

## Chapter 11

## Section 3.3

# Accreditation

Issue Date: September 20, 1990

Authority: [32 CFR 199.6\(c\)](#)

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### 1.0 ISSUE

What does the [32 CFR 199.6](#) mean when it requires that a provider graduate from a regionally accredited university?

### 2.0 DESCRIPTION

**2.1 Accreditation versus State Approval.** Accreditation involves groups of recognized educational, institutional, and professional practitioners encouraging and assisting individual institutions or programs in the evaluation and improvement of their educational endeavors and publicly identifying those institutions or specialized units which meet or exceed commonly accepted standards of educational quality. The accreditation process is separate and distinct from the state approval process. State approval is an act of an officially authorized state government agency certifying that a unit or program within an institution complies with established minimum legal requirements.

**2.2 Accrediting Body.** An accrediting body is a voluntary, nongovernmental association that administers accrediting procedures for entire institutions or for specialized units. **Unless a different accrediting body is specified by law, regulation or TPM provision for a TRICARE individual professional provider, a recognized accrediting body is one formally acknowledged by the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) as having met CHEA's provisions and procedures for recognition. If an accrediting body is not formally acknowledged by CHEA, the Director, Defense Health Agency (DHA), may accept recognition of the accrediting body by the US Department of Education (USDE).**

**Note:** CHEA honors recognitions previously awarded by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation (COPA) and Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation (CORPA), predecessor organizations.

### 3.0 POLICY

[32 CFR 199.6](#) specifies that a provider must graduate from a regionally accredited university or college. This means that the program(s) provided by a university or college has been evaluated by an accrediting body recognized by CHEA, **or by USDE, as approved by the Director, DHA.** Information regarding the nationally accepted accrediting bodies which are formally acknowledged by CHEA may be found on their web site at <http://www.chea.org>. This information may also be obtained by calling (202) 955-6126 or by writing to CHEA at the following address: One

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Dupont Circle NW, Suite 510, Washington, DC 20036-1135. Approval by a state government agency is not acceptable in lieu of accreditation.

**Note:** The foreign degree, although often seen in the physician category, is uncommon in the mental health categories. When it exists, the individual's credentials are reviewed by the state board on a case-by-case basis to see if the degree is equivalent and if the coursework has been sufficient. Some boards require testing in the area of expertise, as well as requiring passage of an English exam. The responsibility is upon the applicant to establish his/her credentials. For questionable foreign graduate programs or where additional input is determined necessary, the applicant should be advised to contact an independent education credentialing agency for assessment. Consideration should be given to the process the state uses, the testing the applicant has undergone and whether the applicant has been afforded clinical membership in the appropriate professional association.

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