

THE COLLEGE OF
FAMILY PHYSICIANS
OF CANADA



LE COLLÈGE DES
MÉDECINS DE FAMILLE
DU CANADA

Management of Relationships with the Health Care/ Pharmaceutical Industry

The 2018/19 HPI Report — September 2020

Background

In November 2013 the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)'s Board of Directors approved the report [The CFPC's Relationship with the Health Care/Pharmaceutical Industry](https://www.cfpc.ca/en/policy-innovation/health-policy-government-relations/cfpc-policy-papers-position-statements/relationship-health-care-pharmaceutical-industry) (<https://www.cfpc.ca/en/policy-innovation/health-policy-government-relations/cfpc-policy-papers-position-statements/relationship-health-care-pharmaceutical-industry>). The Board subsequently described a path for managing relationships with the health care and pharmaceutical industry (HPI) to ensure greater control, increased financial independence, and enhanced transparency. This direction has ensured that the CFPC continually assesses its policies and performance regarding this relationship.

The Board also established a requirement for relevant Board-mandated committees

overseeing continuing professional development (CPD), Family Medicine Forum (FMF), and *Canadian Family Physician* (CFP) to report annually on the implementation of the approved November 2013 Task Force recommendations. This report represents information about the CFPC's 2018/19 fiscal year and offers comparisons with the two previous fiscal years.

In 2019 the Board conducted a significant number of discussions about the College's relationship with the HPI. This included reflection on the data presented in this report, on consultation with staff and CFPC members in a national member survey, and at the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members. At its January 2020 meeting the Board of Directors approved the following motion:

PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY

While recognizing the differing perspectives on the presence of the pharmaceutical industry at Family Medicine Forum (FMF) and within the *Canadian Family Physician* (CFP) journal, and its unconscious influence on prescribing,

THAT the CFPC commit to enhancing the evidence-based independence of FMF and CFP by being pharma-free by the end of 2024.

FMF EXHIBITORS

THAT cannabis, homeopathic, and naturopathic exhibitors be eliminated from the FMF exhibit hall by FMF 2021.

The CFPC departments and committees affected by this motion are now implementing this policy direction and will ensure the ongoing vitality of these two valued CFPC programs.

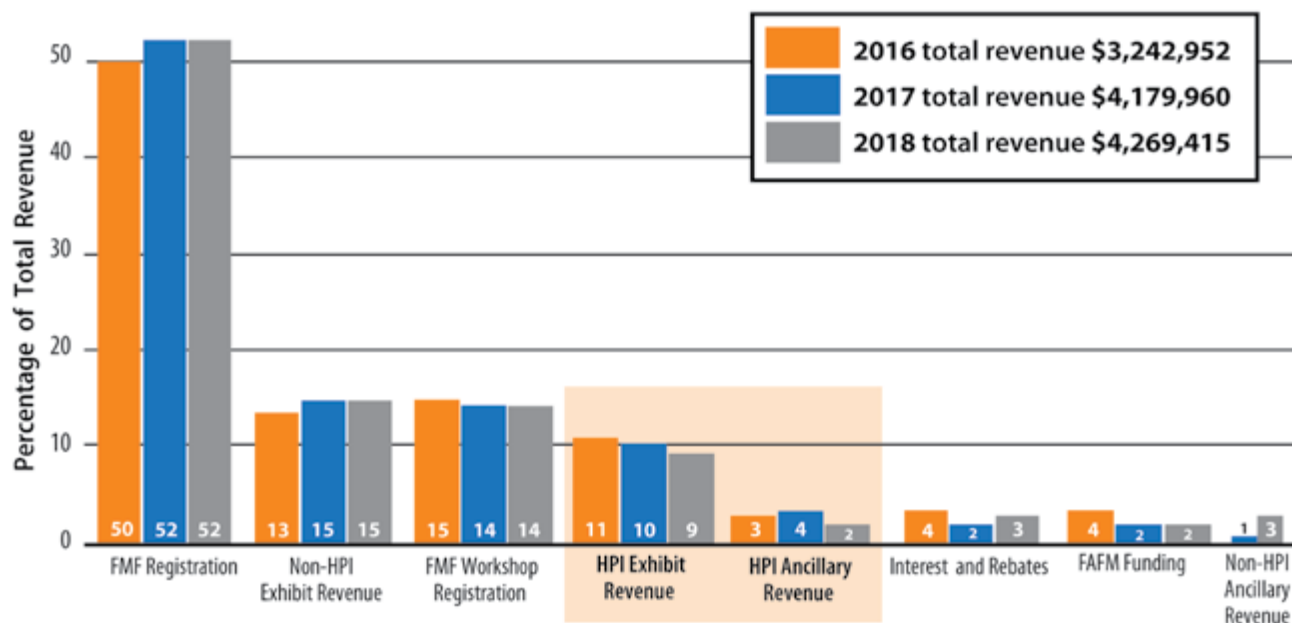
Family Medicine Forum

The Family Medicine Forum (FMF) Committee has developed policies, guidelines, and enforcement activities that ensure accountability and careful management of the relationship between the CFPC and HPI. These are described in detail in the [January 2019 report \(https://www.cfpc.ca/en/policy-innovation/health-policy-government-relations/cfpc-policy-papers-position-statements/relationship-health-care-pharmaceutical-industry\)](https://www.cfpc.ca/en/policy-innovation/health-policy-government-relations/cfpc-policy-papers-position-statements/relationship-health-care-pharmaceutical-industry). The committee ensures its activities are compliant with the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* (the Standard) (<https://portal.cfpc.ca/resourcesdocs/uploadedFiles/CPD/National%20Standard%20for%20Support%20of%20Accredited%20CPD%20Activities%20FINAL%20ver%2023-1.pdf>).

FMF revenue reporting

All FMF revenues are fully disclosed, reviewed, and approved by the FMF Committee, the CFPC’s Finance and Audit Committee, and the CFPC Board of Directors. All revenues from commercial interests, including the HPI, are tracked and reported annually (**Figures 1 and 2**).

Figure 1. FMF revenue sources for 2016, 2017, and 2018

















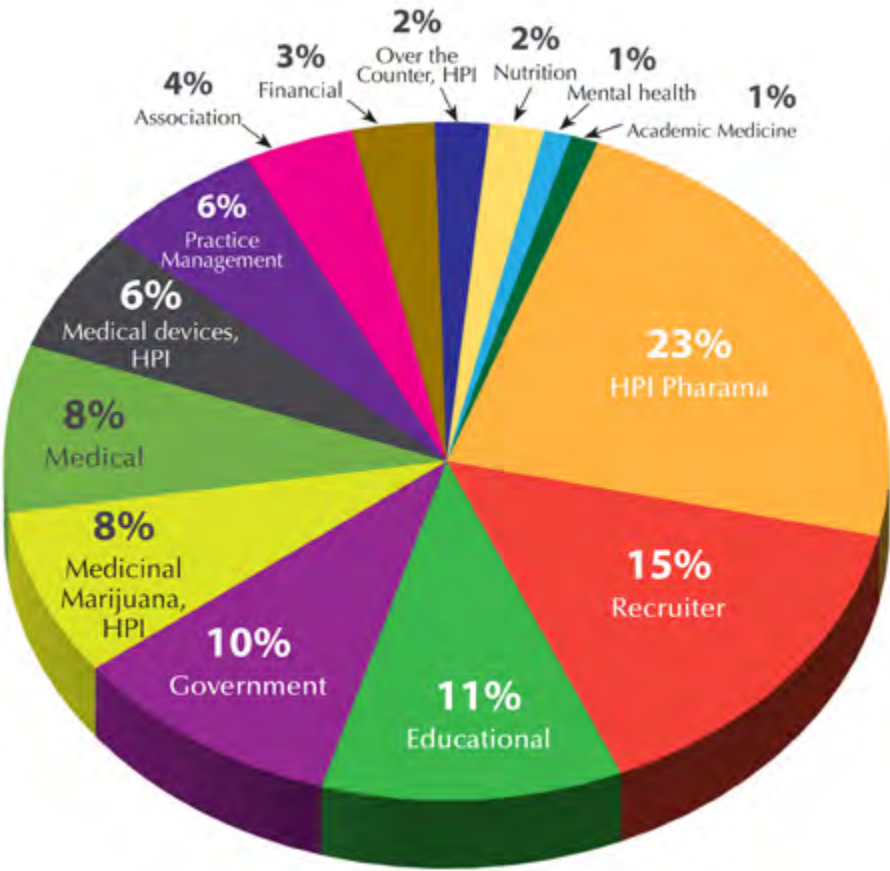
Key finding

Revenues classified as HPI represented 11 per cent of total revenue at FMF 2018, down from 14 per cent in each of the two previous years.



Figure 2. FMF 2018 exhibitor revenue

Exhibitor Revenue \$1,026,346 TOTAL		
%	Source	
23%	HPI Pharma	
15%	Recruiter	
11%	Educational	
10%	Government	
8%	Medicinal Marijuana, HPI	
8%	Medical	
6%	Medical devices, HPI	
6%	Practice Management	
4%	Association	
3%	Financial	
2%	Over the Counter, HPI	
2%	Nutrition	
1%	Mental health	
1%	Academic Medicine	



Key finding

At FMF 2018 the HPI accounted for 39 per cent of all exhibitor revenues. This is a decrease from 41 per cent at FMF 2017 and 44 per cent at FMF 2016.

Canadian Family Physician

The Canadian advertising market for medical journals continues to be volatile. From an HPI standpoint, the trend of developing specialty products rather than products for the primary care market has continued, with a total overall reduction in advertising spending in our sector.

For the 2018/19 fiscal year, total *CFP* revenue was \$944,457 (Table 1). This

compares with \$841,774 in 2017/18 and \$984,550 in 2016/17. Advertising revenues for *CFP* showed similar totals to the previous year. The percentage of revenues coming from the HPI was almost identical to last year and represented 27.8 per cent of total revenue. This compares with 28.3 per cent in 2017/18 and 47.5 per cent in 2016/17.

Table 1. *CFP* revenue sources for 2018/19

Category	Amount
Classifieds	\$432,435
Advertising sales	\$214,133
Advertising non-pharma	\$169,121
Web ads	\$48,852
Web ads non-pharma	\$19,441
Out-of-country mailing	\$44,581
Polywrap inserts	\$42,390
Polywrap recovery	\$24,211
Printing non-journal	\$30,366
Subscriptions	\$5,422
Reprints	\$3,565
Sundry income	\$7,803
Publishing services	\$24,500
Revenue subtotal	\$1,066,820
Advertising discount	\$122,363
Revenue total	\$944,457
HPI revenue	\$262,985
HPI revenue (% of total)	28%

Key finding

Revenues from pharmaceutical advertising were unchanged in 2018/19 at about 28 per cent of total revenue.

As some journals have left the market or reduced publication frequency, we have seen a modest rebound in total advertising revenue for *CFP* that began in the second half of 2019. Year-end revenues will likely exceed what was budgeted for 2019/20 with a likely higher percentage coming from the HPI than the past two years.

Going forward, we will be implementing the Board motion of January 2020 and will seek other sources of non-HPI revenues.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Recent changes in policy and the external CPD environment

Almost 44,000 family physicians participate each year in the Mainpro+® program. Mainpro+ participants must report 250 credits in a five-year cycle. Of these credits, 125 must be from certified activities while the remainder can be from non-certified activities.

In 2019 the CFPC's National Committee on Continuing Professional Development (NCCPD) approved the motion that

Representatives of a commercial interest (e.g., pharmaceutical company, medical cannabis producer, medical device company, etc.) cannot assume the role of a facilitator, speaker, and/or instructor for any Mainpro+ certified program **under any circumstances**.

This new policy further limits the potential for influence on Mainpro+ certified activities.

About CPD revenues

The CFPC and its Chapters certify CPD programs for Mainpro+ credits. These programs or activities are submitted for review via the CERT+ application platform. Revenues are generated through two kinds of fees, application and ethical review. Application fees are based on various factors such as whether the program is seeking national or provincial certification, the number of credits per hour sought, and whether the program has for-profit financial support.

A second stream of revenue is derived from ethical reviews. Programs developed by, or with financial support from, for-profit organizations are subject to a session-by-session review each time they are to be delivered to ensure there is no commercial

bias or marketing evident. It is important to note that for-profit companies include the HPI and others such as independent medical education companies.

The CFPC's National office receives revenues from:

- Application fees charged for all nationally certified programs delivered in Canada
- Application fees and ethical review fees for all programs delivered outside of Canada
- Provincially certified programs, where \$50 from each application fee and \$50 from each ethical review fee goes to the National office; the rest of these fees flow to the 10 Chapters

The current fees are outlined in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Mainpro+ certification application fees by program type

PROGRAM DELIVERY	Nationally Certified Programs (includes programs delivered outside of Canada)			Provincially Certified Programs		
	ONE CREDIT PER HOUR	TWO CREDITS PER HOUR	THREE CREDITS PER HOUR	ONE CREDIT PER HOUR	TWO CREDITS PER HOUR	THREE CREDITS PER HOUR
With For-Profit Support	\$850	\$950	\$1,050	\$650	N/A	N/A
Without For-Profit Support	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$450	N/A	N/A

N/A: Not applicable

CPD revenues from the HPI—a caveat about the data

While enhancements have been made to the CERT+ platform, there are still some issues with capturing all data relevant to certification revenues and relationships. Caveats remain in interpreting the available information.

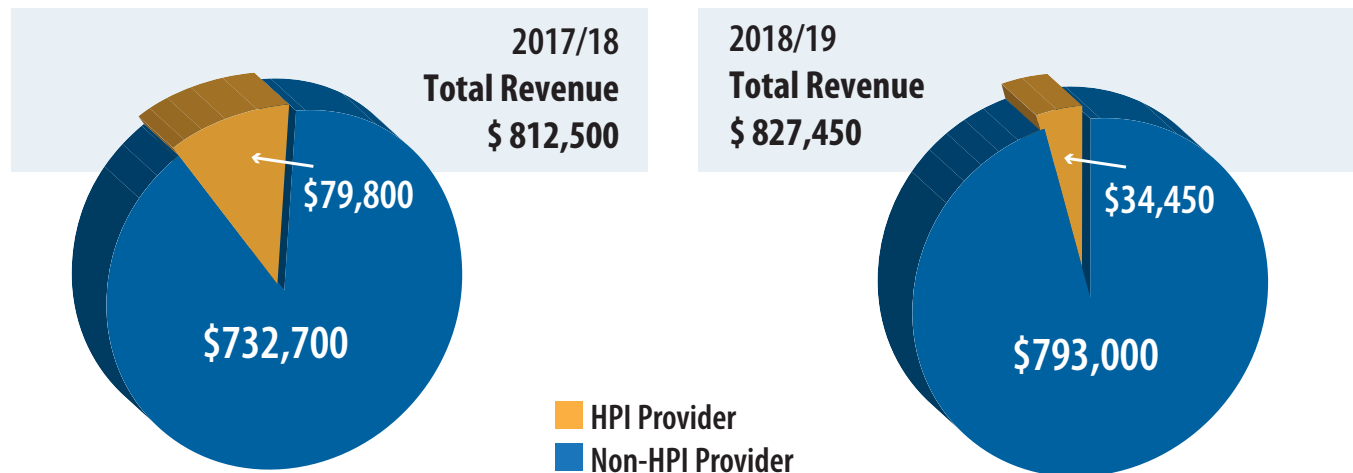
Challenges have been identified in capturing the full picture of HPI funding in CPD:

- Ethical review fees are not collected in all cases. University certified programs are considered exempt from ethical reviews. Only a single—rather than session-by-session—review is required for journal clubs and hospital/clinical rounds. The first ethical review is provided at no cost for provincially certified one-credit-per-hour programs.
- Medical education companies are represented in the non-HPI category, although they can also work directly on contract for the HPI companies. These companies can propose programs for certification only when they work independently.
- CPD providers in Canada seeking certification of their programs can receive financial or in-kind support from external organizations, including the HPI, as governed by the [National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities](#) (<https://portal.cfpc.ca/resourcesdocs/uploadedFiles/CPD/National%20Standard%20for%20Support%20of%20Accredited%20CPD%20Activities%20FINAL%20ver%2023-1.pdf>). The Standard has restrictions that limit the role of the HPI to that of sponsorship and to strengthen the independence of scientific planning committees.
- When for-profit support is declared, the applications also receive ethical review each time the program is presented.
- The data available do **not** include programs approved by university CPD offices that certify on the CFPC's behalf through their accreditation by the Committee for Accreditation of Continuing Medical Education (CACME). University CPD offices do upload information into the CERT+ system. However, at this time they do not identify whether programs have been funded by the HPI. The CFPC receives no revenues from university certified CPD activities.

CPD Department revenues from the HPI—the data

The following charts (Figure 3) show total HPI and non-HPI revenue for the CFPC for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Figure 3. CPD fees revenue for National Office and Chapters combined, HPI versus non-HPI (2017/18, 2018/19)



Key finding

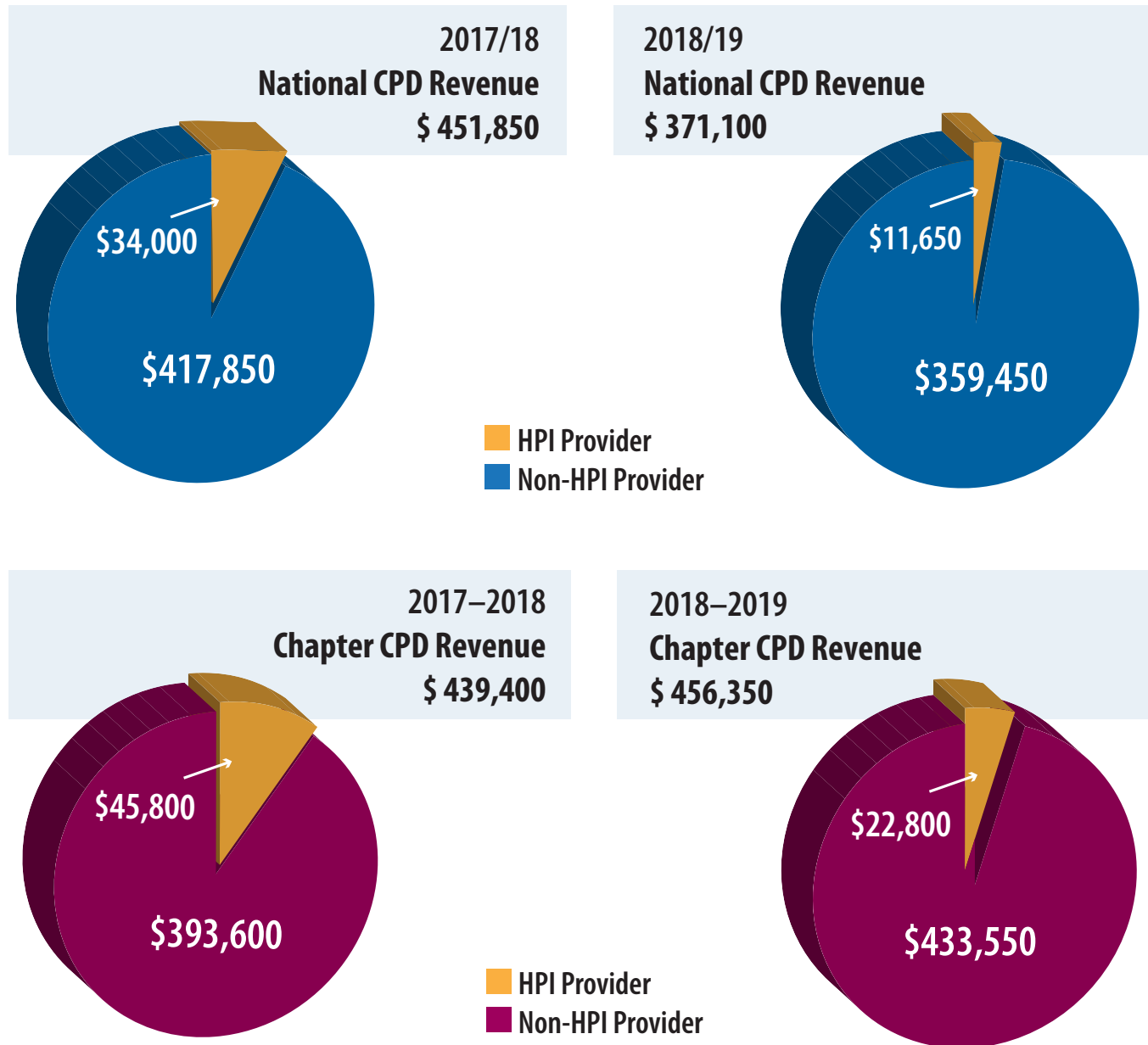
In 2018/19 the CFPC and its Chapters received \$34,450 in revenues from HPI sources, which was 4.2 per cent of total revenue. This was a drop from \$79,800 (9.8 per cent) in the previous year (Figure 3).

This drop in HPI-derived revenue is due to the launch of the Standard on January 1, 2018. Since that date, the HPI and its representatives are no longer permitted to submit programs for Mainpro+ certification. As a result, the CPD Department has not received revenues from HPI companies for any activities certified after that date. The 4.2 per cent of revenue we

are reporting is due to programs still running in 2018/19 that were approved prior to the Standard, and/or to programs submitted to the CFPC that were later found to be non-compliant with the Standard during the review process. The CFPC and its Chapters retain the application fees regardless of the success of the application for certification.

The following charts (Figure 4) show total HPI and non-HPI revenue for the National and Chapter offices for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

Figure 4. CPD fees revenue, National and Chapters—HPI versus non-HPI (2017/18, 2018/19)



Key finding

In 2018/19, the CFPC National office received \$11,650 (3.1 per cent) and its Chapters \$22,800 (5.0 per cent) in revenue from HPI sources related to the review of CPD programs. These figures are down from 7.5 per cent and 10.4 per cent of National and Chapter revenues, respectively, in 2017/18 (Figure 4).

HPI support of CPD activities in Canada

Based on information collected from the Mainpro+ certification applications received on the CERT+ platform, the CFPC can provide data on the prevalence of HPI funding of CPD activities certified by the CFPC and its Chapters. In 2018/19, 29 per cent of the programs indicated that they had received financial and/or in-kind support from an HPI organization. This amount is down slightly from 31 per cent of programs in 2017/18.

Looking ahead

HPI revenues now make up about four per cent of revenues received by the CPD Department for the review and certification of CPD activities for family physicians. This figure is expected to drop to nearly zero in 2019/20 as the full effect of the Standard is felt. The CPD Department intends to build further enhancements into the CERT+ platform to allow for better classification of CPD providers and to better clarify the funding supports for CPD activities. This will help to further validate the data presented in this report in years to come.

The CPD Department is committed to managing its relationships with HPI organizations in an ethical and transparent manner while ensuring CFPC members and Non-Member Mainpro+ Participants continue to have access to high-quality and relevant CPD activities. Supported by the work of the NCCPD, which continually reviews the College's CPD policies, we are striving for continual improvement in our management of HPI relationships in CPD.

Conclusion and CFPC Board Direction

This report describes the revenues the CFPC received from the HPI for three of the key programs and services that it provides: Family Medicine Forum (11 per cent of revenues in 2018), the *Canadian Family Physician* (27.8 per cent in 2018/19), and CPD certification (4.2 per cent in 2018/19). These revenues, as percentage of total revenue, are all declining. This reflects both active policy development and enforcement by the CFPC and broader industry trends in the ways in which the HPI is involved in education, marketing, and promotion.

As noted at the beginning of this report, the CFPC Board conducted a significant number of discussions in 2019 about the College's relationship with the HPI. This included reflection on the data in this report, consultation with CFPC staff and members in a national member survey, and at the 2019 Annual Meeting of Members. At its January 2020 meeting, the CFPC Board of Directors approved the following motion:

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