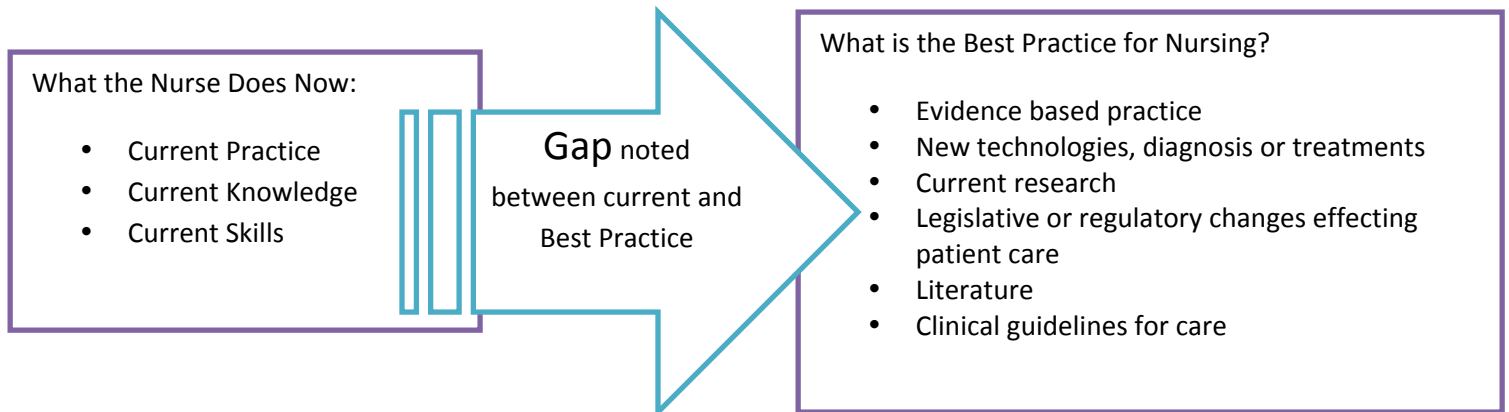A Guide to Performing a Needs Assessment and a Gap Analysis

<u>A Needs Assessment is:</u> A systematic process of gathering information that is appropriate and sufficient to develop an effective educational program that will address the groups' needs and wants (gap). Methods that are frequently used for determining a needs assessment include the following:
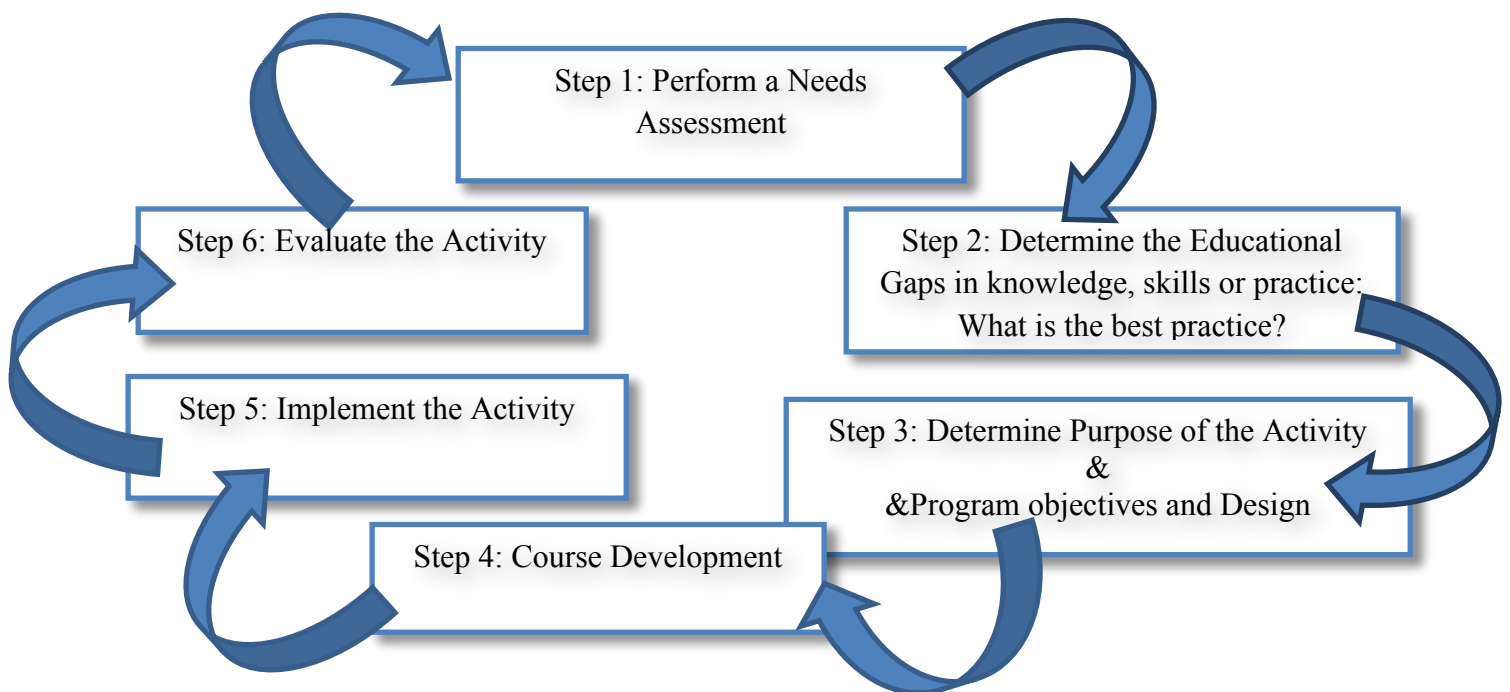
- Membership Learning Needs Survey
- Patient Care Requirements
- Request from Sample of Potential Audience (focus groups)
- Changes in Legislation or reimbursement
- Review of current professional literature
- Evaluation from prior learning activity
- Recent trends in patient population
- Annual event
- Others including: QI data, Morbidity and Mortality data, new methods of diagnosis or treatment, new technologies.

What the Nurse Does Now:

- Current Practice
- Current Knowledge
- Current Skills

Gap noted between current and Best Practice

What is the Best Practice for Nursing?

- Evidence based practice
- New technologies, diagnosis or treatments
- Current research
- Legislative or regulatory changes effecting patient care
- Literature
- Clinical guidelines for care

<u>A Gap Analysis is:</u> A gap analysis can be defined as the determination of the difference between current knowledge/practices (what we are doing) and current Evidence Based Practices (what we should be doing). Gaps can occur in knowledge, skills or practice.

Steps to Performing a Gap Analysis:

1. Find the need- through conducting a Needs Assessment

2. Is the gap a knowledge, skill or practice? Determine "What is the best practice? "

3. Determine the Purpose of the Activity then develop the learning objectives to "closing the gap"

Step 1: Perform a Needs Assessment

Step 6: Evaluate the Activity

Step 2: Determine the Educational Gaps in knowledge, skills or practice: What is the best practice?

Step 5: Implement the Activity

Step 3: Determine Purpose of the Activity & &Program objectives and Design

Step 4: Course Development