

Updated March 30, 2021

PALS Provider Instructor-Led Training (ILT) Course Questions

Q: What is the AHA's 2020 PALS Provider Course?

A: The AHA's PALS Course has been updated to reflect new science in the 2020 AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC. The goal of the PALS Provider Course is to improve outcomes for pediatric patients by preparing healthcare providers to effectively recognize and intervene in patients with respiratory emergencies, shock, and cardiopulmonary arrest by using high-performance team dynamics and high-quality individual skills. This course uses precourse preparation, didactic instruction, and active participation in learning stations and simulated cases.

Q: What specifically is taught in the new PALS Course?

A: In the 2020 PALS Provider Course, students will learn and practice

- **Skills:**
 - Performing child and infant CPR
 - Using oxygen delivery and airway management equipment
 - Establishing intraosseous (IO) access and a method for giving rapid fluid boluses
 - Using electrocardiogram (ECG) monitoring
 - Providing defibrillation/cardioversion
- **Pediatric assessment:** A systematic approach
- **Medical management:**
 - 4 types of acute respiratory problems
 - 4 types of acute circulatory problems
 - 4 types of acute cardiac problems, including cardiac arrest
- **Leadership:** Communication and other important elements of team dynamics as they relate to resuscitation

Q: What are the key differences between the 2015 Guidelines and 2020 Guidelines versions of the PALS Provider Course?

A: The new PALS Course includes the following changes:

Learning and testing Stations

The key change in the PALS Provider Course is achieving a minimal Chest Compression Fraction (CCF) of 81% for more objective practice and testing. This allows everyone to move from a perception of how they did to actual measures of how they performed (perception to reality). This requires scenarios to be run in real time so that CCF can be measured coupled with a required feedback device for increased CPR quality. Teams will need to work together to figure out how to increase their CCF (i.e., choreography, logistics, etc.) for arrest related cases. The desire is to transfer this newly acquired knowledge into real world emergencies. This is the core of increasing survival rates.

Perform-----Measure-----Evaluate/Debrief-----Implement changes-----Perform better-----Measure→
→Continuous improvement cycle

Online exams

The AHA now offers online exams for Instructor-led Training (ILT) courses. Using their Security ID number, Training Centers secure online exams (bundled with eCards or as a standalone option) from ShopCPR to be issued to students during the ILT course. Online exams improve exam security and are just one way the AHA ensures that cardholders around the world have met the same course completion requirements for PALS classroom training.

Course Videos

- Course videos are available in digital format online and on DVD
- New videos have been added to the PALS Course, including CPR Coach

Instructor Manual

Part 1: General Concepts – All healthcare Instructor manuals now have a universal section, including

- Science and educational principles of resuscitation training
- Basic logistics for conducting any AHA course

Precourse Work

Instructor-led courses now include precourse work (recommended). If an Instructor chooses this option, students review course content through online interactive videos before they enter the classroom. Video lessons cover multiple medical subjects to prepare students for the course. Each lesson includes questions to engage students. This format allows more classroom time for hands-on skills training and leads to students being better prepared to participate as soon as they enter the classroom.

Prebriefing

In the 2020 PALS Provider Course, Instructors conduct a prebriefing with students immediately before the start of each simulation. The goals of prebriefing are to establish a positive learning environment and to provide information about the session to students. In addition, teams will set goals for the case and discuss the goals they set in the prebriefing during the debriefing. This will prepare students for success in the course.

CPR Coach

The CPR Coach is a new role within the resuscitation team. The CPR Coach role is designed to promote the delivery of high-quality CPR and allow the Team Leader to focus on other elements of cardiac arrest care, coordinate the various team members' assigned tasks, and ensure that clinical care is delivered according to AHA guidelines.

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Infant CPR and Child CPR and AED Skills Testing

- Includes enhanced prebriefing and debriefing
- Assesses students as a group
- Includes new CPR Coach role

Provider Manual Updates

The manual includes new information on the use of a CPR Coach and high-performance teams.

Q: What is the format for the PALS Provider ILT Course?

A: In the new PALS Provider ILT Course, precourse work is completed before the course so that students are prepared for the course at a Training Center (TC) or other facility. Precourse work includes the mandatory Precourse Self-Assessment, followed by video lessons. The course is structured as follows:

- Core concepts are presented online through interactive video lessons. Video lessons are completed before coming to class. Then Instructors lead discussions and case-based scenarios around a manikin during class.
- The Instructor coaches students by using a feedback device as they practice CPR and ventilation skills.
- The Instructor monitors as each student/team demonstrates skills proficiency as outlined in the skills testing checklist.
- Students take the PALS Provider Course Exam exam to confirm their understanding of core concepts.

The TC may choose for students to complete online video lessons (precourse work) before coming to class, or may choose to conduct a traditional PALS course, where all video lessons are conducted in class as interactive discussions with students. The course is designed to give students the opportunity to practice and demonstrate proficiency in the following skills used in resuscitation:

- Identifying and treating problems that place the child at risk for cardiac arrest
- Applying a systematic approach to pediatric assessment
- Using the evaluate-identify-intervene sequence
- Using the PALS algorithms and flowcharts
- Demonstrating effective resuscitation team dynamics

PALS Course Completion Requirements

Q: What are the course completion requirements for the PALS Course?

A: The minimum course completion requirements include:

- Participation in the classroom course, including completion of all learning stations
- Completion of the open-resource written exam with a minimum score of 84%

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- Passing the 1- and 2-Rescuer Child BLS With AED and 1- and 2-Rescuer Infant BLS Skills Tests
- Passing 2 PALS core case scenarios (1 cardiac and 1 respiratory or shock), providing appropriate medical treatment and demonstrating effective team dynamics
- Required skills stations include:
 - Child CPR and AED
 - Infant CPR
 - Airway Management
 - Rhythm Disturbances/Electrical Therapy
 - Vascular Access

Q: Are students required to act as a team leader in the two core test case scenarios in order to pass the PALS Course?

A: No.

Q: Is there a PALS Update Course?

A: Yes.

PALS Target Audience

Q: Who is the intended audience for the PALS Course?

A: The AHA's PALS Course is for healthcare providers who either direct or participate in the management of respiratory and/or cardiovascular emergencies and cardiopulmonary arrest in pediatric patients. This includes personnel in emergency response, emergency medicine, intensive care, and critical care units such as physicians, nurses, paramedics, and others who need a PALS course completion card for job or other requirements.

Q: What are the prerequisites for taking the PALS Course?

A: Before taking PALS, students should have a mastery of infant and child BLS skills. Students should also

- Be able to recognize a variety of heart rhythms
- Be familiar with different types of airway management tools and how they are used
- Have knowledge of the drugs commonly used in the PALS algorithms and flowcharts
- Understand the Systematic Approach Algorithm and the "evaluate-identify-intervene" sequence

Q: What resources are available to help prepare students for the PALS Course?

A: The following PALS resources are available to students at eLearning.heart.org:

- Mandatory Precourse Self-Assessment
- Video Lessons (Precourse Work)

Precourse Self-Assessment

Q: What is the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment?

A: The Precourse Self-Assessment is an online tool that evaluates a student's knowledge in 3 sections: rhythm recognition, pharmacology, and practical application. Students complete the assessment *before the course* to help evaluate their proficiency and determine the need for additional review and practice before the course. All students must complete the Precourse Self-Assessment and achieve a score of at least 70% before taking the PALS Course. Students must print their successful scoring report and bring it with them to class.

Q: Why is the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment required?

A: Students need to make sure they are prepared for the PALS Provider Course to minimize the risk of failing the course. Market research indicates a significantly favorable response from Instructors on making the Precourse Self-Assessment mandatory. The need for the mandatory Precourse Self-Assessment has increased due to more non-traditional students taking PALS.

Q: Will there be a printed version of the PALS Precourse Self-Assessment? If not, why not?

A: The online Precourse Self-Assessment cannot be duplicated in a printed format since it measures knowledge gaps based on how students answer questions as they move through the assessment. A written version would not be able to adequately assess knowledge.

Course Materials

Q: What materials are available for the PALS Provider Instructor-led Course?

A: Materials for the AHA's PALS Provider Instructor-led training course are currently available through ShopCPR.Heart.org or WorldPoint (for some AHA Training Centers). Materials include:

Student/Provider Materials

20-1119 PALS Provider Manual, includes PALS Reference Card (20-1118)

20-3120 PALS Provider Manual eBook, includes PALS Digital Reference Card (20-3121)

20-1118 PALS Reference Card

20-3121 PALS Digital Reference Card

Instructor Materials

20-1114 PALS DVD

20-1424 PALS Digital Video

20-1117 PALS Instructor Manual

20-3122 PALS Instructor Manual eBook

Cards

20-3006 PALS Provider eCard

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Supplemental Materials

- 20-1116 PALS Posters (set of 10)
- 20-1115 PALS Emergency Crash Cart Cards

Course Length

Q: How long is the PALS Course?

- A: Approximate times for each version of the PALS Provider Course are listed below:
- PALS ILT Full Course: 12.5 hours with breaks; 10.5 hours without breaks
 - PALS ILT Traditional Course: 17 hours and 15 minutes with breaks; 16 hours and 45 minutes without breaks
 - PALS ILT Update Course 8 hours and 45 minutes with breaks, 8 hours and 15 minutes without breaks

Teaching the New PALS Provider Instructor-led Course

Q: Who can teach the new PALS Provider ILT Course?

- A: The new PALS Course may be taught by AHA PALS Instructors who have completed their 2020 Guidelines Instructor Update for PALS and have received and reviewed their new PALS Course Instructor materials.

Q: What resources are available to help Instructors understand the new PALS Course and materials?

- A: The AHA developed the PALS Product & Course Orientation (P&CO) to help PALS Instructors understand the new, 2020 PALS course design and teaching strategies, and to quickly get up to speed on the latest and most important updates to the PALS Course materials. This orientation is available free of charge to Instructors through eLearning.Heart.org (requires login with AHA Instructor Network credentials).

The P&CO provides PALS Instructors

- Information about new course materials, course curriculum updates, and how the changes impact the way you will teach the PALS Course
- Details, clarification, and direction on various course formats
- Specifics about new PALS course materials
- Steps to incorporate new updates into various course settings

While all PALS Instructors are strongly encouraged to complete the P&CO before teaching the new course, it is not required. Viewing the P&CO is most helpful if Instructors have new course materials in-hand while viewing.

- Q: Does the 2020 PALS Provider Course include an option for students to earn a BLS Provider Card during a PALS class?**

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A: Yes. The AHA allows Instructors to add BLS skills testing and an exam to provide both a BLS Provider eCard and a PALS Provider eCard upon successful completion of the PALS course. If a BLS Provider card is to be issued, a BLS Instructor must be present to complete the adult CPR skills tests as well as the exam. **Note that offering testing for BLS skills and administering the BLS exam will add time to the PALS Course.** Renewal of BLS skills during a PALS class should be a preplanned option, with registration for the BLS portion to allow for both the students and the Instructor to prepare.

2020 PALS Exam

Q: Are students allowed to access resources when taking the PALS Provider Course Exam?

A: The AHA has adopted an open-resource policy for exams. Open resource means that students may use resources as a reference while completing the exam. Resources could include the provider manual, either in printed form or as an eBook on personal devices, any notes the student took during the provider course, the 2020 Handbook of ECC for Healthcare Providers, the AHA Guidelines for CPR and ECC, posters, etc. Open resource does not mean open discussion with other students or the Instructor. Students may not interact with each other during the exam.

Continuing Education (CE) Information

Q: Does the PALS Provider ILT Course offer continuing education (CE)?

A: Yes. The following CE is available for the PALS Provider and the PALS Update Courses:

PALS ILT Full Classroom Course

Continuing Education Accreditation – Emergency Medical Services

This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 9.75 Educator CEHs, activity number 20-AMHA-F2-0089.

PALS ILT Update Course

Continuing Education Accreditation – Emergency Medical Services

This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 6.50 Educator CEHs, activity number 20-AMHA-F2-0090.

PALS ILT Traditional Full Course

Continuing Education Accreditation – Emergency Medical Services

This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 13.75 Educator CEHs, activity number 20-AMHA-F2-0100.

PALS ILT Full and Update Precourse Work

Continuing Education Accreditation – Emergency Medical Services

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This continuing education activity is approved by the American Heart Association, an organization accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE), for 2.75 Advanced CEHs, activity number 20-AMHA-F3-0091.

AMA Credit Designation Statement - Physicians

The American Heart Association designates this live activity for a maximum of 2.50 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credits*[™]. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

AAPA Credit Acceptance Statement – Physician Assistants

AAPA accepts certificates of participation for educational activities certified for *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*[™] from organizations accredited by ACCME or a recognized state medical society. Physician assistants may receive a maximum of 2.50 hours of Category I credit for completing this program.

AANP Credit Acceptance Statement – Nurse Practitioners

American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) accepts *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit*[™] from organizations accredited by the ACCME.

ANCC Credit Designation Statement - Nurses

The maximum number of hours awarded for this CE activity is 2.50 contact hours.

ACPE Credit Designation Statement – Pharmacists

ACPE Credit: 2.50 Contact Hours. Universal Program Number: JA0000134-0000-20-043-H04-P