



ACPA and our Approved Teams are leading interdisciplinary cleft and craniofacial care so patients and families thrive.

The American Cleft Palate Craniofacial Association (ACPA) empowers and supports cleft and craniofacial healthcare professionals and the patients they serve through research, education, and advocacy. ACPA promotes team care and professional collaboration to ensure the highest quality resources are available to all with the craniofacial differences throughout their healthcare journey.

Children born with cleft lip, cleft palate and/or other craniofacial difference may require individualized treatment into adulthood. Their care is best managed when a team of specialists works with the family to develop and follow a treatment plan. Coordinated teams include experienced and qualified professionals from medical, surgical, dental, and allied health disciplines working together to serve patients.

Leading the science.
Defining the patient
care approach.

Interdisciplinary
excellence.
A unified mission.



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Frequently Asked Questions

What is an ACPA Approved Team?

This distinction is for teams in the US or Canada that demonstrate they meet the Standards for Approval of Cleft Palate and Craniofacial Teams – The six components identified in the standards as essential to the quality of interdisciplinary team care include team composition, team management and responsibilities, patient and family/caregiver communication, cultural competence, psychological and social services, and outcomes assessment. These standards have been widely peer-reviewed and represent expectations for approval of teams providing care to individuals with cleft and/or craniofacial conditions.

What kind of treatment does a team provide?

The team will likely request regular visits throughout a child's growing years. After infant surgeries are complete, travel to a team may be limited to once a year or may be more frequent depending on treatment needs. Routine treatment such as general dental care, orthodontics, speech therapy and pediatric care can usually be provided by professionals in your local community who can maintain regular contact with professionals on the team.

What medical professionals are on a team?

Cleft Palate and Craniofacial ACPA Approved Teams are required to have a care coordinator, an orthodontist, a speech-language pathologist, and a surgeon. Teams must also have access to an audiologist, geneticist, otolaryngologist (ENT), pediatrician, pediatric dentist or dental specialist, psychologist, and social worker. Additionally, Craniofacial Teams must also have a craniofacial surgeon and access to a neurosurgeon, an ophthalmologist, and a radiologist.

Where can I view Team Listings?

ACPA Approved Teams are listed on the ACPA website and are available for the general public to reference when choosing a provider for cleft and craniofacial healthcare needs.

What should I think about as I select a team?

All professionals on a team should be fully trained in their specialty areas and appropriately certified and licensed. This is critical since it may impact insurance coverage, as well as the quality of care delivered. You should also consider the experience of team members and ask how often the team meets and how many patients are seen on each team clinic day. This will give you an idea of how involved the providers are in treatment.

Is there a team near me?

You can search for teams by location at acpacares.org. You may consider travelling some distance to access an ACPA Approved Team or other qualified professionals. When considering teams, please note that insurance funding often requires patients to access treatment in their state of residence.

How are International Teams listed?

Although ACPA Team Approval does not extend beyond teams outside of the US and Canada, the website also lists teams from around the world as a resource for patients and families.

What does it mean if a team isn't approved?

It may mean that the team either has not applied or that the team does not meet the minimum requirements for approval. There is no judgment or statement of quality made about established teams that have not elected to apply for approval; nor is holding approval required in order for health care professionals to organize and advertise themselves as a team.

How does a team apply to be an ACPA Approved Team?

In order to apply, each team must submit an application. Information on applications, fees, and due dates can be found on ACPA's website.

How long is a team approved?

Approval is for a period of five years. All ACPA Approved Teams must submit an annual self-audit report verifying that they still meet the Standards for Approval.

What is the Commission on Approval of Teams?

ACPA's Commission on Approval of Teams manages the approval process by maintaining the Standards for Approval of Cleft Palate and Craniofacial Teams, evaluating teams that voluntarily apply for approval and recognizing teams that meet the Standards for Approval.

