Dear Colleagues,

Due to the impact of the pandemic, all APA accreditation site visits scheduled to occur in-person during 2020 were postponed. This postponement was made to curb community spread of COVID-19 and protect and promote health and well-being.

The APA Commission on Accreditation (CoA), with the support of the APA office of program consultation and accreditation (OPCA), is working to plan for all programs to be reviewed in a timely manner. At its July 15-19, 2020 meeting, the CoA voted to approve the temporary implementation of virtual site visits through the end of 2020 for a subset of applicant programs. Due to the success of those virtual site visits, and the ongoing impact of the pandemic, the CoA will continue with virtual site visits until July 1, 2021. A virtual visit will follow the same general format as an in-person visit, consisting of 2 days of interactive audio/video interviews, facility verification, and record review. It is an opportunity for programs to showcase their strengths, the site visit team to verify and confirm information provided in the self-study report, and the CoA to gain information on the program that cannot be gleaned from the written record. Each virtual site visit will be followed up with a brief in-person site visit to meet the statutory and regulatory requirements to perform regular on-site inspections (timing TBD).

Due to a variety of factors (e.g., staff resources, site visitor availability/training) the CoA has determined that accredited programs originally scheduled for a winter 2020 visit and applicant programs will take priority. Please note that applicant programs will be contacted in the order in which they were authorized to have a visit and that a site visit prior to July 1, 2021 is not guaranteed. The OPCA will be contacting programs (and site visitors) in the coming weeks to coordinate and organize the virtual site visit.

As noted previously, all accredited programs with site visits that continue to be delayed remain accredited and in good standing throughout this delay. The CoA will provide an update on the status of site visits originally scheduled for spring/fall 2020 (and beyond) when decisions are made about their scheduling.

Site visitors participating in virtual site visits will be required to participate in an online, asynchronous training session on scheduling and conducting a virtual visit. The OPCA will also offer (upon request) live video-conferencing sessions to answer questions and familiarize visitors with the platform that is intended for use (i.e., Zoom). If you are a site visitor, you can anticipate emails from OPCA with additional information.

We greatly appreciate your flexibility and patience as we finalize the specifics and logistics associated with the ongoing need to conduct site visits virtually. Please contact apasitevisit@apa.org with any immediate questions regarding the temporary implementation of virtual site visits.

Kind Regards,

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