

# Understanding Mainpro+<sup>®</sup> Certification

Standards for continuing professional  
development program providers



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If you have an inquiry regarding a provincial program review or ethical review, please contact the appropriate CFPC Chapter via [http://www.cfpc.ca/Chapter\\_Offices/](http://www.cfpc.ca/Chapter_Offices/).

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# Frequently Asked Questions

## **What are the requirements and costs associated with Mainpro+® certification?**

Costs and requirements vary depending on the type of certification sought. Please see the Mainpro+ certification overview in the Introduction for more specific information.

## **How many College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) members are required to sit on the scientific planning committee of a nationally reviewed Mainpro+ certified program?**

Three active CFPC members are required to sit on the scientific planning committee of a nationally reviewed Mainpro+ program. These members may come from any region of the country or from the same region. Please see the Introduction: Understanding Mainpro+ Certification.

## **How can I confirm that a physician is an active CFPC member?**

You can check a physician's membership status by searching the CFPC Members List, a tab located at the top of the CFPC website's home page: <https://www.cfpc.ca/en/members-list>.

## **Can any physician be involved in program planning and development for CFPC Mainpro+ certification?**

Yes. However, at least three physicians for nationally reviewed Mainpro+ programs and one physician for provincially reviewed Mainpro+ programs who are active CFPC members must have had substantial input in the program's planning and development.

## **What constitutes "substantial input" in program planning and development?**

As part of the application process, substantial input or involvement is confirmed when a CFPC member verifies that they have contributed to the consideration of learning needs, the determination of learning objectives and program content, and the choice of speakers or presenters.

## **What are the main differences in certification requirements for online or virtual activities versus live, in-person activities?**

Regardless of the method of delivery, all activities seeking Mainpro+ certification must meet the Mainpro+ Quality Criteria requirements as well as all ethical standards. Activities delivered via the Internet must address the following components:

- Participants must be able to register and receive a receipt or record of registration for all online or virtual continuing professional development (CPD) activities. This is required regardless of whether the CPD activity has a registration fee.
- For a live or asynchronous Group Learning activity there must be a means for the participants to interact with the material, with each other, and with faculty or a facilitator.
- For Self-Learning activities there must be a means for learners to interact with the material and with a faculty member or facilitator (primarily to address questions regarding the content).

**What are the branding parameters for CPD providers?**

Sponsors' logos and other branding, such as colours associated with a company or product, must not be included in the content presented during a Mainpro+ certified CPD activity, such as handouts, PowerPoint slides, virtual platforms, email communications, etc.

**Does the College allow for industry representatives to assume an educator/presenter role at Mainpro+ certified events?**

No. Representatives of health care/pharmaceutical industry (HPI) commercial interests (for-profit entities that develop, produce, market, resell, or distribute drugs, devices, products, or other health care goods, services, or therapies that may be prescribed to patients or ordered by doctors in the diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, management, or palliation of health conditions) may not act as educators or presenters under any circumstances.

**Can HPI commercial interests be involved in program development?**

No. Representatives of HPI commercial interests (as described in the response to the previous question) are not permitted to participate in or attend scientific or content planning committee meetings for programs seeking Mainpro+ certification. They may not have any role whatsoever in the program's content development. Program committees primarily concerned with program logistics are considered different and would not exclude representatives of HPI commercial interests.

**What happens if an out-of-province participant takes part in a provincially certified online self-study activity?**

Programs seeking provincial certification for self-study online activities must demonstrate that the target audience is provincial in scope and the marketing of the program is restricted to participants from a single province. If an out-of-province participant learns of the program and takes part, they are eligible to claim the credits earned for the activity.

**When do I submit conflict of interest (COI) information?**

The CFPC's three-step COI declarations (which may be presented on PowerPoint slides, as handouts, etc.) and related information (including planning committee COI forms) must be included with the application for certification. If the speaker name or names and other required details are not known at the time of application submission, a template should be submitted to identify how the information will be later presented.

**Do online programs require ethical reviews?**

Ethical reviews are required only for live events (in-person or virtual) that have been funded with support from for-profit groups or organizations and/or delivered outside Canada.

**How is for-profit support defined?**

This is defined as monetary or in-kind contributions provided by an organization whose primary goal is to incur profit for the company owners or shareholders. If the CPD provider organization is a for-profit company, then the program is deemed to be supported by a for-profit company.

**What is in-kind support?**

In-kind support may be services, tools, or human resources that have a monetary value and are provided to an organization in support of an educational activity.

**What does the CFPC consider to be an acceptable needs assessment?**

There are many valid types of needs assessments, including chart audits, questionnaires, focus groups, interviews, standardized assessment exercises, morbidity/mortality data, provincial/national/organizational databases, and direct observation, to name a few.

Please refer to the requirements for Quality Criterion 1: Needs assessment and practice relevance in Chapter 3: Determining Credit Allocation for more information.

**How are conferences, symposia, congresses, and scientific assemblies certified in Mainpro+?**

Single-delivery one-credit-per-hour conferences, symposia, congresses, and scientific assemblies are certified using a modified application process in CERT+ (the CFPC's online certification application platform). Providers must complete the appropriate online application and respond to a modified set of Quality Criteria questions (see Chapter 3: Determining Credit Allocation). Programs are still required to adhere to the Quality Criteria requirements, but the application process requires less content review. In place of content review there is a review of the scientific planning committee's process for program development and communication with speakers. Mainpro+ reviewers may still request content for review should any topics or aspect of the process outlined on the application require clarification or raise concerns.

**Can a conference have some sessions certified for one credit per hour and some sessions certified for two or three credits per hour?**

Yes, this is possible; however, separate applications must be completed and submitted for the two- or three-credit-per-hour aspects of the program. These aspects must be reviewed separately from the one-credit-per-hour sessions.

**Is it possible to offer a program in more than one distance learning format (e.g., online, webinar, webcast, teleconference, or video conference)?**

Yes. You must indicate that you intend to offer a program in more than one format in your initial application and provide details on how you will ensure that the learning experience remains consistent from one format to the next. If it is determined that there will be a substantially different learning experience based on the delivery format, a separate application will be required per format. Please refer to Chapter 4: Mainpro+ Certification Requirements by Program Type.

**Is it possible for regularly scheduled series (e.g., hospital rounds and journal clubs) to have Mainpro+ certification?**

Yes. Please see Journal clubs in Chapter 4: Mainpro+ Certification Requirements by Program Type.

**Is it possible to apply for certification for modular CPD programs?**

Yes. Providers can apply for credits for modular CPD programs (i.e., credits granted on a per-module basis versus credits for completion of an entire program). A single application can be made for modular certification if the following criteria are met:

- The modules are targeted at a common audience
- All content has a demonstrated theme
- The modules are organized such that value can be derived from taking only one module in a series

- Certificates of completion and/or letters of participation clearly indicate the following:
  - The title of the CPD program
  - The CERT+ Session ID number for the module
  - The title(s) of the module(s) that an individual has completed (e.g., “Module I: Introduction to Diabetic Foot Care”)
  - The number of credits based on the module(s) the participant has completed (e.g., “Module I: Introduction to Diabetic Foot Care – 1.0 Mainpro+ Certified Self-Learning credit”)

For existing Mainpro+ certified programs, if the provider wishes to offer the program in a modular format and assign credits for completing a module versus the entire program, a new application for certification must be submitted.

**How long does it take for applications to be reviewed?**

Applications submitted through CERT+ that meet all requirements and include confirmation of participation from planning committee members will undergo initial review within six weeks. Please note that the review process does not begin until the application fee is paid and the confirmation of CFPC member planning committee involvement is received.

**If a live, in-person program is to be offered outside Canada, is it eligible for Mainpro+ certification?**

For programs held in the United States, please refer to Chapter 5: Mainpro+ Certification Agreements for information on the CFPC’s bilateral reciprocal agreement with the American Academy of Family Physicians. CPD programs organized and offered by Canadian organizations but held outside North America must be submitted to the CFPC National Office for review via CERT+. Specific ethical review requirements apply to programs held outside of Canada; see Introduction: Understanding Mainpro+ Certification for details.

**If program content has been altered after it was approved/certified, does it need to be resubmitted to the College?**

Yes. Requests for changes should be submitted to [certplus@cfpc.ca](mailto:certplus@cfpc.ca) for review. If the changes are minimal, the College’s CPD Director or Executive Director will review and either approve the request, indicate the changes required, or reject the requested changes. If content changes or additions are substantial, a new application should be made for approval/certification.



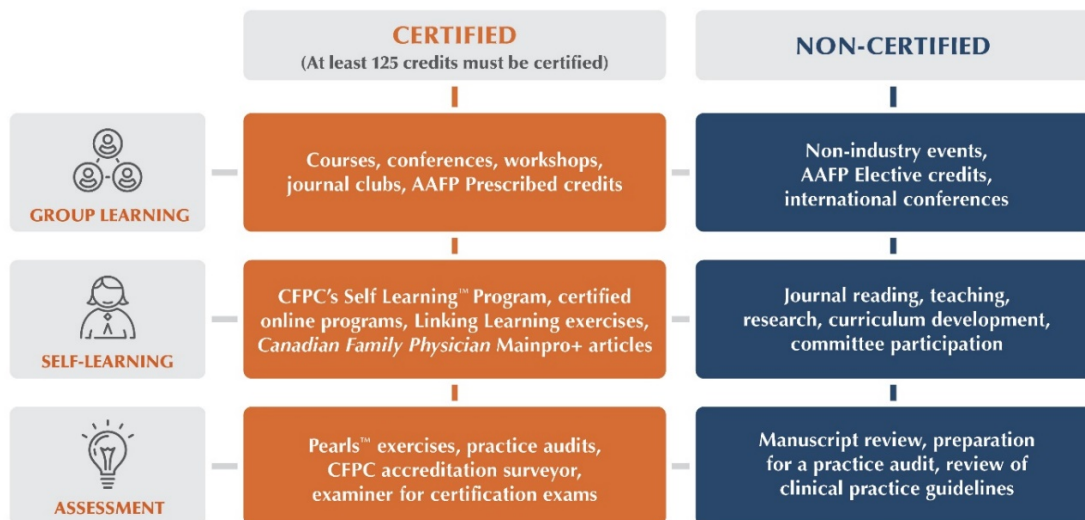
# Introduction: Understanding Mainpro+ Certification

## Continuing professional development categories, formats, and providers

The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) has three recognized continuing professional development (CPD) credit categories: Group Learning, Self-Learning, and Assessment. Credits within these categories are classified as either certified or non-certified:

- Certified credits are awarded for those activities that have been reviewed and approved by the College, a CFPC Chapter, or a Canadian university's CPD office and judged to have met the standards for certified CPD.
- Non-certified credits are awarded for those activities that have not been formally reviewed by the College but that comply with the College's definition of CPD (see Defining CPD: Eligible CPD provider).

Figure 1. Categorization of CPD credits



### Defining CPD: Credit categories

- Group Learning: Activities that provide opportunities to learn with others
- Self-Learning: Activities accessed and completed by the individual, outside the context of a group
- Assessment: Activities that stimulate learning and practice or performance improvement through the analysis of data and provision or receipt of feedback about an individual, group, or materials

## Defining Eligible CPD: Learning formats

CPD may be delivered in a wide variety of formats. These include but are not limited to the following examples:

**Live, in-person:** This is CPD delivered in a face-to-face format (e.g., conferences, workshops, in-person courses, journal clubs, clinical rounds).

**Live online learning:** These activities are delivered via the Internet to live audiences (e.g., webcasts of live, in-person conferences; virtual conferences; virtual workshops; virtual rounds programs; live webinars).

**Online self-study:** This is also known as asynchronous or self-paced activities. This type of CPD is accessed by the learner independently via online platforms. Examples include online module-based learning, recorded webinars with interactive elements, online simulation activities, mobile app-based learning, and virtual reality-based learning activities.

**Hospital or clinical rounds:** These scheduled education sessions are developed by hospital or academic departments and delivered from or within a hospital, clinical, or academic setting. The scientific planning committee must be accountable to a clinical or academic department head.

**Journal clubs:** These involve groups of physicians and other health professionals who meet on a regular schedule to review and critically evaluate recent articles in the scientific and medical literature. Members of a journal club are also the scientific planning committee for the club.

**Small-group learning activities:** These activities are planned by an organized group of physicians and other health care professionals (approximately 12 or less) to review and discuss practice related issues. Members of the small group act as the scientific planning committee for the group.

**Regularly scheduled series:** These live (online or in-person) activities are planned as series with regular schedules. They can be offered outside a clinical or hospital setting and there is no restriction on the number of participants. Regularly scheduled series may be organized by eligible CPD provider organizations (see below), including medical education companies.

## Defining CPD: Eligible CPD providers

A CPD provider organization is one that assumes the responsibility and accountability for the development, delivery, and evaluation of Mainpro+ certified CPD activities. The CPD provider organization may form a scientific planning committee to conduct this work.

CPD provider organizations that meet the following criteria may submit applications to the CFPC and its Chapters for review and awarding of Mainpro+ credits for CPD activities they develop. University CPD offices accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Continuing Medical Education (<https://cacme-caemc.ca/>)—a national body of which the CFPC is a member—may also certify activities in which they have substantial involvement. All Mainpro+ certification standards must be adhered to, including the substantial input of CFPC members in all aspects of the planning process.

### **Eligible CPD provider organizations for Mainpro+ one-credit-per-hour activities:**

- **Not-for-profit physician organizations** as defined by the National Standard (and explained in “Organization descriptions” below); this includes organizations whose health professional membership includes, but is not restricted to, physicians
- **Disease-oriented patient advocacy organizations**
- **Government departments and agencies** with an interest in and responsibility for health care
- **Organizations and professional associations** with an interest in and responsibility for health care who do not meet the definition of a health care/pharmaceutical industry (HPI) commercial interest
- **Medical education companies** (including online educators, publishing companies, and simulation companies) that are not subsidiaries of or in the employ of an HPI commercial interest and are not developing an activity on behalf or under the direction of an HPI commercial interest
- **A scientific planning committee** composed of two or more CFPC members or a single CFPC member in affiliation with one or more other health care providers for the specific purpose of creating CPD activities

### **Eligible CPD provider organizations for Mainpro+ two- and three-credit-per-hour activities:**

- **Not-for-profit physician organizations**, as defined by the National Standard (and explained in “Organization descriptions” below); this includes organizations whose health professional membership includes, but is not restricted to, physicians
- **Collaborations with not-for-profit physician organizations:** The following must develop and submit activities for certification in collaboration with a not-for-profit physician organization (as defined by the National Standard and explained in “Organization descriptions”): disease-oriented patient advocacy organizations; government departments and agencies; and organizations, professional associations, and medical education companies, as stipulated in the definitions above.

### **Not eligible to act as a CPD provider organization for Mainpro+ certified activities:**

- **HPI commercial interests are not eligible CPD providers**, nor is a subsidiary of an HPI commercial interest, nor an organization developing an activity on behalf of or under the direction of an HPI commercial interest.

## **Defining CPD: Organization descriptions**

**Health care/pharmaceutical industry (HPI) commercial interest:** These for-profit entities develop, produce, market, resell, or distribute drugs, devices, products, or other health care goods, services, or therapies that may be prescribed to patients or ordered by doctors in the diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, management, or palliation of health conditions. Examples include (but are not limited to):

- Pharmaceutical companies

- Medical device companies
- Medical and surgical supply companies
- Producers of non-prescription health care products
- Nutrition companies (infant formula, nutritional supplements)
- Pharmacies; diet, fitness, and weight-loss companies; prosthetic and orthotic stores; hearing-test centres; home care companies; etc.
- Clinical services that are owned or controlled by any of the above entities

This category **does not** include medical software (electronic medical record) companies.

**Medical education company:** An entity (either for profit or not for profit) whose primary business is the dissemination of education on disease states, therapies, medical products/devices, and other pertinent medical practice topics to physicians and other health care professionals. These activities may be supported by educational grants from HPI commercial interests, other commercial entities, government agencies, or charitable foundations, or by subscription or registration fees. Examples include CPD/CME travel companies, online educators, publishing companies, and simulation companies.

These entities **do not** provide marketing, brand recognition, advisory board support, or other services considered primarily the work of medical communication companies.

**Not-for-profit physician organization:** A not-for-profit group of health professionals with a formal governance structure, accountable to and serving, among others, its affiliated physician members through any of the following activities:

- Continuing professional development
- Provision of health care
- Research

This definition includes (but is not limited to):

- Faculties of medicine
- Hospital departments or divisions
- Medical societies
- Medical associations
- Medical academies
- Physician research organizations
- Physician clinics
- Health authorities not linked to government agencies
- Canadian provincial medical regulatory authorities

Types of organizations that are **not** considered physician organizations:

- Disease-oriented patient advocacy organizations (e.g., Diabetes Canada)
- Government departments or agencies (e.g., Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada)

- Industry (e.g., pharmaceutical companies, medical device companies)
- Medical education or communication companies (e.g., CME Inc.)
- For-profit online educators, publishing companies, or simulation companies (e.g., Medscape, CAE Healthcare)
- A small number of physicians working together solely and specifically to develop educational programming



**Scientific planning committee (new details added in 2020):** A group of target audience representatives responsible for identifying the educational needs of the intended target audience; developing educational objectives; selecting educational methods; selecting scientific planning committee members, speakers, moderators, facilitators and/or authors; developing and delivering content; and evaluating the outcomes of an accredited CPD activity.

The CFPC strongly encourages CPD providers to include diversity as a factor in the selection of scientific planning committee members and of speakers, moderators, facilitators, and/or authors to represent the target audience. This includes considering balanced representation for gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation/identity. If the target audience for a CPD activity is interprofessional, having an interprofessional scientific planning committee is strongly encouraged. Planners of CPD activities are also encouraged to include the patient voice in the design of CPD. A good way to accomplish this is to invite patients to join scientific planning committees.

### Defining CPD: Eligible topics

In addition to the clinical and therapeutic topics traditionally addressed in family physicians' CPD sessions, the following are considered acceptable topics for Mainpro+ programs:

- Faculty development programs that aim to improve teaching in family medicine
- Programs that aim to improve primary care research skills
- Programs that aim to improve computer skills as applied to learning, access to information, or CPD (e.g., electronic medical record program education)
- Practice management topics that emphasize quality assurance, patient flow, patient satisfaction, and general patient well-being
- Programs designed to increase physicians' skills in administration in hospitals, medical organizations, or other health care organizations
- Programs on alternative health practices designed to increase physicians' awareness of these techniques and how they might affect patients
- Programs designed to increase physician knowledge of billing in a practice setting
- Programs focusing on increasing health care provider resiliency and preventing burnout that can be linked directly to one or more CanMEDS-FM Roles

## Defining CPD: Ineligible topics

Any topic outside the generally accepted scope of medical practice, or peripheral to it, is not acceptable for Mainpro+ certification. Such topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Clinical topics outside the usual scope of practice of family physicians
- Business management topics that focus on physician benefits (e.g., personal financial planning)
- Programs on alternative health practices that are designed to teach associated techniques
- Programs that focus on self-growth or the personal development of physicians
- Programs aimed at preparing individuals to take the College's Certification Examination in Family Medicine or the Examination of Added Competence in Emergency Medicine (though participants can self-claim these hours for non-certified credits)

Regardless of the certification activity category (Group Learning, Self-Learning, or Assessment), all programs are subcategorized based on how the review is conducted and where the program is eligible for delivery. That is, the certification type will be either provincial or national.

## Provincial certification

A program categorized as provincially certified is eligible to award credits only in the province where certification is granted. Its scientific planning committee must include at least one active CFPC member from the province of program delivery. Programs seeking provincial certification for self-study online activities must demonstrate that the target audience is provincial in scope and the marketing of the program is restricted to participants from a single province. If an out-of-province participant learns of the program and takes part, they are eligible to claim the credits earned for the activity.

## National certification

A program that is nationally certified is eligible to award credits in all provinces\* (including two- and three-credit-per-hour programs). Its scientific planning committee must include at least three active CFPC members.

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\* Nationally certified programs that are delivered in Quebec have additional certification requirements.

## Mainpro+ certification overview

Table I provides a broad overview of the categories, costs, requirements, and processes of certification.

The information below is applicable to Group Learning, Self-Learning, and Assessment activities. The chapters that follow give more details on these elements.

### Application fee (taxes extra)

Please note that providers will be charged the non-refundable application fee based on the number of credits per hour they have requested. If a program is reviewed and approved for lower credit values than requested, the application fee will not be refunded.

**Table I. Mainpro+ certification application fees by program type**

Program Delivery	Nationally Certified	Nationally Certified	Nationally Certified	Provincially Certified	Provincially Certified	Provincially Certified
	One credit per hour	Two credits per hour	Three credit per hour	One credit per hour	Two credits per hour	Three credits per hour
With For-Profit Support	\$850.00	\$950.00	\$1,050.00	\$650.00	N/A	N/A
Without For-Profit Support	\$500.00	\$600.00	\$700.00	\$450.00	N/A	N/A

N/A: Not applicable

Note: Nationally Certified Programs include programs delivered outside of Canada.

### Certification period for all Mainpro+ certified activity types

- One-credit-per-hour programs: 12-month certification period
- Two-credit-per-hour programs: 18-month certification period
- Three-credit-per-hour programs: 24-month certification period

### Application deadline

All application materials are to be received by the College at least **six weeks** prior to the first anticipated activity delivery date. Please note:

- Approval and certification are not retroactive for programs that do not meet the aforementioned timeline.
- Providers who fail to submit their applications and all supporting materials prior to the deadline might not receive approval in time for their first session.
- Providers must inform participants that they may not claim certified credits for the program if program certification is not completed before the session starts.

## Application process

All applications must be submitted online using CERT+ (<https://certplus.cfpc.ca/>). All required documents are to be uploaded at the time of application, along with payment of the application fee.

**Content review:** Full content review is required for most programs seeking Mainpro+ certification. The only exceptions are one-credit-per-hour single-delivery conferences, hospital or clinical rounds, journal clubs, and regularly scheduled series (live and online). Mainpro+ reviewers may request content reviews for these activities at their discretion.

## Two- and three-credit-per-hour programs

Two- and three-credit-per-hour programs must be developed by or in collaboration with a not-for-profit physician organization, as defined by the CFPC.

**Content review:** All two- and three-credit-per-hour programs require full content review. All program content must be submitted at the time of review.

**Completion requirements:** Participants who wish to claim credits for attending two- and three-credit-per-hour programs are required to complete all components of the Mainpro+ certified activity to be eligible to receive the approved credits. Program providers should not supply participants with letters or certificates of participation until all program components have been completed, including the post-program requirements. Participants not completing all the required program elements will be eligible to claim only non-certified credits.

**Definition of a small group:** A small group is defined as approximately 10 participants per facilitator.

## Nationally certified programs delivered in the province of Quebec

At the time of application for national Mainpro+ certification, providers must indicate whether the submitted program will be delivered in Quebec. If so, the Mainpro+ certification application will include additional questions that must be answered. Programs will be assessed by a Quebec-based reviewer and one other CFPC reviewer. If the content is intended to be delivered in French in Quebec, French content must be submitted simultaneously with the English for review.

Translation verification will take place after the program review is complete, and final program approval is contingent on translation verification.

For information on additional requirements for programs delivered in Quebec see Mainpro+ certification of programs delivered in the province of Quebec.

## Content review process

**Nationally certified programs:** Each application is reviewed independently by two trained CFPC members to determine eligibility for certification and appropriate credit allocation.



**Provincially certified programs:** Each application is reviewed independently by one trained CFPC member to determine eligibility for certification and appropriate credit allocation.

After being reviewed, a program will be deemed one of the following:

- Approved
- Changes required<sup>†</sup>
- Rejected

Confirmation of content approval is sent to CPD providers from the CFPC National Office/Chapter via CERT+. Programs that require an ethical review are not considered certified until the ethical review is completed.

### **Adding sessions**

All live programs must add a session in CERT+ prior to each time the activity is delivered. Sessions can be added to a program by clicking the “Add session” button on the program details screen in CERT+. Live programs with no for-profit support can add sessions at no charge. Programs with for-profit support must undergo an ethical review for each session added. There is a fee for each ethical review. Please see below for more details.

### **Ethical review process**

- All live (in-person or virtual) programs funded by for-profit financial or in-kind support are subject to the ethical review process prior to final certification.
- Each time a session of an approved program is delivered, session materials must first be submitted to the pertinent CFPC Chapter for review.
- The fee for an ethical review is \$150.00 per session; for provincially certified programs the first ethical review is included in the cost of the application fee.

### **Programs delivered outside Canada (effective January 1, 2018)**

Programs delivered outside Canada are subject to ethical review regardless of whether the program has for-profit financial support. This ethical review will focus on the marketing and promotion of these programs. Sessions are reviewed to ensure the appropriate Mainpro+ certification statements are used when describing certified education, that Mainpro+ credits are not used to leverage participation, and that ancillary benefits such as meals and entertainment attractions are not promoted more prominently than education activities. The ethical review will provide an opportunity to examine the program’s marketing and ensure that the promotion of social events is secondary to the promotion of the educational content. This includes a review of all marketing for the program (brochures, websites, invitations, etc.). An ethical review is required

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<sup>†</sup> Programs listed as “changes required” must make the required changes within 30 days of the request from reviewers. If changes are not made or feedback is not provided to reviewers within this time frame, the application will be closed and a new application must be submitted, along with a new application fee.

each time a session of the program is delivered outside Canada. The fee for an ethical review is \$150.00 plus applicable taxes.

## Certificate of participation

It is the responsibility of CPD providers to supply each participant with a letter or certificate of participation upon completion of a certified program. This document must include the following:

- Participant's full name
- Program name (exactly as it appears in CERT+)
- **CERT+ session identification number**
- Session date and location
- Number of credits for which the session is certified
- Type of credits for which the session is certified (i.e., Group Learning, Self-Learning, Assessment)
- Signature of an official from the CPD provider organization **for activities delivered in Quebec**

Note that participants in three-credit-per-hour programs should not receive letters or certificates of participation until the required post-program requirements are met.

Mainpro+ participants are required to submit proof of participation only when requested to do so by the College. However, all Mainpro+ participants and program providers should retain records for a minimum period of six years in case they are selected to participate in credit validation or program auditing.

## Program audit

All Mainpro+ certified CPD programs may be audited by the CFPC National Committee on Continuing Professional Development, the CFPC Department of Continuing Professional Development, and/or a CFPC Chapter or its CPD committee. The CFPC is not required to provide advance notice to CPD providers of intent to audit.

Failure to comply with established certification policies and procedures could result in revocation of certification. If certification is revoked, it is the responsibility of CPD providers to inform physician participants that they are not eligible to claim Mainpro+ credits.

## Appeal process

CPD providers may appeal decisions to deny program approval or session certification (ethical approval). All appeals must:

- Be made in writing (email is acceptable) to the CFPC National Office and sent to the attention of the Mainpro+ Certification Coordinator at [certplus@cfpc.ca](mailto:certplus@cfpc.ca)
- Include a cover letter outlining the rationale for the appeal, as well as a copy of the certification or ethical review rejection notice and/or the CERT+ identification number

## Calendar of Mainpro+ certified events

The CFPC maintains a calendar of upcoming Mainpro+ certified events on the CFPC website. When adding a session to CERT+, providers will be required to indicate whether they wish to list a program on the calendar of upcoming events. Only certified programs will appear on the calendar of events.

Self-study online programs will automatically be added to the calendar of upcoming events upon program approval. These programs will appear as ongoing until the certification period for the program expires. Providers may remove these sessions from the calendar if they wish.

**Important:** If providers do not wish to have programs appear on the calendar of upcoming events, they must indicate this when adding sessions to CERT+.

# Chapter 1: Eligibility for Certification

## – The basics

All continuing professional development programs (CPD) submitted to the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) for Mainpro+ certification must meet or exceed the criteria established by the CFPC Board and Executive Committee, National Committee on Continuing Professional Development (NCCPD), and other appropriate CFPC committees/groups. Standards established by bodies external to the CFPC—including the Canadian Medical Association (CMA)—are also considered when determining certification eligibility.

The College considers the criteria listed below to be the foundation upon which all high-quality CPD programs must begin; these are the basics of CPD programming. Individuals and groups involved in the design, development, and dissemination of CPD programming should review these documents—in their entirety—and understand the policies and standards contained within.

### Ethical standards

In brief, the planning, content, and conduct of CPD programs must follow Mainpro+ ethical standards to achieve and retain certified status. CPD providers, representatives, and selected faculty and presenters must understand and comply with:

- The requirements laid out in this document (*Understanding Mainpro+ Certification: Standards for continuing professional development program providers*)
- The CMA's *Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions With Industry* (<https://www.cma.ca/sites/default/files/2018-11/PD08-01.pdf>)
- The *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* (<https://www.cfpc.ca/national-standard>)

As well, all Innovative Medicines Canada member organizations must follow its 2020 *Code of Ethical Practices* (<http://innovativemedicines.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/IMC-EthicalPractices-2020-web-lowres-EN.pdf>), and programs held in the province of Quebec must adhere to the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins' *Code of Ethics* ([http://cqdpcm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CODE-ETHIQUE\\_CQDPCM\\_EN\\_VF-rev2020.pdf](http://cqdpcm.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CODE-ETHIQUE_CQDPCM_EN_VF-rev2020.pdf)).

Wherever discrepancies exist among the above documents, this standard, *Understanding Mainpro+ Certification: Standards for continuing professional development program providers*, shall prevail.

### Role of HPI representatives in certified activities

Representatives of a health care/pharmaceutical (HPI) commercial interest (e.g., pharmaceutical company, medical cannabis producer/provider, medical device company) cannot assume the role

of a facilitator, speaker, and/or instructor for any Mainpro+ certified program under any circumstances.

Industry (pharmaceutical/biotechnology company) representatives may attend live certified CPD programs as non-contributing members to the discussion to provide logistical support such as facilitating registration, audiovisual set-up, seating, and distribution of certificates of attendance.

Industry representatives may attend a live certified program only with the consent of the scientific planning committee chair and only if seating remains, preferably at the back of the room; these individuals must wear no commercial identifiers (e.g., corporate logos).

## Appropriate selection and conduct of scientific planning committee members

Substantial involvement is required by all scientific planning committee members and must be verified by the CFPC member(s) identified in the application. Substantial involvement is confirmed when the CFPC member verifies that:

- They have had substantial input into the program being submitted for certification (e.g., contributed to the consideration of learning needs, the determination of learning objectives, the development of program content, and the choice of speakers or presenters)
- The content of the program is relevant to family medicine
- The planning, content, and conduct of the program meet pertinent ethical standards
- They have been informed of any financial or non-financial incentives associated with the program
- They are also a member of the scientific committee

The CFPC member(s) on the scientific planning committee will be held accountable for how a program is presented and will be required to respond to any concerns regarding standard violations.

Representatives of a commercial interest (e.g., pharmaceutical company, medical cannabis producers/providers, medical device company, or marketing or communication firm) cannot participate as members of the scientific planning committee, nor may they participate as observers, scribes, etc., for scientific planning committee activities or meetings.

## Declaring and disclosing conflicts of interest

The CFPC requires compliance with the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities*, which describes the process and requirements for gathering, managing, and disclosing conflicts of interest (COI) to participants.

### Definitions

**Conflict of interest:** A COI is a set of conditions in which judgment or decisions concerning a primary interest (e.g., patient welfare, validity of research, quality of medical education) are

unduly influenced by a secondary interest (such as personal or organizational benefit including financial gain, academic or career advancement, or other benefits to family, friends, or colleagues).

**Perceived conflict of interest:** A perceived COI is the appearance of a COI as judged by outside observers, regardless of whether an actual conflict of interest exists.

**Real conflict of interest:** A real COI is when two or more interests are indisputably in conflict. An identified real conflict of interest always requires a bias mitigation strategy.

### **National Standard Element 3: Conflict of Interest**

This element describes the processes and requirements for gathering, managing, and disclosing conflicts of interest to participants.

3.1 All members of the scientific planning committee (SPC), speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors must provide to the CPD provider organization a written description of all relationships with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations over the previous two years including (but not necessarily limited to):

- a) Any direct financial payments including receipt of honoraria;
- b) Membership on advisory boards or speakers' bureaus;
- c) Funded grants or clinical trials;
- d) Patents on a drug, product or device; and
- e) All other investments or relationships that could be seen by a reasonable, well-informed participant as having the potential to influence the content of the educational activity.

3.2 The SPC is responsible to review all disclosed financial relationships of speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors in advance of the CPD activity to determine whether action is required to manage potential or real conflicts of interest. The SPC must also have procedures in place to be followed if a conflict of interest comes to its attention prior to or during the CPD activity.

3.3 All members of the SPC, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors, must disclose to participants their relationships as described in 3.1.

3.4 Any individual who fails to disclose their relationships as described in 3.1 and 3.3 cannot participate as a member of the SPC, speaker, moderator, facilitator or author of an accredited CPD activity.

### **COI disclosure process**

1. All members, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors must complete the Declaration of Conflict of Interest form.
2. All completed original forms must be retained by the party submitting the program for Mainpro+ certification (referred to herein as the CPD provider or CPD organizer) for a period of one year

following certification expiry, so that the forms are available in the event that the CFPC audits the program.

3. **Scientific planning committee forms:** Completed forms for each scientific planning committee member must be submitted at the time of application for certification (please scan and upload all forms to CERT+).

4. **Speaker, moderator, facilitator, and author forms:** These completed forms must be submitted to the scientific planning committee of the CPD provider organization. It is the role of the scientific planning committee to review all disclosed financial relationships of speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors in advance of the CPD activity to determine whether action is required to manage potential, perceived or real COIs. The scientific planning committee must also have procedures in place to be followed if a COI comes to its attention prior to or during the CPD activity.

5. A disclosure must be made to the audience regarding whether you do or do not have a relationship to disclose.

6. Speakers must disclose conflicts verbally and in writing using the CFPC COI slide template at the beginning of a presentation. If slides will not be used disclosures must be included in written program materials (e.g., conference program, course website, workbook, reading material) as applicable.

7. Speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors are responsible for ensuring that their presentations and education materials—and any recommendations—are balanced and reflect the current scientific literature. The only caveat to this guideline is where there is only one treatment or management strategy. Unapproved uses of products or services must be declared in the presentation.

8. Any individual who fails to disclose their relationship(s) as required cannot participate as a member of the scientific planning committee, speaker, moderator, facilitator, or author of a Mainpro+ certified activity.

**Please refer to Appendix 1: Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form to view a copy of the form and instructions for completing the form.**

### **The three-step COI disclosure policy**

All Mainpro+ certified CPD programs must disclose to learners any relevant financial relationships and potential COIs related to the program's design and delivery. It is the role of the scientific planning committee to review the COI forms submitted by speakers, facilitators, and authors and to devise a mitigation strategy for identified conflicts. COIs must be disclosed to learners even if an activity does not include live presenters. This includes the disclosure of any identified COIs (or lack thereof) of the scientific planning committee members and program development faculty as well as any financial support (or lack thereof) provided for the program's development. If conflicts are identified, the conflict mitigation strategy used by the scientific planning committee must also be made clear to the learners. This policy is referred to as the three-step COI disclosure policy. In the case of live programs, the disclosure must be made verbally and in writing (i.e., via slides in

the presentation). In the case of online or virtual CPD, these disclosures and any mitigation should be made to the learners before they access any educational content. This can be done in an onscreen format or in a video clip. The following three steps must be accounted for in the information provided to participants:

**Step 1: Faculty/presenter disclosure**

- Provide the speaker’s name and describe any relationships with for-profit and not-for-profit interests (grants/research support, consulting fees, honoraria, etc.).

**Step 2: Disclosure of financial support**

- Provide a specific outline of connections/support for the development/presentation of the program from external entities (for-profit and not-for-profit) or organizations—including educational grants and in-kind services (e.g., logistics)—and specific aspects of the faculty/presenter connections that a reasonable program participant might consider relevant to the presentation (e.g., products made by companies named on slide 1 that could be germane to the presentation). This slide should be completed and (when possible) presented by the scientific planning committee chair or designate.

**Step 3: Mitigating potential bias (required only if a conflict is identified in steps 1 and 2)**

- Describe the measures taken by the scientific planning committee to deal with and mitigate potential sources of bias in the presentation. This slide should be completed and (when possible) presented by the scientific planning committee chair or designate.

If faculty or speakers have not been identified at the time of application for certification, placeholder slides, handouts, or other written-format documents must be included with the application. The COI review and mitigation strategy that the scientific planning committee employed must be described and submitted on slide 3. As soon as faculty or speakers have been selected, providers must ensure the placeholder documents are updated.

The CFPC has developed a sample PowerPoint template/reference for CPD providers. For more information on how to complete the COI slides, please review our Quick Tips guide on COI ([https://portal.cfpc.ca/resourcesdocs/uploadedFiles/CPD/Mainpro - Maintenance of Proficiency/QuickTips\\_COI\\_Final\\_ENGLISH.pdf](https://portal.cfpc.ca/resourcesdocs/uploadedFiles/CPD/Mainpro_-_Maintenance_of_Proficiency/QuickTips_COI_Final_ENGLISH.pdf)) and view the three-step COI declaration online.



Figure 1.1. Examples of three-step disclosure slides

**Slide 1: Faculty Presenter Disclosure**

» Faculty/speaker's name:

» Relationships with financial sponsors:

- Any direct financial relationships, including receipt of honoraria: PharmaCorp ABC, **Canadian Cancer Org.**
- Membership on advisory boards or speakers' bureaus: **XYZ Biopharmaceuticals Ltd.**
- Patents for drugs or devices: **Widget ABC**
- All other investments or relationships that could be seen by a reasonable, well-informed participant as having the potential to influence the content of the educational activity: **Employee of XXY Hospital Group**

**Slide 2: Disclosure of Financial Support**

This program has received financial support from [organization name] in the form of [describe support here—e.g., an educational grant].

This program has received in-kind support from [organization name] in the form of [describe support here—e.g., logistical support].

Potential for conflict(s) of interest:

- [Speaker/Faculty name] has received [payment/funding, etc.] from [organization supporting this program and/or organization whose product(s) are being discussed in this program [do not list the products].
- [Supporting organization name] [developed/licenses/distributes/benefits from the sale of, etc.] a product [do not name the product] that will be discussed in this program.

### Slide 3: Mitigating Potential Bias

- » [Explain how potential sources of bias identified in slides 1 and 2 have been mitigated]
- » Refer to "Quick Tips" document

## Points of clarification

- When a speaker has no relationships that might pose a potential COI and the program has been developed without support from external entities, the slide regarding the management or mitigation of conflict may be omitted.
- Scientific planning committees are expected to review and approve the content of the COI slides for each speaker associated with the program (steps 1 and 2). Where the potential for conflicts exists, the committee must discuss and approve the management plan.
- Scientific planning committees are expected to declare any relationships that exist with any commercial entities with respect to the development or dissemination of the program (step 2; see slide 2 for examples).
- Where potential for conflict exists, scientific planning committees must develop and declare a plan for managing such conflicts and details of that plan must be outlined (step 3).
- It is expected that the mitigation of bias slides approved by the planning committee will be available for the ethical review whenever the program is presented.
- It is not sufficient to indicate CFPC program review as the mitigation of bias plan.
- For large events with multiple sessions and speakers, information for participants about financial support for the entire program needs to be presented once at the beginning of the program and in written program materials. Individual speakers in such programs need to present information about their own relationships only (or lack thereof).
- If a program is delivered without the use of presentation software (e.g., PowerPoint, Prezzi, etc.) or other presentation aids, declaration information must be provided verbally and in print, if printed materials are distributed (e.g., in handout materials or inserted in the event syllabus).

## The ethical review process

CPD is an essential component of maintaining proficiency for family physicians. The CFPC recognizes that there are many costs associated with the planning, development, and implementation of CPD events and programs. The CFPC and its Chapters believe it is ethically acceptable for industry (pharmaceutical, biomedical, etc.) to contribute to CPD events provided all contributions are at arm's length and that all parties adhere to the standards presented throughout this document.

To ensure that the focus of Mainpro+ certified CPD programs remains on addressing the educational needs of family physicians and not on ancillary benefits such as meals, entertainment, and monetary rewards, the CFPC has instituted a formal ethical review process for all live (in-person or virtual) Mainpro+ certified programs that have received financial or in-kind support from a for-profit organization. Programs delivered outside Canada are also subject to ethical review regardless of whether the program has for-profit support.

Each time a session of a live (in-person or virtual) Mainpro+ certified program that is supported by a for-profit organization is offered, the CPD provider must seek ethical approval from the CFPC Chapter in the province where that session is being offered. The cost of each ethical review is \$150.00 plus applicable taxes and is non-refundable. The ethical review is completed via online application in the provider portal in the CERT+ platform.

Here are the steps involved in the ethical review process for provincial and national certification applications:

### **Provincial Mainpro+ programs**

1. Submit your program via CERT+ to your CFPC Chapter for review and approval (application form, administration fee, needs assessment, evaluation, PowerPoint slides, etc.).
2. Once your program has been approved by a Chapter you are eligible to seek ethical approval and final certification from this Chapter only).
3. The first ethical review is provided at no cost for provincial Mainpro+ programs only. For all subsequent sessions you must submit the ethical review application (through CERT+), along with the ethical review fee (\$150.00 + applicable taxes) and required documents, to the pertinent Chapter at least 10 business days before your session.

### **National Mainpro+ programs**

4. Submit your program via CERT+ to the National Office for review and approval (application form, administration fee, needs assessment, evaluation, PowerPoint slides etc.).
5. Once the National Office has approved your program, you are eligible to seek ethical approval and final certification in any province where the program is delivered. (Programs delivered in Quebec must have undergone the Quebec review process.)
6. For all sessions of a program offered you must submit the ethical review application (through CERT+) along with the ethical review fee (\$150.00 + applicable taxes) and required documents to the pertinent Chapter at least 10 business days before your session.

## **Elements addressed during an ethical review**

The certification process includes a thorough review of the following elements to ensure their compliance with Mainpro+ certification standards:

- The logistical components of sessions (e.g., meals, breaks, entertainment, social events, venue, online platform, speakers, and presenters)

- Promotional materials, invitations, correspondence with potential attendees, participation certificates, and all other published announcements in print or digital media (e.g., websites, blogs); this review includes verification that no sponsor branding is included in these materials and that appropriate Mainpro+ certification statements are in use
- Costs to be assumed by attendees (e.g., registration and social events); this review is to verify that attendees' costs are not being subsidized in such a way as to introduce sponsor influence on the educational content
- Completed COI forms and COI slides for speakers, moderators, and facilitators at the session being reviewed

CPD providers must submit the documents and information listed above using CERT+ at least 10 business days before the session being offered. The following sections provide more details on these elements of the application.

### **Program logistics: Limits on meal expenses related to Mainpro+ certified events**

Logistics surrounding CPD programming are reviewed during the ethical review process.

The National Committee on Continuing Professional Development (NCCPD) and the CFPC National Office support the ability of Chapters, based on knowledge of their geographic regions, to establish and reinforce limits on the cost of meals associated with Mainpro+ certified activities. The costs of running an event can vary greatly from one province to the next and from one city to another. While it is not necessary for Chapters to have the same maximum values, in the interest of transparency and fairness there is an obligation for each Chapter to:

- Establish maximum values that they feel are acceptable in their province for meals associated with Mainpro+ certified CPD events
- Make these values publicly available (i.e., published on both the National and Chapter websites) so that all providers understand the limits by which they must abide

Please note that the costs outlined in Table 1.1 are on a per-attendee basis.

**Table 1.1. Daily limits on meal expenses related to Mainpro+ certified events**

Chapter	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Alberta	\$30.00	\$40.00	\$75.00
British Columbia	\$25.00	\$35.00	\$55*/\$70 <sup>†</sup>
Manitoba	\$20.00	\$30.00	\$75.00
New Brunswick	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$75.00
Newfoundland and Labrador	\$25.00	\$30.00	\$100.00
Nova Scotia	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$75.00
Ontario	\$30.00	\$60.00	\$85.00
Prince Edward Island	\$35.00	\$50.00	\$75.00
Quebec	\$30.00	\$40.00	\$80.00
Saskatchewan	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$75.00

\*Downtown Vancouver

<sup>†</sup>Elsewhere in the province of British Columbia

Table established 2013; revised 2019

### **Exceptions to the ethical review process**

- Programs developed and delivered by the CFPC National Office or CFPC Provincial Chapters are exempt from ethical review
- Programs that have received no funding from for-profit entities are exempt from the ethical review process (except for programs delivered outside Canada)
- Self-study online programs (programs that participants access independently on their own time without assistance from a sponsor representative)

For more about the process, see Chapter 8: Addressing Mainpro+ Certification Policy or Procedure Violations.

### **Program presentation: Separating education from marketing**

The separation of promotion from education is critical in Mainpro+ activities. As such, sponsors' logos and other branding may not be used on Mainpro+ certified educational content (i.e., must not appear within the header or footer of PowerPoint slides, handouts, sign-in sheets, Web modules, etc.). For the same reason, it is not permissible to use colours and/or colour schemes commonly associated with a sponsoring company or one or more of its products for PowerPoint slides, handouts, invitations, Web modules, and so on.

To ensure compliance with these standards, providers are required to submit the following with their application for review:

- A list of all funders of the program

- A list of the funders' products discussed in the program
- A sample of the funders' product packaging, company logos, and associated colours for comparison purposes

## **Standards for Mainpro+ program presentation and marketing materials**

The Mainpro+ certification review and approval processes apply to every aspect of CPD programming, from development to delivery. The following section outlines some requirements and restrictions that apply to promotional and presentation materials.

### **Required information**

Invitations or brochures (paper or digital) about the program must include the following:

- Title of the program (must be the exact title as approved at time of certification)
- Learning objectives of the session
- Name(s) of speaker(s) (if applicable)
- Name(s) of moderator(s) (if applicable)
- Start and end times of the certified presentation
- Times at which meals and breaks occur, including how this will be managed in a virtual format (if applicable)
- Location
- Mainpro+ certification statement and/or marketing statement
- Financial support acknowledgement statement (if applicable)

### **General use of logos and branding**

Regardless of whether the certified CPD activity is live, in-person; virtual; or asynchronous online, sponsors' logos and other branding must not be included on materials (in print or digital)—invitations, brochures, slides, websites, online platforms, apps, and other media—used to facilitate a Mainpro+ certified CPD event. For example:

- It is not permissible to include sponsors' logos in PowerPoint slides, handouts, invitations, communications, educational platforms, webinars, etc.
- It is not permissible to use colours or colour schemes commonly associated with a sponsoring company or one or more of its products on PowerPoint slides, handouts, invitations, communications, etc.
- Sponsor-specific advertising, promotional materials, or branding strategies cannot be included on or appear in locations where accredited CPD sessions are occurring (e.g., live or virtual lecture halls, small-group discussion rooms) immediately before, during, or immediately after a certified CPD activity.

There are other specific restrictions that apply to positioning and prominence of sponsors' names, logos, and product names that are explained in the following sections.

## Multi-page booklets or brochures

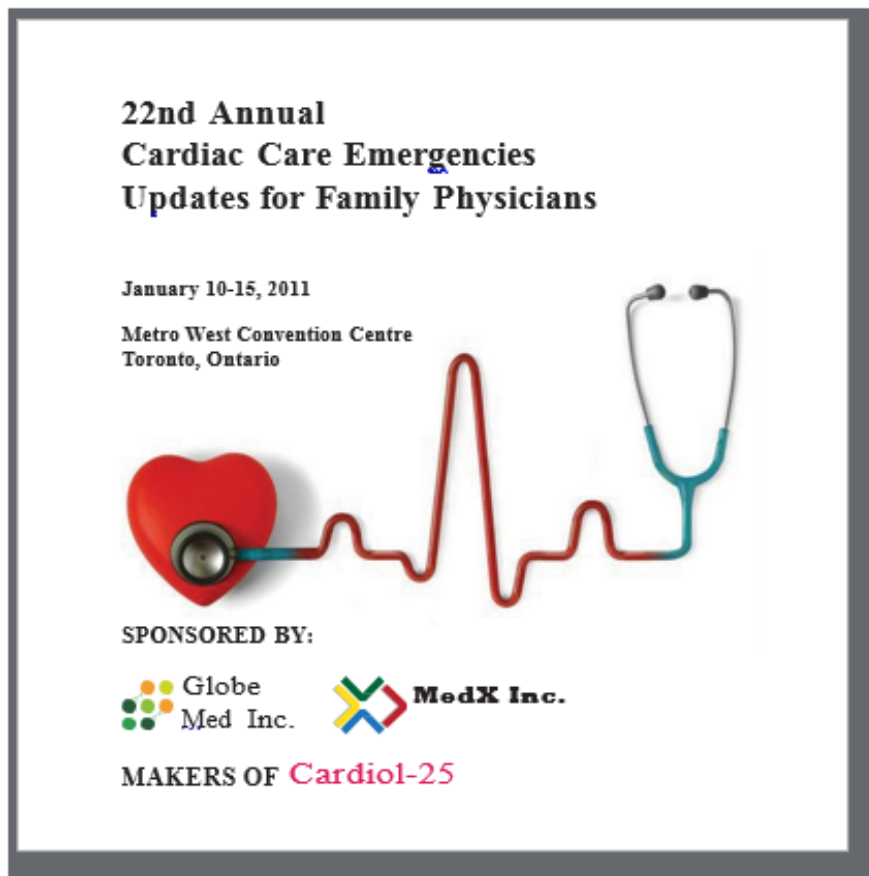
Sponsor logos must not be included on the cover page or title page of a multi-page booklet or brochure (print or digital).

The CFPC permits the use of sponsor logos only on the end or back page of the booklet or brochure (print or digital). Where a commercial or industry logo is used, it must not incorporate or include the name or title of a specific product. When acknowledging sponsorship, the following statement **must** be used: "This program has received an educational grant or in-kind support from [names of funding organizations]."

As well, the name of the company or logo must not appear on the same page as the program description (e.g., its agenda, speaker information, course outline).

When using logos as part of advertising/promotional materials for a Mainpro+ certified event, the size of text in the sponsor logo(s) must not exceed 100 per cent of the body text font size used in the advertisement or brochure (see Figures 1.2 to 1.4).

**Figure 1.2. Example A: Unacceptable front cover of a single-page brochure, poster, or flyer (print or digital)**

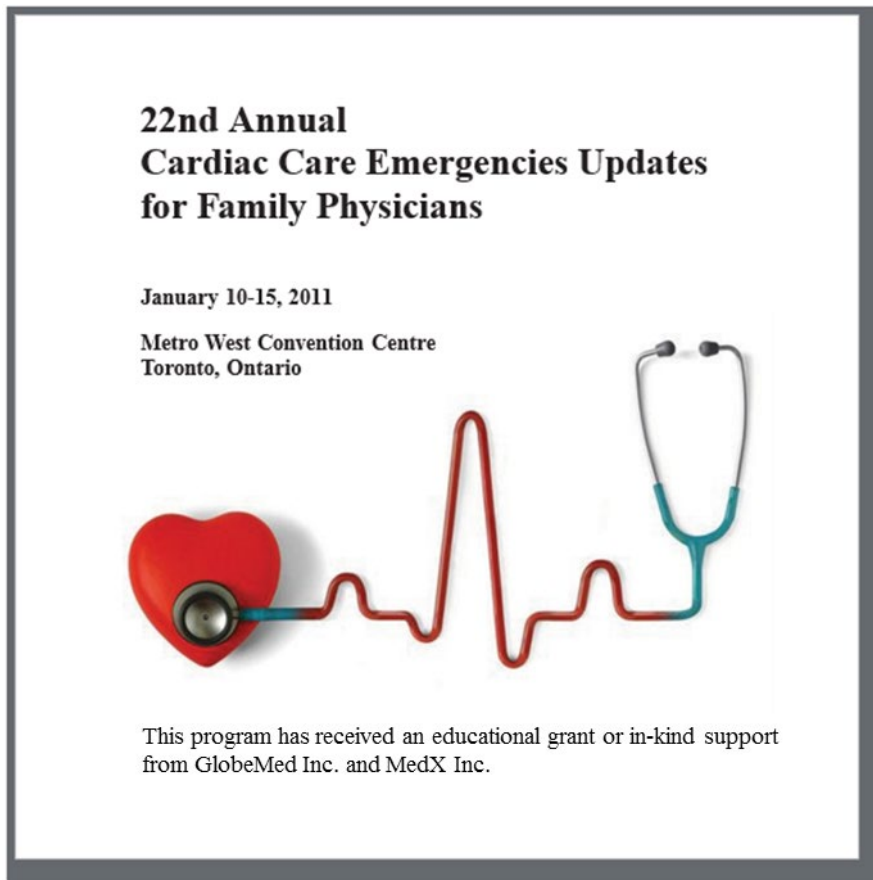


Example A is not acceptable because:

- Sponsor logos are included on the cover page

- Product names are included
- Sponsors' names appear in bigger/more prominent type than the rest of the copy

**Figure 1.3. Example B: Acceptable front cover of a single-page brochure, poster, or flyer (print or digital)**

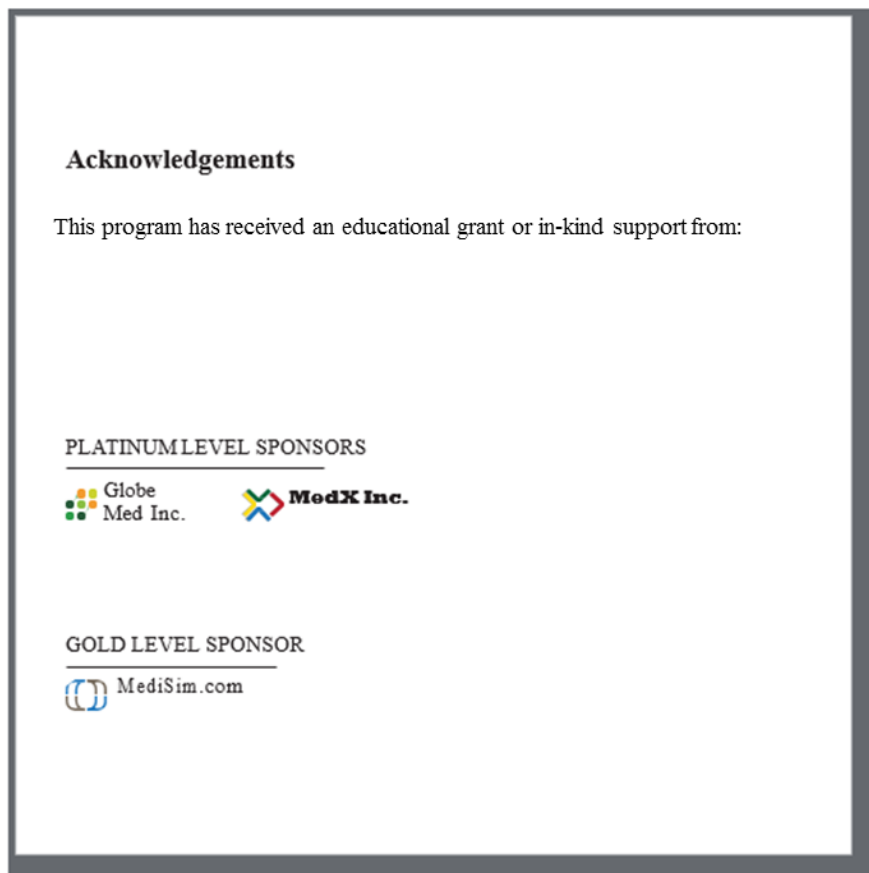


Example B is acceptable because:

- No sponsor logos appear on the cover page
- No product names are included
- Sponsors' names are displayed in type no larger or more prominent than the text copy's type



**Figure 1.4. Example C: Back cover or end page**



Example C is acceptable because:

- Sponsor logos are included only on the back cover or end page; please note that the inclusion of HPI commercial interest logos is not permitted under any circumstances related to certified activities delivered in the province of Quebec, as providers must adhere to the CQDPCM *Code of Ethics*
- Product names are not included
- The type size of the sponsors' names does not exceed the type size of the body text

### **Single-page brochures, posters, flyers (print or digital)**

For single-page brochures, posters, or flyers, sponsors may be acknowledged at the bottom of the document in an unobtrusive manner. The following approved sponsor acknowledgement statement should be used: "This program has received an educational grant or in-kind resources from [names of funding organizations]." Logos may not be used in this instance.

### **Advertisements**

Advertisements and promotional materials may be included in programs (print or digital) or on CPD event handouts (print or digital) only if they are:

- Included at the end of the document (final pages only)
- Not facing any page containing certified educational content (agenda, speaker information, course outline, etc.)
- Marked clearly as advertising/promotion
- Not product-specific advertising

## **Websites**

Brochures, programs, and promotional websites for Mainpro+ certified events may not be housed or advertised on an HPI or commercial website, including online registration pages for Mainpro+ certified events. For example, “www.pharmaX.com/Mainpro+\_events” is not acceptable.

Where a website for Mainpro+ certified events includes an active link to non-certified materials, content, or services, it must provide a pop-up warning to inform the user that the site and content are not part of the Mainpro+ certified program site and content.

In addition, the following conditions apply:

- The destination page must appear in a new window or tab.
- Users must have the option to not click on an advertisement or link; the advertisement or link cannot be established in such a manner that requires the user to click on the advertisement or link to proceed.

Sponsor and/or product logos must not be included on the home page or front page of the website for a Mainpro+ certified event. The CFPC requires that when logos must be used, they are reserved for a separate supporter acknowledgement web page/tab. The name of the company or logo should not be on the same web page as the Mainpro+ certified program (e.g., agenda, speaker information, course outline). Product-specific logos or branding may not be used in any capacity.

## **Participant certificates**

Sponsor logos and other branding must not be included on certificates presented to participants upon completion of the program. A statement such as “This program has received an educational grant or in-kind support from [names of funding organizations]” may be included on certificates, with the proviso that the font size must not be larger than that used in the body of the certificate.

Figure 1.5 is a College-approved sample of what an ideal certificate might include.

**Figure 1.5. Sample certificate of attendance for a CPD program**



<sup>‡</sup>Activities delivered in Quebec require the inclusion of the signature of an official representative from the CPD provider organization and the certified duration of the activity.

## Use of the CFPC logo

The CFPC logo may not be used without explicit, written consent from the CFPC; Mainpro+ certification does not confer the right to use the CFPC logo.

Mainpro+ certification statements may be used only once program approval or final certification is granted. The use of Mainpro+ certification statements without certification may result in providers being prohibited from submitting programs for Mainpro+ certification for up to 12 months. See Chapter 6: Mainpro+ Certification Statements and Chapter 8: Addressing Mainpro+ Certification Policy or Procedure Violations for more details.

## Program delivery: Faculty/presenter compliance

**CPD providers must stipulate specific instructions to faculty and presenters regarding their involvement in the program and its delivery.** Without this guidance many programs are faced with certification compliance challenges when faculty and presenters take liberties with the content and activities and modify them to meet their personal needs or beliefs.

**Once a program has been certified for Mainpro+, changes cannot be made to the program without explicit, written consent from the College.** No modification is acceptable (beyond the correction of spelling or grammatical errors)—including modifying or adding data points to a chart, changing the colour or theme of slides, inserting new studies, revising case studies, etc.

**Failure to deliver a program in the exact manner in which the program was reviewed and certified might result in revocation of certification status or other such penalties.** If changes or modifications to a certified program are required, the program provider must notify the College and seek permission accordingly.

The College suggests the following approach to working with faculty and presenters for Mainpro+ certified programs:

- For nationally certified programs, it is advised that a formal train-the-trainer (T3) program be provided to facilitate consistency and to ensure all persons involved in the delivery of the program are doing so in compliance with CFPC rules and regulations.
- For provincially certified programs, it is advised that all persons involved in the delivery of the program receive a briefing and/or supporting document to facilitate consistency and ensure compliance with CFPC rules and regulations.

Specifically, faculty and speakers must be provided with the following:

- The College-approved learning objectives for the program
- A copy of all College-approved materials associated with the program (e.g., PowerPoint slides, handouts, evaluations)
- Details on the College-approved program format/teaching methodologies (e.g., small-group activities, lecture)
- Information about the target audience (e.g., experience level)

- Instruction on the requirement to deliver the program and associated content/materials only in the manner in which the program was approved (see below)

It is the responsibility of CPD providers to ensure that the content and materials presented are identical to those submitted and approved by the CFPC. If changes are to be made to the approved program or content, the CPD provider must first contact the CFPC Chapter (for provincially certified programs) or the National Office (for nationally certified programs) to discuss the intended changes. If changes are deemed by the Chapter or National Office to be substantial, the program must be resubmitted for review and certification (along with payment of the administrative fee plus applicable GST/HST).

Additionally:

- CPD providers must retain copies of completed evaluation forms or response summaries for at least one year in the event that the CFPC audits the program.
- The CFPC recommends that organizers provide a summary of the evaluations to all speakers and presenters for personal and professional development.
- Feedback sought from participants must be used by CPD providers to improve future presentations of the program and evidence of this must be demonstrated in subsequent applications for certification.
- The CFPC National Office and Chapter might require submission of evaluation results.
- When programs are submitted for recertification, providers will be required to provide the evaluation results from the previously certified sessions when applying for recertification.

Please see Quality Criterion 5: Evaluation and outcome assessment.

# **Chapter 2: Mainpro+ Quality Criteria Framework**

The following criteria are applied to all continuing professional development (CPD) programs seeking Mainpro+ certification. A series of requirements pertaining to each criterion allows those with the task of reviewing programs to assess each application in an objective fashion and to assign credit values appropriately to programs meeting minimum certification requirements.

# Quality criteria framework tables

## Quality Criterion 1:

### Needs Assessment and Practice Relevance

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<p><b>One Credit Per Hour</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An indirect assessment of target audience needs is used to guide program development and to obtain information on prior knowledge and practice experience</li> <li>• Learning objectives are tied to needs assessment results</li> <li>• The needs assessment addresses physician competency through CanMEDS-FM Roles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Literature reviews</li> <li>• Critical event reports</li> <li>• Reports of near misses</li> <li>• Epidemiological data analysis</li> <li>• Review of patient reports</li> <li>• Evaluation of feedback from previous events</li> </ul>
<p><b>Two Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the needs assessment sample is representative of the intended target audience, thus enhancing the applicability of program content</li> <li>• Ensure the needs assessment identifies gaps in physician competence in at least one CanMEDS-FM competency area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surveys representative of the intended target audience (e.g., urban versus rural physicians)</li> <li>• Community-based data</li> <li>• Studies of referral patterns</li> <li>• Morbidity and mortality reviews</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one- and two-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the needs assessment is performed on actual participants</li> <li>• Include measures of gaps in knowledge, competence, or performance based on data from practice</li> <li>• Identify gaps in physician competence in multiple CanMEDS-FM competency areas, extending beyond the Family Medicine Expert Role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chart reviews</li> <li>• Quality improvement Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle results</li> <li>• Analysis of EMR data/practice data</li> <li>• Interviews</li> <li>• Knowledge test</li> </ul>

**Quality Criterion 2:**  
**Interactivity and Engagement**

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<p><b>One Credit Per Hour</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 25% of the program is conducted in an interactive manner</li> <li>For <b>Assessment category</b> activities, interactivity and engagement must include the review of and reflection on practice data relative to previously established standards, protocols, and norms.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audience Q &amp; A period</li> <li>Audience response systems</li> <li>Case discussions</li> <li>Quizzes and multiple-choice questions built into online program content</li> <li>Asynchronous online activities must include a way for participants to pose questions about program content</li> </ul>
<p><b>Two Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one-credit-per-hour requirement and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have learner engagement go beyond an audience Q &amp; A</li> <li>Include opportunities for participants to engage with each other, with facilitators, and with the materials being taught (for Self-Learning activities, programs require engagement with facilitators and the materials being taught only)</li> <li>For <b>Assessment category</b> activities, participants must receive at least one feedback interaction with peers, colleagues, patients, or coaches</li> <li>Base a component of the activity on small groups or workshops (for Self-Learning activities, the small-group requirement is replaced with a case-based learning component)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A component of the activity is based on small groups or workshops</li> <li>For the <b>Self-Learning category</b>, the small-group requirement is replaced with case-based learning components</li> <li>Case discussions</li> <li>Role playing</li> <li>Simulation activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one- and two-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be based on small-group learning (for Self-Learning activities, programs must be based on case-based or immersive scenario learning)</li> <li>For <b>Assessment category activities</b>, the program must include more than one feedback interaction with peers, colleagues, patients, or coaches.</li> <li>Include activities that can be applied to participants' practices</li> <li>Include formal reflection on the application of learning to practice over a realistic time period to assess practice change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Program must be based on small-group learning</li> <li>For the <b>Self-Learning category</b>, programs must be based on case-based or immersive scenario learning (simulations)</li> <li>Simulation with observation and feedback</li> <li>Practice-based scenarios</li> <li>Practice data review exercises</li> <li>Consultation with peers/patients/colleagues</li> <li>Post-program reflective exercises</li> </ul>



## Quality Criterion 3:

### Incorporation of Evidence

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<p><b>One Credit Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Evidence for program design (Assessment category)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An outline of the evidence/rationale and how it was used to determine assessment design must be provided and references must be included in materials</li> </ul> <p><b>Evidence for content discussed</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clinical evidence should come from systematic reviews/meta-analyses of studies (RCTs, cohort studies, case control studies); single, moderate-sized, well-designed RCTs; well-designed, consistent, and controlled but not randomized trials or large cohort studies</li> <li>Any lack of evidence for assertions or recommendations must be acknowledged to participants</li> <li>If the focus is on a single study or select studies are omitted, program developers must provide the rationale to support these decisions</li> <li>Graphs or charts cannot be altered to highlight one treatment or product</li> <li>Both potential harms and benefits should be discussed (e.g., the number needed to treat, and number needed to harm, and/or absolute and relative risk reductions)</li> <li>Practice or patient data may be used as evidence in <b>Assessment activities</b></li> <li>Depending on the topic, evidence may also be sourced from the pedagogical, social sciences, humanities, or business literature</li> </ul> <p>References must be included in participant materials</p>	<p><b>Sources of clinical evidence discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Systematic reviews/meta-analysis of studies (randomized controlled trials [RCTs])</li> <li>Cohort studies, case-controlled studies</li> <li>Single, moderate-size, well-designed RCTs or well-designed, consistent, controlled but not randomized trials</li> <li>Large cohort studies</li> <li>Number needed to treat, number needed to harm, and/or absolute and relative risk reductions</li> <li>Clinical guidelines</li> </ul> <p><b>Sources of non-clinical evidence discussed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pedagogical literature</li> <li>Social sciences literature</li> <li>Humanities literature</li> <li>Business literature</li> </ul>
<p><b>Two Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflect patient-oriented outcomes and avoid surrogate outcomes in the content</li> <li>Include Canadian evidence, where it exists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use patient-oriented/ functional outcomes and avoid surrogate outcomes</li> <li>Canadian evidence should be included where it exists</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one- and two-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include opportunities for participants to seek, appraise, and apply the best available evidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature review and critique</li> <li>Mini journal club</li> <li>Application and appraisal of clinical practice guidelines</li> </ul>

## Quality Criterion 4:

### Addressing Barriers to Change

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<p><b>One Credit Per Hour</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The educational design includes a discussion of commonly encountered barriers to practice change</li> </ul>	<p><b>Barrier examples:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attitude (motivation to change)</li> <li>Geographical (access to resources/facilities)</li> <li>Knowledge</li> <li>Organizational (process-related barriers/health system barriers)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Two Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one-credit-per-hour requirement and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include a discussion of approaches to overcoming these barriers in the educational design</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to overcome barriers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Patient tool kits</li> <li>Practice-based exercises</li> <li>Case studies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Three Credits Per Hour</b></p>	<p><b>Must meet the one- and two-credit-per-hour requirements and:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask actual participants to identify barriers to change</li> <li>Discuss these barriers and approaches to overcoming them</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ways to solicit barriers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Needs assessment to solicit barriers</li> <li>Practice audit</li> <li>Knowledge test</li> </ul>

**Quality Criterion 5:**  
**Evaluation and Outcome Assessment**

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<b>One Credit Per Hour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measures are included to assess self-reported learning or change in what participants know or know how to do as a result of the CPD program</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reported change in knowledge/skill/performance</li> <li>Commitment-to-change contract</li> </ul>
<b>Two Credits Per Hour</b>	<p>Must meet the one-credit-per-hour requirement and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include an objective measurement of change in knowledge</li> <li>Provide opportunities for participants to evaluate change in CanMEDS-FM competencies (as identified in the learning objectives)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowledge test</li> <li>Fulfillment of a quality improvement PDSA cycle</li> </ul>
<b>Three Credit Per Hour</b>	<p>Must meet the one- and two-credit-per-hour requirements and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include the objective measurement of change in competence and/or clinical performance and/or patient outcome for all learners</li> <li>Provide opportunities to evaluate change in all CanMEDS-FM competencies identified in the learning objectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation and feedback in a practice setting</li> <li>Practice/chart audit</li> <li>Commitment-to-change contract with follow-up</li> </ul>

**Quality Criterion 6:**  
**Reinforcement of Learning**

Credits Per Hour	Certification Requirements	Examples
<b>One Credit Per Hour</b>	Not required for one-credit-per-hour programs	Not required for one-credit-per-hour activities
<b>Two Credits Per Hour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate one or more validated strategies to reinforce and/or facilitate continued learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-program teleconference</li> <li>Open-ended questionnaire</li> <li>Follow-up on commitment to change</li> <li>Chart audit and feedback</li> <li>Performance or knowledge test</li> <li>Post-program reflective exercises</li> <li>Meeting with coach or peer related to practice improvement plan</li> </ul>
<b>Three Credits Per Hour</b>	<p>Must meet the two-credit-per-hour requirement and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate two or more validated strategies, ideally administered at staggered time intervals (e.g., at six and 12 weeks)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post-program teleconference</li> <li>Open-ended questionnaire</li> <li>Follow-up on commitment to change</li> <li>Chart audit and feedback</li> <li>Performance or knowledge test</li> <li>Post-program reflective exercises</li> <li>Meeting a coach of peer related to practice improvement plan</li> </ul>

# Chapter 3: Determining Credit Allocation

Based on the total Quality Criteria requirements met, programs will be approved for Mainpro+ certification at one credit per hour, two credits per hour, or three credits per hour. Credits are calculated as follows:

(Total number of hours [not including introductions, breaks, meals, evaluation time])  
x number of credits per hour approved = credit value for program

For example: **(1.5 hours) x 2 credits per hour = 3.0 credits**

Individual programs may be certified for one activity category only.

## Quality Criteria described

### Quality Criterion 1: Needs assessment and practice relevance

Programs must demonstrate evidence of being designed to address a professional practice gap (whereby the current state—with respect to physician knowledge, competence, or performance—is not aligned with the ideal or desired state) through content and activities that align with the participant’s educational needs (knowledge, competence, and/or performance).

Providers must demonstrate a valid professional practice gap from which the educational needs of physicians are then identified. Surveys indicating physicians are interested in “improving care” or “enhancing” knowledge and/or skills/performance with respect to a given disease, course of treatment, or otherwise do not demonstrate a valid professional practice gap.

A needs assessment strategy should identify both the perceived and unperceived educational needs of the target audience.

Additionally, the needs assessment strategy should consider the CanMEDS–Family Medicine (CanMEDS-FM) competencies framework (<https://www.cfpc.ca/en/education-professional-development/educational-frameworks-and-reference-guides/canmeds-family-medicine>).

Traditionally, continuing professional development (CPD) has focused on imparting or updating clinical knowledge—enhancing the role of physicians as medical experts. Over time we have learned that while this type of professional development is essential to good medical practice, so too are several non-clinical domains—specifically those that recognize the diverse roles of physicians beyond the clinical diagnosis and treatment of symptoms.

The CanMEDS-FM Roles provide a framework whereby competence in family medicine can be evaluated across a variety of domains. The seven Roles are:

- Family Medicine Expert
- Communicator

- Collaborator
- Leader
- Health Advocate
- Scholar
- Professional

Additionally, there must be evidence that the identified practice gaps have been used as the basis for establishing learning objectives, program content, and educational interventions and activities. This is first established through the development and articulation of learning objectives that clearly define how the program will improve physician competence, physician performance, and/or patient outcomes.

The next step is to use the objectives as the foundation for developing educational content and activities that enable learners to incorporate their new knowledge, skills, and competence into their practices in a meaningful way. To be eligible for Mainpro+ certification, all programs must be relevant to the overall practice of family medicine. Relevance is determined by assessing whether the program:

- Fosters improved patient care by family physicians
- Addresses at least one of the Four Principles of Family Medicine (<https://www.cfpc.ca/en/about-us/vision-mission-principles#four>)
- Is within the scope of practice for family physicians
- Has content and concepts that are evidence-based and/or generally accepted by the Canadian medical community

**For examples of acceptable and unacceptable topics, see the Introduction: Defining CPD: Eligible topics.**

## **Quality criterion 2: Interactivity and engagement**

Activities, environments, and teaching techniques for Mainpro+ certified programs must be conducive to effective learning and support the learning objectives of the program.

Assessment activities require interaction with data and feedback from others (peers, coaches, facilitators, patients, etc.). For a live or asynchronous Group Learning activity there must be a means for the participants to interact with the material, with each other, and with faculty members or a facilitator. For Self-Learning activities there must be a means for learners to interact with the material and with a faculty member or facilitator (primarily to address questions about the content). There are several ways you can address interaction with the material. Polling software, pre- and post-session tests, multiple-choice questions built into the learning, and interactive cases are some examples. Interaction with other participants can be handled in live, virtual learning settings via breakout rooms, chat rooms, or discussion boards. Asynchronous learning can use chat rooms and discussion boards for interaction among participants and with faculty. Interaction with faculty members can also be managed using an email address to which participants can submit questions about the content.

### Quality criterion 3: Incorporation of evidence

Program providers must ensure the following to demonstrate that the clinical content of their programs is valid and represents the best available and most up-to-date evidence:

- Evidence used within CPD programs—and specifically with respect to assertions and clinical recommendations—is in keeping with that generally accepted within the medical profession.
- Research used as the basis of recommendations or guidelines and/or reported within a program meets generally accepted standards for scientific rigour (experimental design, analysis, reporting, etc.).
- No Mainpro+ certified program shall teach or promote medical-related procedures and/or practices that are known to be dangerous or ineffective or that otherwise fail to meet standards for high-quality patient care.
- Evidence—and the content derived from this evidence—is selected without influence by, or consideration for, a business or commercial interest.
- A balanced presentation of information and any associated therapeutic options is vital to certification; therefore, program providers must ensure that descriptions of therapeutic options use generic names (or both generic and trade names) and do not reflect exclusivity and branding. If no generic name exists, trade names must be used in a consistent manner.
- Any assertion or recommendation made in an educational activity must include references. If there is lack of evidence for an assertion or recommendation, it must be acknowledged in the program.

Best-quality evidence is defined as evidence from systematic reviews/meta-analyses of studies (randomized controlled trials [RCTs], cohort studies, and case-control studies); single, moderate-size, well-designed RCTs; or well-designed, consistent, controlled, but not randomized trials or large cohort studies.

If a single study is the focus or select studies are omitted, program developers must provide the rationale to support this decision.

Graphs and charts or other evidence-related materials cannot be altered to highlight one treatment or product.

Both potential harms and benefits should be discussed (e.g., number needed to treat, number needed to harm, and/or absolute and relative risk reductions). All-cause mortality is the optimal outcome in therapies purporting to increase survival.

Sensitivity and specificity are helpful criteria for judging clinical tests.

Depending on the topic, evidence may also be sourced from the pedagogical, social sciences, humanities, or business literature.

### Quality criterion 4: Addressing barriers to change

The value of a well-designed and well-delivered CPD program is greatly diminished—if not entirely negated—when barriers prevent learners from applying new approaches, techniques,

skills, or other improvements in their practices. Bridging the gap between best practices and actual patient care requires an understanding of the barriers—real and perceived—encountered by physicians and other health care providers.

The needs assessment process is an important step in identifying the physician behaviours or competencies that need changing or improving; an equally important step is the identification of any barriers that might exist that would inhibit that change from occurring. Effecting change in health care is therefore a complex process with many potential barriers to effective adoption of new attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and processes. CPD programs that address barriers to physician change are more likely to result in a change in practice.

The needs assessment process plays an important role in identifying potential barriers to physician change. This process should include an analysis of the gap between the recommended practice and the current practice of the target audience. Once the gap has been identified, the barriers to the recommendation’s implementation may become evident. Common barriers to physician change are identified in Table 3.1. Methods that can be used to identify barriers to change are:

- Learning from key individuals with the knowledge, authority, and skills to speak to implementation of the innovation
- Observing individuals in practice, especially for routine behaviours
- Using a questionnaire to explore individuals’ knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour
- Brainstorming informally in small groups to explore solutions to a problem
- Conducting a focus group to evaluate current practice and explore new ways of working

**Table 3.1. Common barriers to physician change**

Type of Barrier	Description
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness or lack of familiarity with the content of guidelines or recommendations</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of recent findings, evidence, techniques</li> </ul>
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disagreement with the new recommendations or guidelines</li> <li>• Lack of outcome expectancy</li> <li>• Lack of motivation to change</li> <li>• Lack of belief in one’s ability to perform a behaviour</li> </ul>
Behavioural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in recalling the proposed intervention when needed</li> <li>• No place established for learning in usual routine of care</li> <li>• Little to no opportunity to use the new intervention, due to patient profile/caseload</li> </ul>
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process-related barriers within health care system</li> <li>• Financial constraints on implementing changes</li> <li>• Lack of time or opportunity to implement the recommendations</li> </ul>

Once barriers have been identified the CPD activity can address and propose interventions for overcoming these barriers, which will help ensure that the learning objectives of the CPD activity



are not only met but also carried into practice. Below are some examples of interventions that may be used.

### **Interventions to overcome barriers to practice change**

- Educational outreach
- Academic detailing
- Reminder systems (e.g., chart reminders, follow-up communications, feedback requests)
- Audit and feedback
- Patient-mediated interventions
- Practice tools
- Timed follow-up
- Informal consultations

### **Quality criterion 5: Evaluation and outcome assessment**

In the past, the assessment of CPD programs has focused on two domains: participation (the number of people who participate in the educational intervention) and satisfaction (whether the educational intervention meets the participants' expectations). However, we now know that change that occurs as a result of an educational intervention—in particular, change within the domains of performance, patient health, and community health—is a more valuable measure of program success.

Change as a direct result of an educational intervention can be very difficult to assess, as there might be confounding and/or uncontrolled variables at play. However, a great deal of work in the area of outcomes assessment has yielded a framework that allows for the assessment of change beyond declarative or procedural knowledge. For example:

- **Competence:** Observation of performance in the educational setting, commitment-to-change report
- **Performance:** Review of patient charts, observation in a simulated clinical setting, self-report of performance
- **Patient health:** Changes in health status of patients as recorded in charts or as self-reported by patients
- **Community health:** Data gleaned via epidemiology reports/studies or via self-reports by communities

Evaluation is a mandatory component of Mainpro+ certified programs. Evaluation allows for the ongoing improvement of CPD programs and provides valuable feedback to program planners and faculty. To receive Mainpro+ certification, a program must allow participants to evaluate the program in a meaningful and confidential manner. Further, the College requires that certain evaluation questions be incorporated into the evaluation forms for all Mainpro+ certified programs.

The following evaluation question is mandatory (must be stated exactly as shown):

**CPD program evaluation and outcome assessment**

1. Did you perceive any degree of bias in any part of the program?

- Yes  No

If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Programs delivered in Quebec have an additional mandatory question (must be stated exactly as shown):

2. Did the activity respect the CQDPCM Code of Ethics (<http://cqdpcm.ca/>)?

- Yes  No

**Figure 3.1. Sample participant evaluation form**

Sample Participant Evaluation Form					
Title:	_____				
Date:	_____				
Location:	_____				
Educational objectives: The program met the stated objectives					
Objective	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
[Objective 1]	5	4	3	2	1
[Objective 2]	5	4	3	2	1
[Objective 3]	5	4	3	2	1
[Objective 4]	5	4	3	2	1
Program content and delivery					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The program content:	5	4	3	2	1
Was relevant to family medicine	5	4	3	2	1
Met my expectations	5	4	3	2	1
Was well organized	5	4	3	2	1
Disclosure of potential conflicts of interest was clearly communicated	5	4	3	2	1
There were adequate opportunities to interact with my peers	5	4	3	2	1
I will use the information I learned in my practice	5	4	3	2	1
(... cont'd)					

Sample Participant Evaluation Form (... /cont'd)

Program Content and Delivery

Did you perceive any degree of bias in any part of the program?\*  Yes  No

If yes, please describe:

What was the **most effective** part of the program? Why?

Describe **two ways** in which you will change your practice as a result of attending this program:

1.

2.

What was the **least effective** part of this program? Why?

Please list any topics you would like to see addressed in future programs:

For programs delivered in the province of Quebec:

Did the activity respect the CQDPCM *Codes of Ethics* (<http://cqdpqm.ca/>)?

Yes

No

Thank you for completing the program evaluation. Please return the form to the program organizer.

General comments:

\*Mandatory question

## Outcome assessment

Programs seeking to achieve two- and three-credit-per-hour status for Mainpro+ certification must also include strategies for measuring the outcomes of the educational activity. Programs must include the objective measurement of change in knowledge and, for three credits per hour, the objective measurement of change in performance of all participants. Outcomes of CPD activities may be measured through:

- Observation and feedback in an educational setting
- Observation and feedback in a practice setting
- Practice/chart audit
- Commitment-to-change contract with follow-up
- Knowledge test
- Fulfillment of a quality improvement Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle
- Review of community health data before or after the educational activity\*

## Quality criterion 6: Reinforcement of learning

Educational interventions have a greater impact on learners when learning occurs over a continuum of time versus during a single, finite period or session. Mainpro+ recognizes the value of educational strategies that reinforce and/or facilitate continued learning, because these strategies:

- Encourage participants to reflect on what they have gained from completing the educational intervention and how it might affect, or has affected, their practices
- Provide opportunities for participants to continue a dialogue with colleagues and/or faculty after having had the opportunity to apply new knowledge, skills, or attitudes in practice
- Help with recall and retention—both of which can be challenging given the workload of the average family physician

Where inclusion of such strategies is required (programs seeking certification for three credits per hour; see Chapter 3: Determining Credit Allocation), participants must not receive documentation of program completion, such as a certificate, until the reinforcement-type activity or activities have been completed and returned to the CPD provider. Failure on the part of the provider and/or participant to ensure such activities have been completed may result in removal of the program's certification status.

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\* For more information see: Moore DE Jr. A framework for outcomes evaluation in the continuing professional development of physicians. In: Davis D, Barnes BE, Fox R, eds. *The Continuing Professional Development of Physicians: From Research to Practice*. Chicago, IL: American Medical Association Press; 2003:249-274.

## Examples of post-program and learning reinforcement activities

- **Performance and/or knowledge test**

A performance and/or knowledge test should use open-ended questions (as opposed to multiple-choice questions) to encourage active reflection. The test should be directly related to the learning objectives of the program and the results should be used to provide specific feedback to participants.

- **Follow-up chart audit with feedback provided**

An audit could be performed by an external agency or by the actual participants if they are provided with the necessary instructions and tools.

- **Open-ended questionnaire**

Open-ended questionnaires should challenge participants to consider the effect of the program on their practices. This should reinforce the key themes or information presented during the program and stimulate further inquiry.

Sample questions:

- What effect has [program title] had on your practice?
  - Did you implement changes in your practice as a result of this program?
    - What specific change(s) did you implement?
    - What effect, if any, has the program had on your confidence in dealing with patients with [condition/disease]?
  - If you have not changed your practice as a result of this program:
    - Did you find the program to be irrelevant to your practice? If yes, please explain.
    - Have you encountered specific barriers to implementing change? If yes, please explain.
    - How might the program have been modified to make it more useful?
  - What further changes might you implement as a result of this program?
- **Post-program teleconference/Web conference**

Hold a teleconference/Web conference six to 12 weeks after the course has concluded. Include program facilitators and participants. Focus on one or two key concepts from the program and encourage the participants to share their experiences and best practices with one another.
  - **Other activities**

Post-course strategies that support and reinforce change also include reminders, checklists, guidelines, algorithms, feedback systems, protocols, patient education materials, etc. If a commitment-to-change contract is part of the designed curriculum, include a follow-up activity to review the contract at six and 12 weeks post course.

Please note that Quality Criterion 6 is not mandatory for one-credit-per-hour programs.

# Chapter 4: Mainpro+ Certification Requirements by Program Type

This section contains certification information on multiple types of CPD activities.

## Online/virtual learning programs

Some online learning programs meet the requirements for Mainpro+ online certification. Please carefully review the information below before you submit your program to ensure you have selected the correct application type. If you have questions, please contact our office (see Contact information) to ensure you select the correct application type.

### Online self-study (asynchronous) programs

Select the self-study online option in CERT+ when the following apply:

- The program is being offered exclusively online.
- Participation involves self-study only.
- Participants log in to the program as individuals at any time from any location.
- There is no specified venue for participation (i.e., there is not a group of physicians situated in a single location to log in to the program); participants log in from home, from work, etc.
- There is no food or beverage provided to participants.
- There is no health care/pharmaceutical commercial interest involvement with logistics at the time of the event.

Online programs must meet all the requirements below in addition to those for Mainpro+ programs outlined earlier in this document:

- Participants must be able to register and receive a receipt or record of registration. This is required regardless of whether the activity has a registration fee.
- There must be a definitive period of time during which the program is available; this time frame should be mentioned before the start of the program.
- There must be an opportunity for participants to interact with faculty and other participants (directly or asynchronously); as well, when a discussion is closed, a summary of the discussion points, conclusions, and recommended additional readings should be provided (please note that programs designed for the Self-Learning category require interactivity only with the learning materials and the facilitator).
- If participants have questions regarding program content, there should be a means to submit questions and receive a response.
- The number of assigned credits should be based on a best estimate of the time required to complete the CPD program (including reading time, discussion board entries, and so on).

- Programs seeking provincial certification for self-study online activities must demonstrate that the target audience is provincial in scope and marketing is restricted to attendees from a single province.

### **Live, online/virtual learning programs (synchronous)**

You must select the live webcast option in CERT+, according to the intended audience. These application routes are for programs being delivered in one of the following ways:

- Presented solely to a live audience
- Presented to a live audience and broadcast in a synchronous fashion to participants at a remote location
- Presented solely to a remote audience in a synchronous fashion (e.g., live webinar, video conference, teleconference, virtual conference, or workshop)

If you intend to offer a program in more than one of the above formats, you must indicate this in your initial application and provide details on how you will ensure that the learning experience remains consistent from one format to the next. If it is determined that there will be substantially different learning experiences based on the delivery format, a separate application will be required per format.

The Mainpro+ certification standards and the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities allow for financial and in-kind support of virtual CPD activities by external organizations. This financial support may be recognized in virtual formats with an acknowledgement that complies with the Mainpro+ certification standards and the National Standard. When acknowledging sponsors there are a few key points to remember:

- Frame recognition of financial and in-kind support using the standard acknowledgement statement outlined in the National Standard: “This program has received an educational grant or in-kind support from [name of organization(s)].”
- Avoid branding strategies that include using colours, fonts, and themes reminiscent of sponsors’ corporate or product branding.
- Separate the introduction of virtual exhibit halls, sponsored sessions, etc., from Mainpro+ certified material; in addition, they cannot be promoted in the same invitations or agendas as certified material.

Please note that if there is for-profit (in-kind or financial) support of the program, a separate ethical review is required for each venue (hotel, conference centre, physician’s office, etc.) where food or beverages are provided or where an industry representative is present to assist with logistics, such as audio-visual equipment set-up, distribution of learning materials, etc.

### **Electronic medical record vendor training programs**

Electronic medical record (EMR) training is eligible for Mainpro+ certification. Training may be provided by an EMR vendor or supplier, regardless of whether this person is a physician. Vendors

and suppliers are likely the people most knowledgeable about the various programs or equipment being used.

## **Journal clubs**

Well-organized, pre-planned journal clubs (both live and online) involving groups of family physicians and/or family medicine learners are eligible for Mainpro+ credits provided they are designed and delivered to meet the Mainpro+ certification standards.

Individual presentations arranged and/or sponsored by external agencies (e.g., pharmaceutical companies or biotechnology companies) may not be implemented or advertised as Mainpro+ certified journal club events.

Journal clubs funded by monies obtained from educational grants are permissible if they satisfy all other certification criteria.

## **Regularly scheduled series**

Regularly scheduled series (online or live, in person) organized and pre-planned by eligible provider organizations are eligible for Mainpro+ certified credits provided the design and delivery of these activities meet the Mainpro+ certification standards. These activities may be sponsored by external (for-profit or not-for-profit) funders in the form of educational grants. These activities will be subject to a session-by-session ethical review if the funder is a for-profit organization.

## **Organized clinical traineeships, fellowships, preceptorships**

Organized clinical traineeship (individual or group-based), fellowship, and preceptor programs are eligible for Mainpro+ certification. A completed Mainpro+ certification application, including a description of the traineeship, is required, along with payment of the administration fee.

## **One-credit-per-hour small-group learning**

This section does not apply to the Foundation for Medical Practice Education's member-based Practice Based Small Group Learning Programs. These programs have certification at two and three credits per hour. Members attending these programs should claim credits as defined by the Foundation.

### **Independent small-group learning**

The facilitator of each independent small group must apply for Mainpro+ certification using the application for one-credit-per-hour small-group learning. The application must also include the following:

- Name, address, and telephone number of the facilitator
- A list of group members
- The proposed schedule for group meetings, including frequency and duration



- A description of how the group intends to function, including how they will acquire or develop their evidence-based learning materials and how the discussions will be held
- A signed declaration that the function of the group will be consistent with all ethical practices

For independent small groups, facilitators must provide participants with certificates or letters indicating their overall attendance at the end of the series of meetings (certificates or letters should also indicate the facilitator's name). When applying for recertification facilitators should provide a one-page report to the CFPC describing educational experiences, a list of topics covered, a statement that the group has completed its meetings, and a summary of evaluation of the programs.

Individual presentations arranged and/or sponsored by external agencies (e.g., pharmaceutical companies or biotechnology companies) may not be implemented or advertised as Mainpro+ certified small-group learning. Small groups sponsored by funds obtained from educational grants are permissible.

## Hospital or clinical rounds

Hospital or clinical rounds are eligible for Mainpro+ certification if they are developed and implemented in compliance with the requirements for provincial Mainpro+ certification (see the Mainpro+ certification overview in the Introduction: Understanding Mainpro+ Certification) as well as with the specific standards listed here. Certification must be sought on an annual basis.

Organizers of rounds must complete the Mainpro+ certification application for one-credit-per-hour rounds, which requires adherence to the following:

- The department of family medicine or another relevant department of medicine will select topics based on a needs assessment informed by rounds evaluations, regional initiatives, physician-leader experiences, conversations with colleagues, and newly arising practice issues.
- The needs assessment is to be used as the basis for establishing learning objectives, program design, and program content.
- The department must select an appropriate speaker or presenter as determined by the topic:
  - The department should advise the speaker of Mainpro+ certification requirements
  - Presentations must be generated by speakers, not by external agencies or individuals
- The department will select an appropriate venue and timing for presentations (which should not be held external to the hospital or clinic unless the venue is appropriate for teaching and learning; e.g., a university auditorium).
- The department is responsible for advertising the rounds and providing registration, including attendance, monitoring, and providing a certificate of attendance bearing the Mainpro+ certification statement, on an annual or semi-annual basis (minimum).

- All costs associated with the rounds, including speaker honoraria and food or refreshments for participants, will be paid by the department using pooled funds accumulated from unrestricted educational grants (may be from industry), provincial grants, and the like.
- The department will gather evaluation data from presentations and will use this information to establish learning objectives for the following year.

Individual presentations arranged and/or paid for by agencies external to the pertinent department of medicine (e.g., pharmaceutical companies or biotechnology companies) may not be implemented or advertised as Mainpro+ certified rounds.

Hospital rounds funded by monies obtained from educational grants are permissible if they otherwise satisfy the above criteria.

Provincially certified Mainpro+ hospital or clinical rounds are not subject to session-by-session ethical review.

## Mainpro+ certification of programs delivered in the province of Quebec

Any programs or activities intended for delivery in the province of Quebec must also adhere to guidelines from the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins' *Code of Ethics*. These guidelines apply to nationally certified programs for which some sessions may be delivered in Quebec and to provincially certified programs for which all sessions will be delivered in Quebec. There are additional questions on the application for certification for delivery in Quebec that relate to requirements regarding program financial procedures and program development, namely:

- The development of all certified CPD programs is under the responsibility of a physician organization.
- The physician organization is responsible for receiving any financial or in-kind support for the development of the certified CPD activity.
- The physician organization is responsible for the payment of honoraria and expenses for all faculty (members of the scientific planning committee, speakers, moderators, facilitators, or others).
- If the content is intended to be delivered in French in Quebec, French content must be submitted simultaneously with the English for review; translation verification will take place after the program review is complete, and final program approval is contingent on translation verification.
- Sponsor logos may not be included in any program advertising or education materials.

National program applications that indicate an intended delivery in the province of Quebec will be reviewed by one Quebec-based national reviewer and one other national CFPC reviewer. Programs or activities that are not reviewed using the Quebec application process cannot be delivered in the province of Quebec, and members who attend programs that have not been certified for delivery in Quebec will not be able to claim Mainpro+ credits for their participation.

Chapter 5 describes the arrangements that the CFPC has in place with other medical organizations and university CPD departments regarding Mainpro+ certification.

# Chapter 5: Mainpro+ Certification Agreements

This section contains information about organizations to which the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) has granted Mainpro+ certifying authority or Mainpro+ credit equivalency.

## Canadian university CPD departments and offices

Canadian university continuing professional development (CPD) offices have the authority to assign Mainpro+ credits to activities and programs into which they or their faculty have had substantial input regarding planning, organization, development, and implementation (as long as the activity or program meets the criteria for Mainpro+ certification and the university CPD office can demonstrate its ability to review the Mainpro+ criteria appropriately).

University CPD offices may confer certification for the following CPD programs:

- Provincially delivered live or online one-credit-per-hour programs (provided they meet all relevant established Mainpro+ criteria, including having one active CFPC member on the scientific planning committee)
- National online self-study one-credit-per-hour programs (provided they meet all relevant established Mainpro+ criteria, including having a minimum of three active CFPC members on the scientific planning committee)

A university CPD office must be accredited by the Committee on Accreditation of Continuing Medical Education (CACME) to exercise Mainpro+ certification authority; the CACME is an independent, national accrediting body with representation from many national Canadian medical organizations (including the CFPC), and its sole mandate is to evaluate university CPD offices.

University CPD offices may not confer national Mainpro+ certification for live CPD programs. National Mainpro+ certification of live CPD programs will be administered through the CFPC National Office as part of a shared process in which final certification will be granted by the CFPC Chapters.

University CPD offices may not confer Mainpro+ certification for programs for more than one credit per hour, unless the CPD office is participating in the two- and three-credit-per-hour certification training program.

## The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (Royal College) offers the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) program for Canadian surgeons and physician specialists (excluding the specialty of family medicine). Canadian national specialty societies are accredited by the Royal College to provide CPD activities that Royal College members may claim for MOC Section 1 and MOC Section 3 Royal College credits.

CFPC Affiliate members (members whose specialty is not family medicine) may count Royal College credits toward their Mainpro+ credit requirements.

All other CFPC members and Non-Member Mainpro+ Participants may claim up to 50 certified credits per cycle for participation in Royal College MOC Section 1 and Section 3 accredited activities.

## Collège des médecins du Québec

The CFPC accepts all activities certified by the CPD-accrediting organizations recognized by the Collège des médecins du Québec (one hour = one credit).

## The American Academy of Family Physicians

The American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) is the accrediting body for family medicine CPD in the United States. The CFPC and the AAFP have a bilateral reciprocal accreditation agreement, which means that:

- AAFP members who complete any continuing medical education (CME)/CPD activity certified by the CFPC for Mainpro+ Certified credit can claim the equivalent number of AAFP Prescribed credits:
  - CPD providers promoting their program(s) to AAFP members may remind them of this reciprocal agreement
  - Upon written confirmation from the CFPC that a program has been certified, the following statement may be used in program materials but must be presented exactly as indicated:

*Members of the American Academy of Family Physicians are eligible to receive up to \_\_\_\_ Prescribed credit hours for attendance at this meeting/event due to a reciprocal agreement with the College of Family Physicians of Canada.*

- CFPC members who complete any CME/CPD activity certified by the AAFP for Formal Prescribed credits can claim the equivalent number of Mainpro+ certified credits.
- CFPC members who complete any CME/CPD activity certified by the AAFP for Formal Elective credits can claim the equivalent number of Mainpro+ non-certified credits:
  - CPD providers promoting their programs to CFPC members may remind them of this reciprocal agreement
  - Upon written confirmation from the AAFP that a program has been accredited, the following statement may be used in program materials but must be presented exactly as indicated:

*Members of the College of Family Physicians of Canada are eligible to receive up to \_\_\_\_Mainpro+ [enter credit category Group Learning, Self-Learning, or Assessment] credits for participation in this activity due to a reciprocal agreement with the American Academy of Family Physicians.*

- CPD activities held across the Canada–US border are accredited/certified according to the nationality of the primary target audience (regardless of where the providers are located). The programs will be reviewed according to the criteria of the accrediting organization:
  - The CFPC certifies the activity if the primary target audience is Canadian:
    - If the activity is to be held in Canada and delivered by an American provider, certification is done through the appropriate provincial CFPC Chapter
    - If the activity is to be held in the United States and delivered by a Canadian provider, certification is coordinated through the CFPC National Office
    - The CFPC will inform the AAFP of all such programs
    - Canadian university CPD offices may assign Mainpro+ credits to programs they organize and then offer the programs in the United States as long as the primary target audience is Canadian (they must inform the CFPC National Office of all such programs; the CFPC will then inform the AAFP)
  - The AAFP accredits the activity if the primary target audience is American:
    - This is true if the activity is to be held in the United States and delivered by a Canadian provider or if it is to be held in Canada and delivered by an American provider
    - The AAFP will inform the CFPC of all such programs held in Canada

Chapter 6 provides the details of the certification statements that CPD providers must present to participants to meet their requirements of certification.

# Chapter 6: Mainpro+ Certification Statements

**Please note:** Providers may make no reference to the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) or to Mainpro+ certification before their program has received approval or final certification. Providers must not state or indicate “application for CFPC credits pending” nor imply it through similar wording. Use of such a reference prior to review and Mainpro+ certification is a violation of Mainpro+ standards and could result in providers being banned from submitting programs for Mainpro+ certification for up to 12 months.

For more on the CFPC’s policy and procedures regarding violations of Mainpro+ certification requirements, please see Chapter 8: Addressing Mainpro+ Certification Policy or Procedure Violations.

## Choosing the correct certification statement

Once a program has been approved,\* program providers may use the following certification statements on correspondence and promotional materials. **The statements must be presented exactly as they appear here**, with the relevant fields filled in or chosen from the highlighted text (the statements should be presented without highlights).

To find the appropriate certification statement, start by selecting from the five options for how the program is being presented and/or certified:

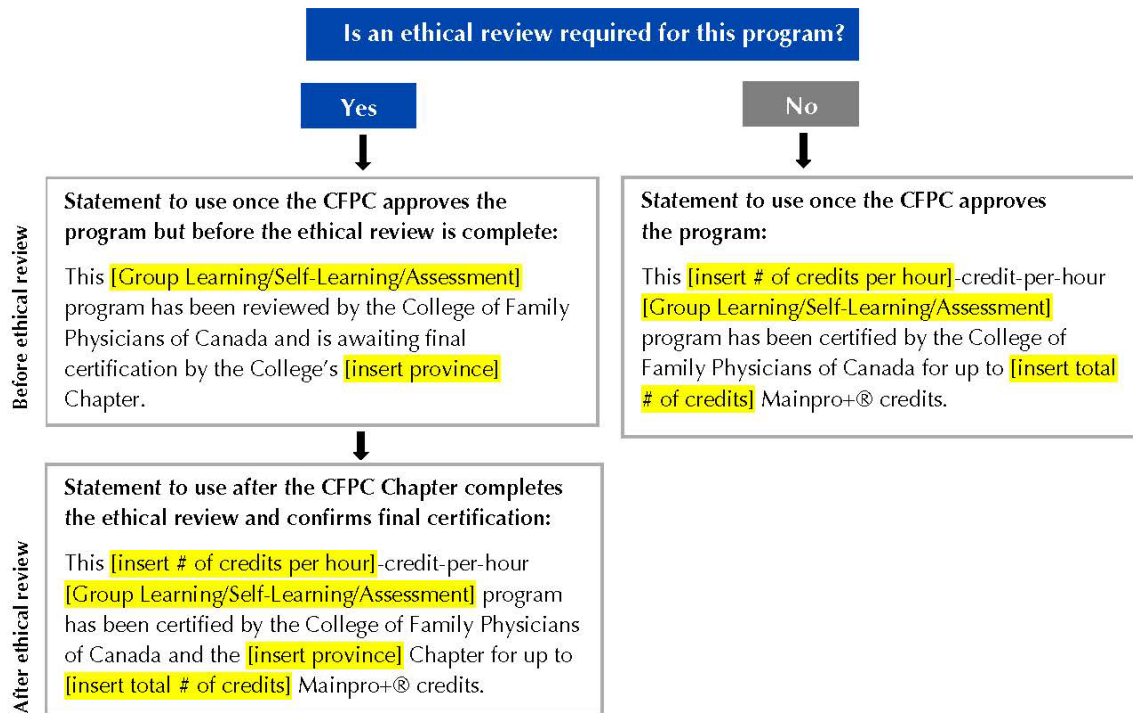
1. National Mainpro+ programs offered outside Quebec
2. Provincial Mainpro+ programs offered outside Quebec
3. National and provincial Mainpro+ programs held in Quebec
4. Mainpro+ programs certified by a Canadian university faculty of medicine CPD office
5. Reciprocal agreement for Mainpro+ and American Academy of Family Physicians Prescribed credits

Next, trace the paths on the following pages that lead to certification statements tailored to specific circumstances, such as whether the program requires an ethical review, where the program is in the review process, etc.

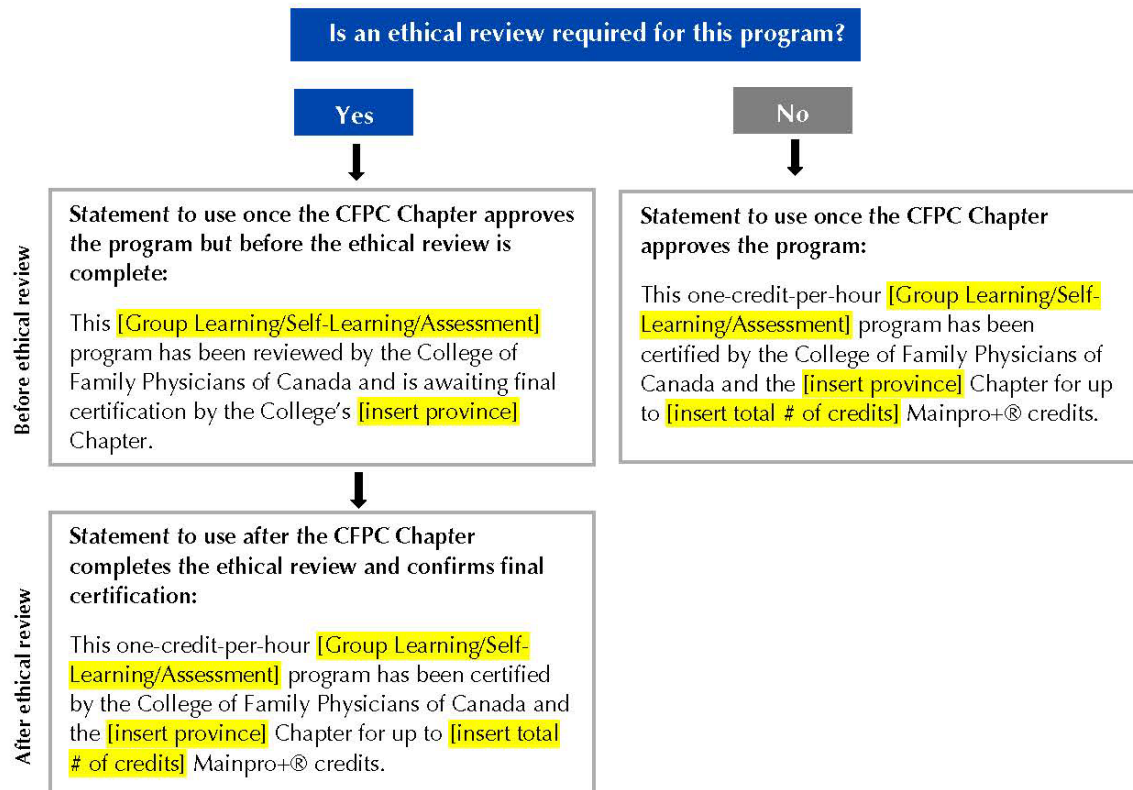
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\* Once the CFPC National Office or a CFPC Chapter has approved a program a notice will be provided in writing by email.

## 1. National Mainpro+ programs offered outside Quebec

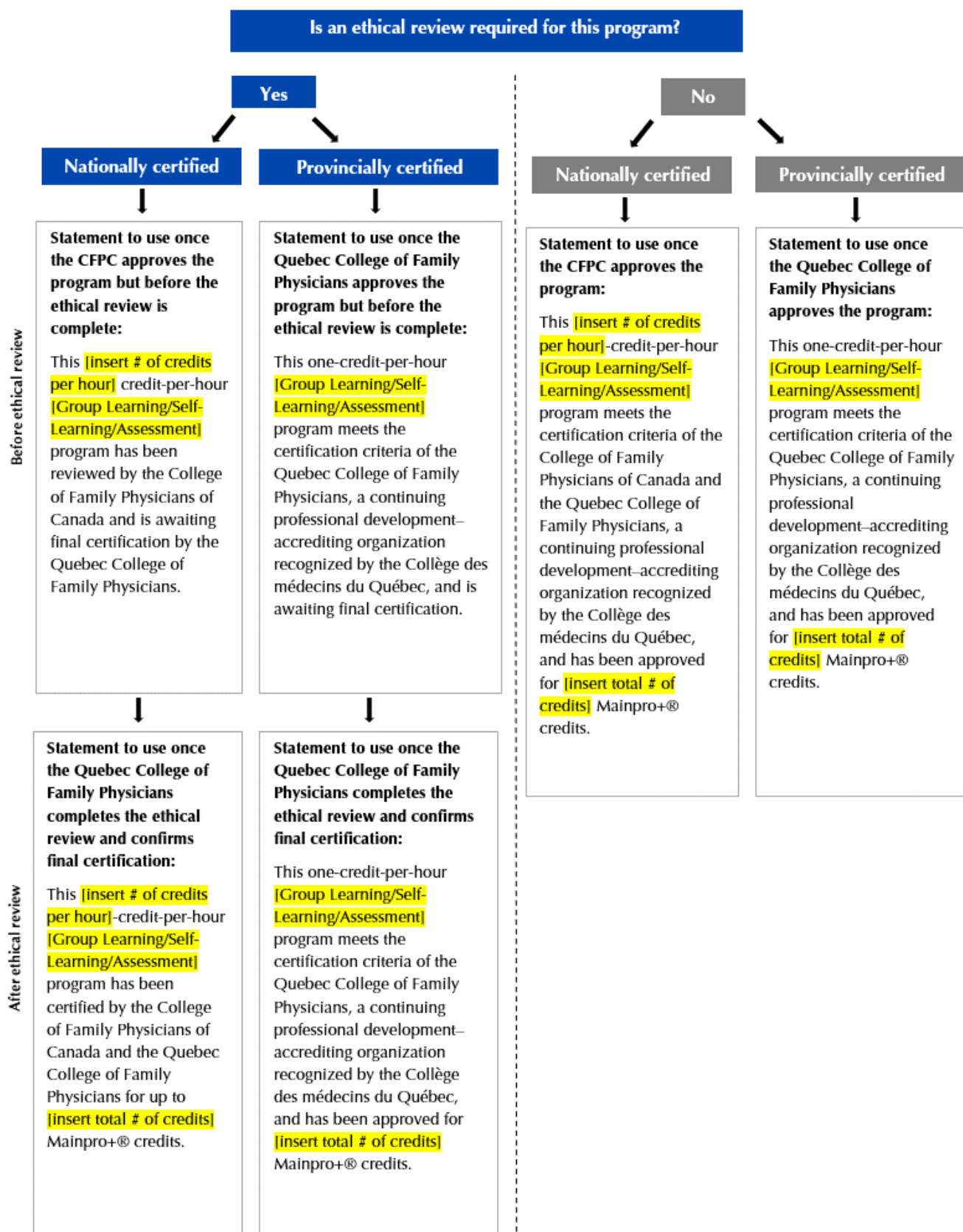


## 2. Provincial Mainpro+ programs offered outside Quebec





### 3. National and provincial Mainpro+ programs held in Quebec



#### 4. Mainpro+ programs certified by a Canadian university faculty of medicine CPD office

Upon written confirmation from the university CPD office that a program has been certified, program providers may indicate the following on program materials:

This one-credit-per-hour [Group Learning/Self-Learning/Assessment] program meets the certification criteria of the College of Family Physicians of Canada and has been certified by the [university CPD office name] for up to [insert total # of credits] Mainpro+® credits.

#### 5. Reciprocal agreement for Mainpro+ and American Academy of Family Physicians Prescribed credits

The CFPC and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) have an agreement that allows members to participate in each others' live CPD/CME activities and claim CPD/CME credits under their own programs. That is, AAFP members can claim AAFP Prescribed credits for attending a program certified by the CFPC for Mainpro+ credits, and CFPC members can claim Mainpro+ credits for attending a program accredited by the AAFP. CPD/CME providers can explain this in their programs using the statements below.



## Marketing statements for certified programs

We understand that the certification statements provided in this chapter are somewhat lengthy due to the required details. Once a program has been approved and certified, providers may use the following brief descriptions for marketing purposes in the circumstances outlined below. **No such statements may be used while a program is awaiting approval or final certification.**

For programs being offered nationally and provincially (including in Quebec) and for those certified through Canadian faculty of medicine CPD offices (scenarios 1 through 4 described earlier in this chapter), the following statements may be used for marketing purposes **as long as the full certification statements are provided as outlined above in the full program:**

- This [program/conference/activity/event] has been certified for up to [insert # of credits] Mainpro+® credits.
- Earn up to [insert # of credits] certified Mainpro+® credits!

**Participant certificates of attendance must use the full certification statements** provided in this chapter; the shorter marketing statements cannot be used for this purpose.

Similar informal marketing statements cannot be used for programs that refer to the reciprocal agreements between the CFPC and the AAFP. Only the full certification statements may be used to describe these programs.

# Chapter 7: Standards for Partial Certification

The following are the standards for planning and implementing certified and non-certified continuing professional development (CPD) sessions during a live or virtual program:

- If during the certification application process the provider knows that both certified and non-certified CPD sessions will be offered in the program, the provider must include this information with the application.
- When planning for different sessions, providers must group all the certified sessions separately from all the non-certified sessions. For example, all certified sessions can be held in the morning (or first in the series of sessions) and all non-certified sessions in the afternoon (or at the end of the series of sessions) or vice versa.
- When submitting sessions and/or programs for an ethical review, the provider must inform the CFPC Chapter that there will be certified and non-certified sessions in the program. The entire program, including all invitations and promotional material (paper-based and online/digital), needs to be presented for ethical review. Presenting this material for review will allow the Chapter to ensure that all advertising, promotional materials, and the published session format comply with Mainpro+ standards.
- In the invitations and marketing material (paper-based and online/digital), the certified sessions must be clearly identified as being certified by the CFPC as per the current Mainpro+ certification standards. **Non-certified CPD activities (live or virtual) cannot be listed or included in activity agendas, programs, or calendars of events that include certified activities (preliminary and final).**
- Non-certified CPD sessions must be listed separately and identified as being non-certified by the CFPC.
- Non-certified CPD activities can be listed in a separate tab in an app or in a separate section in a printed program. Inserts about the activity can also be placed in the delegate's bag. In each of these cases, it should be explicit to the participants that these activities are not certified and may be sponsored by a commercial interest.
- Non-certified activities that are not CPD activities can be listed in the preliminary and final programs. The following are examples of non-certified activities that can be listed in the preliminary and final programs:
  - Paid lunches/breaks sponsored by commercial interests can be listed as: "Non-certified sponsored lunch/break" with no reference to the sponsor name
  - Non-certified poster sessions during breaks may also be included in the preliminary and final programs; a note can be included to explain that viewing posters is eligible for Section 2 MOC credits or non-certified Mainpro+ credits in the Self-Learning category
  - Committee or annual general meetings

- Streams developed for allied health care professionals in the scientific program that are not certified for Mainpro+ credits
- Non-certified CPD activities funded with for-profit support must use the following statement: “This session is not certified by the College of Family Physician of Canada.”
- Non-certified CPD activities funded with support from non-profit organizations may use the following statement: “This activity has not been formally reviewed by the CFPC; however, it is eligible for non-certified credits. Mainpro+ participants may also earn additional certified credits by completing a Linking Learning exercise.”
- At the beginning of each session, the chairperson or speaker must advise the audience whether the session is certified by the CFPC or not.
- Failure to comply with any of the above standards will be considered a violation of Mainpro+ certification policies and procedures and the provider may be subject to disciplinary actions (please refer to Chapter 8: Addressing Mainpro+ Certification Policy or Procedure Violations).

## Programs without certification

CFPC members and Non-Member Mainpro+ Participants may claim Mainpro+ non-certified credits for certain activities not certified by the CFPC, provincial Chapters, or university CPD offices (and therefore ineligible for Mainpro+ certified credits). These activities must be relevant to family medicine and cannot be promotional in nature. Non-industry partners may use the following statement: “This activity has not been formally reviewed by the CFPC; however, it is eligible for non-certified credits. Mainpro+ participants may also earn additional certified credits by completing a **Linking Learning exercise**.” For-profit program providers cannot designate any activities as eligible for Mainpro+ non-certified credits.

# Chapter 8: Addressing Mainpro+ Certification Policy or Procedure Violations

If in the course of delivering a Mainpro+ certified activity a continuing professional development (CPD) provider\* (individual and/or company) or speaker acting on behalf of a CPD provider is found to be in violation of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)'s standards for Mainpro+ certification—the standards and requirements outlined in this document, including the appropriate use of the Mainpro+ certification statement—the following process may apply.

## First violation

A written warning will be issued by the CFPC National Office. The CPD provider must provide evidence of amendments to any erroneous information and respond to the warning with details of how the individual or company has taken or will take steps to ensure compliance with Mainpro+ standards within 10 business days following receipt of the warning.

Failure on the part of the CPD provider to provide evidence of amendments, institute corrective action, and/or respond to the warning within the time frame of 10 business days may result in “second violation” actions being employed.

In instances where the violation is deemed to be significant in nature, the CFPC reserves the right to handle the violation as a second violation—*vide infra*—irrespective of whether a first violation has occurred.

Also, if the violation is deemed to be significant in nature, the CFPC reserves the right to communicate the violation to Innovative Medicines Canada at any stage of the process.

## Second violation

A written warning will be issued by the CFPC National Office. A copy of this warning will be distributed to all CFPC provincial Chapters and members of the National Committee on Continuing Professional Development (NCCPD). Within 10 business days of receipt of the warning, the CPD provider must provide evidence of amendments to any erroneous information and respond to the warning with details of how the individual and/or company has or will put into place measures to ensure compliance with Mainpro+ standards.

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\* Often, the CPD provider is a communications or consulting company acting on behalf of another organization or company; in such instances, both the contracted party (i.e., the communications company) and the contractor (i.e., the company or organization that engaged the contracted party) are considered to be the CPD provider. As such, when a violation is noted, both parties will be issued warnings and subject to appropriate action(s).

Failure on the part of the CPD provider to provide evidence of amendments, institute corrective action, and/or respond to the warning within the 10-business-day time frame may result in “subsequent violation” actions being employed.

## Subsequent violations

A referral will be made to the NCCPD for appropriate action, which may include but not be limited to one or more of the following:

- Revoking the certification of one or more programs (programs from the provider that are involved in “subsequent violations”) currently certified for Mainpro+ credits (CFPC members would not be permitted to claim Mainpro+ credits for their participation)
- A six- to 12-month suspension, during which time no new programs may be submitted for Mainpro+ certification/re-certification
- A written complaint submitted to Innovative Medicines Canada in instances where the CPD provider is a member organization and it is believed that they have violated the *Innovative Medicines Canada 2020 Code of Ethical Practices*
- A written complaint submitted to the Federal Medical Regulatory Authorities and/or provincial licensing bodies where the CPD provider is a CFPC member or Non-Member Mainpro+ Participant and it is believed that they have violated standards related to professional conduct

The rights of the CFPC pursuant to these standards and the actions set out herein are without prejudice to any other rights that the CFPC may have at law or otherwise.

# Appendix 1: Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form

## Declaring and Disclosing Conflict of Interest

The College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) requires compliance with the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* (the National Standard) which describes the process and requirements for gathering, managing, and disclosing conflicts of interest to participants.

### Definitions:

**Conflict of interest:** A conflict of interest is a set of conditions in which judgement or decisions concerning a primary interest (example a patients' welfare, the validity of research and/or quality of medical education) is unduly influenced by a secondary interest (personal or organizational benefit including financial gain, academic or career advancement, or other benefits to family, friends, or colleagues).

**Perceived conflict of interest:** A perceived conflict of interest is the appearance of a conflict of interest as judged by outside observers regardless of whether an actual conflict of interest exists

**Real conflict of interest:** A real conflict of interest is when two or more interests are indisputably in conflict

### National Standard Element 3: Conflict of Interest

This element describes the processes and requirements for gathering, managing and disclosing conflicts of interest to participants.

3.1 All members of the scientific planning committee (SPC), speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors must provide to the CPD provider organization a written description of all relationships with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations over the previous 2 years including (but not necessarily limited to):

- a) Any direct financial payments including receipt of honoraria;
- b) Membership on advisory boards or speakers' bureaus;
- c) Funded grants or clinical trials;
- d) Patents on a drug, product or device; and
- e) All other investments or relationships that could be seen by a reasonable, well-informed participant as having the potential to influence the content of the educational activity.



3.2 The SPC is responsible to review all disclosed financial relationships of speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors in advance of the CPD activity to determine whether action is required to manage potential or real conflicts of interest. The SPC must also have procedures in place to be followed if a conflict of interest comes to its attention prior to or during the CPD activity.

3.3 All members of the SPC, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors, must disclose to participants their relationships as described in 3.1

3.4 Any individual who fails to disclose their relationships as described in 3.1 and 3.3 cannot participate as a member of the SPC, speaker, moderator, facilitator or author of an accredited CPD activity.

### **Process**

1. All scientific planning committee members, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors must complete the Declaration of Conflict of Interest form.

2. All completed original forms must be retained by the party submitting the program for Mainpro+® certification (referred to herein as the CPD provider or CPD organizer) for a period of one year following certification expiry, so that the forms are available in the event that the program is audited by the CFPC.

**3. Scientific planning committee forms:** Completed forms for each scientific planning committee member must be submitted at the time of application for certification (please scan and upload all forms to CERT+).

**4. Speaker, moderator, facilitator, and author forms:** These completed forms must be submitted to the SPC of the CPD provider organization. It is the role of the SPC to review all disclosed financial relationships of speakers, moderators, facilitators and authors in advance of the CPD activity to determine whether action is required to manage potential or real conflicts of interest. The SPC must also have procedures in place to be followed if a conflict of interest comes to its attention prior to or during the CPD activity.

5. Disclosure must be made to the audience whether you do or do not have a relationship to disclose

6. Speakers must disclose conflicts verbally and in writing using the CFPC conflict of interest slide template at the beginning of a presentation. If slides will not be used disclosures must be included in written program materials (e.g., conference program, course website, workbook, reading material, etc.) as applicable.

7. Speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors are responsible for ensuring that their presentations, or education materials—and any recommendations—are balanced and reflect the current scientific literature. The only caveat to this guideline is where there is only one treatment or management strategy. Unapproved use of products or services must be declared within the presentation.

8. Any individual who fails to disclose their relationship(s) as required cannot participate as a member of the scientific planning committee, speaker, moderator, facilitator, or author of a Mainpro+ certified activity.

## How to complete the Mainpro+ Declaration of Conflict of Interest form

There are three parts to the form:

- **Parts 1 and 3 must be completed by all** scientific planning committee members, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors.
- **Part 2 must be completed by all** speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors.

Completed forms must be returned to the CPD program provider or organizer, not directly to the CFPC. The CPD provider organization must retain completed forms for a period of one year following certification expiry.

# The CFPC Mainpro+® Declaration of Conflict of Interest Form

## Part 1

All speakers, moderators, facilitators, authors, and scientific planning committee members must complete this form and submit it to the identified CPD program’s provider or organizer. Disclosure must be made to the audience whether you do or do not have a relationship with a for-profit or not-for-profit entity. If you require more space, please attach an addendum to this page.

I do not have an affiliation (financial or otherwise) with any for-profit or not-for-profit organizations.

(Speakers, moderators, facilitators, and/or authors who have nothing to declare should inform the audience that they cannot identify any conflict of interest.)

I have/had an affiliation (financial or otherwise) with a for-profit or not-for-profit organization.

Complete the sections below that apply to you now or during the past two (2) calendar years up to and including the current year. Please indicate the for-profit and not-for-profit organizations with which you have/had affiliations, and briefly explain what connection you have/had with the organizations. You must disclose this information to your audience both verbally and in writing.

	Name of for-profit or not-for-profit organizations(s)	Description of relationship(s)
Any direct financial relationships including receipt of honoraria		
Membership on advisory boards or speakers bureaus		
Funded grants, research, or clinical trials		
Patents for a drug or device		
All other investments or relationships that could be seen by a reasonable, well-informed participant as having the potential to influence the content of the educational activity		

## Part 2

Only presenters, moderators, facilitators, and authors must complete this section.

		Circle one		
I intend to make therapeutic recommendations for medications that have not received regulatory approval (i.e., off-label use of medications).		Yes	No	<i>You must declare all off-label use to the audience during your presentation.</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I acknowledge that the <a href="#">National Standard</a> requires that any descriptions of therapeutic options use generic names (or both generic and trade names) and do not reflect exclusivity and branding. If no generic name exists, trade names must be used in a consistent manner.</li> </ul>		Yes	No	<i>Failure to do this is a violation of the National Standard and the Mainpro+ Certification Standards.</i>

## Part 3

Check all that apply. I am a:	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the scientific planning committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Moderator	<input type="checkbox"/> Speaker
		<input type="checkbox"/> Author	<input type="checkbox"/> Facilitator
	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe)		

Name/title of program/event:

\_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgement:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have reviewed the declaration form's instructions and guidelines and that the information above is accurate. I understand that this information will be publicly available.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_