

## **Conducting needs assessment**

### **Identifying your audience's educational needs**

Whenever content is developed for an event or session, it is essential to determine who the target audience is. What is even more critical is determining the target audience's educational needs. Identifying these needs can be done using needs assessment.

Needs assessment consists of identifying perceived needs, as well as unperceived ones, by collecting data and other information from a number of sources. The methods used to gather information depend on the target audience and subject matter. Below are some suggested sources.

#### **Sources of information about perceived needs**

- consultation with planning committee members
- surveys
- questionnaires
- focus groups
- direct requests from the target audience

#### **Sources of information about unperceived needs**

- self-assessment tests
- chart audits
- chart-stimulated recall interviews
- direct observation of practice performance
- quality assurance data from hospitals, regions
- standardized patients
- provincial databases
- incident reports
- published literature (RCT, cohort studies)