

**ACCREDITED SLEEP
TECHNOLOGIST TRAINING**
IN LOCAL SLEEP CENTERS & CLASSROOMS

STANDARDS FOR

A • STEP ACCREDITATION

ACCREDITED SLEEP TECHNOLOGIST EDUCATION PROGRAM A•STEP



AASM SLEEP EDUCATION SERIES

Standards For **A•STEP** Accreditation



The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has recognized a growing commitment to the standardized education and training of sleep technologists. A-STEP, the Accredited Sleep Technologist Education Program, is a two-step program that includes both an 80-hour didactic course (AASM A-STEP Introductory Course) and an 18-month on-the-job training and e-learning program (AASM A-STEP Self-Study Modules).

These Standards define the minimum requirements for AASM A-STEP accreditation. Duration of accreditation is two years.

Every accredited program has the responsibility to meet all federal, state and local regulations pertaining to educational programs.

Adopted by the Board of Directors in July, 2005

American Academy of Sleep Medicine

Personnel

Adequate personnel are critical to A-STEP. The A-STEP Program Director coordinates and manages the AASM A-STEP Introductory Course offering. An experienced registered polysomnographic technologist provides insight into the role of the technologist in the sleep disorders program, the knowledge base necessary to successfully pass the registry examination, and a model for the participant. The role of the A-STEP Clinical Director is to communicate the needs of the potential employer and to provide an overview of sleep medicine. The number and expertise of the remainder of the faculty should reflect the need to provide eight hours of instruction per day to the participants. Faculty will be required to provide didactic training as well as “hands-on” experience with a faculty-to-student ratio that optimizes training.

- Standard 1.** Each program must have a Program Director who is a Registered Polysomnographic Technologist or a Board Certified Sleep Specialist.
- Standard 2.** Each program must have a Clinical Director who is a Board Certified Sleep Specialist. This individual may also fill the role of Program Director.
- Standard 3.** Each program must have a Technical Director who is a Registered Polysomnographic Technologist. This individual may also fill the role of Program Director.
- Standard 4.** Each program must have adequate faculty chosen by the Program Director to provide didactic and practical instruction to the students in the program.

Resources

The A-STEP Participant must have sufficient instructional resources to become familiar with the knowledge base relevant to sleep medicine as well as the work environment. Accredited sleep disorders programs meet high standards for patient care; an affiliation with an accredited sleep program is required. Students must have access to the equipment required to perform polysomnography and positive airway pressure titration. An A-STEP with fewer than four students may provide AASM A-STEP Introductory Course instruction in an office or small conference room, whereas a larger A-STEP must have a classroom. A-STEP courses are encouraged to provide a library of instructional materials for students. Reference materials are essential, but other resources provide an excellent supplement to lectures.

- Standard 5.** Each program must be associated with a comprehensive Sleep Disorders Center accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.
- Standard 6.** Programs must have access to polysomnographic recording and treatment equipment used routinely by sleep technologists.
- Standard 7.** Programs with more than four students must have a classroom for didactic instruction.
- Standard 8.** Programs must have a library that includes, at a minimum, copies of the International Classification of Sleep Disorders Second Edition; Clinical Practice Parameters of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine; the Manual of Standardized Terminology, Techniques and Scoring System for Sleep Stages of Human Subjects; the Manual of Standardized Terminology, Techniques and Criteria for Scoring of States of Sleep and Wakefulness in Newborn Infants; and CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer by the American Red Cross.

Curriculum

Minimum curriculum requirements are defined here. A-STEP Providers are encouraged to review the sample curriculum developed by the Sleep Technologist Issues Committee of the AASM. Additional resources include the Curriculum Outline provided by the American Association of Sleep Technologists as well as the Registered Polysomnographic Technologist Examination Content Outline provided by the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists.

- Standard 9.** **The program must include a minimum of eighty (80) hours of instruction. It is recommended that this instruction be continuous but should not extend beyond an eight week period.**
- Standard 10.** **The program curriculum must include an introduction to the history of sleep and an overview of sleep disorders and sleep medicine.**
- Standard 11.** **The program curriculum must include a basic understanding of the nervous, respiratory, skeletal and cardiovascular systems.**
- Standard 12.** **The program curriculum must include training in patient safety incorporating infection control techniques, fall precautions and recognizing emergencies.**
- Standard 13.** **The program curriculum must include training in obtaining patient histories, interpersonal communication and management of the difficult patient.**
- Standard 14.** **The program curriculum must include training in patient confidentiality, informed consent, and discussion of HIPAA regulations.**
- Standard 15.** **The program must include instruction in preparation of the patient and equipment for polysomnography.**
- Standard 16.** **The program curriculum must introduce the student to polysomnographic recording, treatment equipment and electrical safety.**
- Standard 17.** **The program curriculum must introduce the student to sleep stage scoring and polysomnographic event detection.**
- Standard 18.** **The program must instruct the student in standard polysomnographic procedures, including the Multiple Sleep Latency Test and Maintenance of Wakefulness Test.**
- Standard 19.** **The program curriculum must include instruction in the application of positive airway pressure and supplemental oxygen as well as discussion of nocturnal ventilation.**

Assessment

A-STEP is expected to evolve through a process of self-assessment and quality assurance. This requires evaluation of participant and program performance. Adequate records must be kept to facilitate this task. A-STEP introductory courses must use objective measures as markers of success to aid in refinement and improvement of the training provided. A-STEP should strive for a high rate of passage on the standardized trainee examination. Other markers of success include reports from students that they felt prepared to begin work and reports from employers that the students were adequately prepared to be effective in the workplace.

Standard 20. **The program must provide students with an evaluation at the midpoint of the program that allows for correction of deficiencies in knowledge.**

Standard 21. **The program must maintain records of student performance and attendance.**

Standard 22. **The program must maintain objective measures of success, including but not limited to:**

- **Performance of students on standardized sleep technology trainee tests**
- **Student assessments of the program and how well they were prepared for work**
- **Employer assessments of student proficiency**

Minimum Entry Requirements

A-STEP Providers must ensure that applicants are high school graduates and meet minimum standards for employment as a Polysomnographic Trainee.

Standard 23. **Programs must require that students complete a high school education prior to beginning the program.**

Standard 24. **Programs must require that students are able to perform the duties specified in the AASM/AAST/BRPT job description for a Polysomnographic Trainee.**

Fair Practices

A-STEP Providers must not engage in false or misleading advertisements. Policies and procedures must be available for review, and the A-STEP must make every effort to treat participants and employees in a fair manner. Any A-STEP Provider that loses its Program or Clinical Director, changes the curriculum so that essential elements are no longer part of the training, or fails to maintain compliance with all of the Standards must report the change to the AASM office in a timely fashion.

- Standard 25.** **Announcements, catalogs, publications and advertising must accurately reflect the program offered.**

- Standard 26.** **The policies and procedures of the program must be available to prospective students.**

- Standard 27.** **The program must have a student grievance procedure.**

- Standard 28.** **The program must follow federal, state and local guidelines regarding student and faculty recruitment and employment practices.**

- Standard 29.** **The program must report changes in resources, curriculum or key personnel to the AASM within 90 days when they impact compliance with these standards.**

