



# Update on continuing professional development



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Dear Colleagues,

The pandemic has created a dynamic context for continuing professional development (CPD). Family physicians need to be apprised of evolving science and want to connect to learn and to adapt practice to best meet patient needs. The CFPC is an important and trusted CPD provider for Canadian FPs. We have offered just-in-time online pandemic-related courses and webinars, planned by FPs for FPs and delivered virtually. They have integrated the latest scientific information with practical tips on adapting to the changing situation. The pandemic has challenged the CFPC in its role as a CPD provider but also in our responsibility for Mainpro+, which sets the standards for CPD for FPs in Canada. Various initiatives are under way on this standards side.

*Mainpro+ Standards Working Group:* Staff, CPD academics, and members with CPD expertise have been working over the past year to review the participation standards of Mainpro+, ie, what we require over a 5-year cycle to demonstrate achievement in lifelong learning to the CFPC and medical regulatory authorities (MRAs), which rely on our system. Input from Mainpro+ users was sought through surveys. We aim to make Mainpro+ more user friendly while maintaining rigour, enhancing the recognition of activities that foster improvement in practice, and enabling members to meet accountability requirements of MRAs and regional health authorities. The main areas under review follow.

- Enhancing user friendliness through a reduction in CPD categories so activities are easier to find and report.
- Increasing awareness of the broad menu of eligible Mainpro+ activities, maintaining full reciprocity with the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Collège des médecins du Québec, and continuing to accept up to 50 certified credits per cycle for both Royal College and American Medical Association activities.
- Reviewing mandates versus incentives for priority CPD topics: As expected, further discussion is required. Most do not favour mandating specific activities, given FPs' broad scope. However, there is recognition of the importance of pointing FPs toward ongoing learning in areas of high societal and patient impact. How such CPD could be incentivized is under discussion.
- Supporting quality and practice improvement: The MRAs are variously active across the country introducing new requirements for practice and quality improvement. We are considering new mandatory credits in the Mainpro+

Assessment category in each cycle, following the lead of the Royal College and the Collège des médecins du Québec. We will also be consulting with MRAs to amend the process for certification of MRA-created quality improvement, quality assurance, and peer coaching and assessment programs. Members indicate that valuable CPD comes from completing the (often) mandated MRA activities, and MRAs have not consistently sought certification. Alignment with MRA requirements is important to the continuing success and relevance of Mainpro+.

The National Committee on Continuing Professional Development will review the recommendations, and the board will receive the final version for approval this spring.

*Self Learning:* Published online and in hard copy every 2 months, the program offers clinical questions and answers curated by FP writing teams from coast to coast. Self Learning has been modernized in the past 18 months. Participation has increased by 1517 members since last year for a total of 9259 participants. The updated website launched in December (<http://selflearning.cfpc.ca>). A recent module providing information about COVID-19 is available online to all CFPC members at no cost.

*Professional Learning Plans (PLPs):* Our certified PLPs launch in the Mainpro+ portal this month. Physicians are not always thorough in assessing their own learning needs. Support and structure improve self-assessment, drive learning more effectively, and positively affect practice. The PLP tool is an interactive self-assessment tool that is easily accessible through each member's Mainpro+ dashboard. It is certified for 12 Mainpro+ Assessment credits or for 20 credits if the plan is created with a trusted peer. Use of the tool is entirely optional at this time. It aims to help FPs more directly link scope of practice and education needs for their practices and communities with a commitment to change and improvement in practice. We are hopeful this process will foster reflection and learning related to all CanMEDS roles, and will assist members in meeting MRA requirements for practice and quality improvement initiatives.

Participation in CPD has been a hallmark of our members since our founding in 1954. Mainpro+ has evolved from a feature of membership to a respected and trusted mark of excellence that MRAs across Canada recognize. We are committed to maintaining rigour in our standards as we seek member feedback, enhance the user experience, and enable FPs to link their CPD more closely with practice improvement. Stay tuned for more progress updates! 🌱

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