude** when a vendor accepts a certification award
- **ProCert** certified activities are available within **aPTitude** for licensees to search and record including links to your website

If you would like to get started with **ProCert**, contact [CompetenceStaff@fsbpt.org](mailto:CompetenceStaff@fsbpt.org) for additional information.

Our next series installment – The First Submission....

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### Updated Guidance Documents for ProCert

By way of reminder, as part of our ongoing efforts to improve the guidance we provide to physical therapy continuing competence activity vendors using **ProCert**, we have issued the following updated Guidance Documents:

- [Vendor Guidance Document – Continuing Education](#)
- [Vendor Guidance Document – Conferences](#)

The updates include clarifying information in the following Standards:

- Continuing Education – **Standard 5b CONTENT** (justification statement must discuss the relevance of content to ALL participants within the target audience)
- Continuing Education – **Standard 7 INSTRUCTOR/DEVELOPER/STAFF QUALIFICATIONS** (instructor qualifications shall be submitted in a CV current within 2 years preceding the activity submission date)
- Conferences – **Standard 14b EVALUATION** (this value-added criteria is now available when the activity has documented methods for analyzing data and incorporating results into future versions of the activity)

Changes to these **ProCert** requirements take effect January 1, 2016.

## Attendance Verification Reminder for ProCert Certified Activities

By way of reminder, as of June 2015, confirming the attendance of your learners is a requirement for **ProCert** certified activities. Uploading attendance confirmation is a term in the **ProCert** user agreement as it provides an additional layer of verification for licensees who attended your courses. The simple process is as follows:

- In **aPTitude**, click the “Upload Attendance” link for your **ProCert** certified activity
- Download the template form
- Input licensee email addresses and completion date(s) (the only required fields)
- Save and upload the document

**aPTitude** will then notify licensees who hold **aPTitude** accounts that their attendance for the activity has been verified.

You may [view this short webinar](#) demonstrating the attendance upload process. [Contact FSBPT Continuing Competence Staff](#) for assistance.

## FSBPT Continuing Competence Staff: Here to Help You

FSBPT staff is here to help our valued **aPTitude & ProCert** vendors! We provide individualized attention and assistance when seeking **ProCert** certification and utilizing the **aPTitude** system. Your FSBPT staff representatives are your direct line to the Federation’s continuing competence initiative.

**ProCert** submission can be a daunting process. It is rigorous by design to assure PTs and PTAs, as well as licensure boards, that certified activities are of high quality. Additionally the requirements are intended to assist vendors in course design and structure. So, how specifically can we help you?

- Customer assistance is available during business hours via phone and email (9:00 AM - 5:00 PM Eastern)
- Dedicated weekly time blocks devoted to providing in-depth assistance with ProCert submissions (Wednesdays 10:30am – 12:00pm; Thursdays 12:30pm – 3:00pm Eastern)
- WebEx capabilities for those times when a picture is worth a 1,000 words
- Technical support for your **aPTitude** account
- Wide knowledge base honed by assisting a variety of stakeholders on a daily basis.

- Administrative review offered to vendors submitting to **ProCert** for the very first time; this process allows staff to intervene in a timely fashion if deficiencies exist within an application.

FSBPT staff are experts in our continuing competence product line, but we are also well versed in requirements imposed by licensing boards and the concerns of licensees. Our customer service caters to a wide variety of stakeholders: Licensees subject to a variety of rules/requirements, licensing jurisdictions whose regulations shape continuing competence requirements, and a range of vendors providing an array of activities. This varied interaction shapes a diverse perspective and depth of knowledge which benefits the vendors we assist.

Whether used for compliance reporting or audit, licensing jurisdictions are requiring the use of **aPTitude** by their license holders in increasing numbers. [aPTitude](#) is the perfect place to advertise your course offerings and to seek **ProCert** certification. Doing so ensures that your activities are easily accessible for the 22,000+ licensees currently using **aPTitude** to search for and record completed activities. Let FSBPT staff help you make your activities a part of this growing community. Contact us at [CompetenceStaff@fsbpt.org](mailto:CompetenceStaff@fsbpt.org).

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