

# CPD in Focus

Spring 2022

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## Welcome new Director of Continuing Professional Development

In November 2021 the College of Family Physicians of Canada™ (CFPC) welcomed Dr. Leonora Lalla as our new Director of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Dr. Lalla completed her medical degree at McGill University followed by a family medicine residency at St. Mary's Hospital in Montreal, where she has maintained her clinical practice. Inspired by the commitment of her clinical supervisors, she began her career in medical education as a postgraduate supervisor and has since then worked in all stages of the educational continuum. In 2011 she assumed the position of Family Medicine Undergraduate Program Director at McGill and was part of a team that developed a new family medicine curriculum.

Her journey in CPD began in 2005 when she joined the executive of the Collège québécois des médecins de famille, the Quebec chapter of the CFPC, later becoming the chair of their CPD committee. Dr. Lalla has since held several leadership positions in CPD including serving as the Associate Dean of CPD at the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of McGill University in Montreal from 2016 to 2021. She was the chair of the CFPC's National Committee on CPD (NCCPD) from 2015 to 2021 and chaired the working group that created the new Mainpro+® framework from 2014 to 2015. She is also the past-president of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continue des médecins, Quebec's CPD council. She is a Fellow of the CFPC.

Dr. Lalla brings experience, creativity, and enthusiasm to this new role, where she is responsible for the

Mainpro+ system at the CFPC. She is also one of two CFPC representatives on the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada's Committee on Accreditation of CME (CACME).

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## CFPC CPD Program Award

The CPD team wishes to congratulate the 2020 and 2021 winners of the CFPC CPD Program Development Award. The CFPC CPD Program Award recognizes a Mainpro+ certified educational program that has provided an exceptional learning experience to either practising or practice-eligible members of the CFPC. The award is presented to the individual or group responsible for the design, development, and implementation of the winning CPD program.

### 2020 winners

Urgences en pratique familiale – Dr. François Parent, Quebec College of Family Physicians

Simulation based learning for methadone and buprenorphine prescribing skills – Dr. Peter Selby, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

### 2021 winners

CASTED Emergency – Arun Sayal, North York General Hospital

UBC CPD Personal Learning Plans – University of British Columbia, CPD Office

The 2022 nominees are currently in review and winners will be announced this summer. If you would like to nominate a program for the 2023 award period, visit the [website](#) for more details.

# Highlights from the National Committee on Continuing Professional Development Meeting (April 8 and 9, 2022)

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## Mainpro+ Standards Working Group recommendations

In the fall of 2020 as part of the CFPC's commitment to the process of continuous quality improvement, the NCCPD approved the formation of a working group to review the Mainpro+ program. The Mainpro+ Standards Working Group (MSWG) began meeting in early 2021 with the following mandate:

1. Establish, review, and potentially recommend changes to the participation standards of the Mainpro+ program, including annual/cycle-based reporting requirements, the role of minimum/maximum category-based requirements, and requirements for professional learning plans (PLP).
2. Recommend whether maintenance of certification (e.g., Certification in the College of Family Physicians of Canada, Certificate of Added Competence in the CFPC) should include elements beyond CPD participation.
3. Direct the evolution of the Mainpro+ standards that reflects national and international standards for physician organizations and allied health care professionals.
4. Work to ensure the Mainpro+ standards reflect the needs of Mainpro+ participants while balancing them with the expectations of other stakeholders such as, but not limited to, the medical regulatory authorities and the public.

The working group is made up of CFPC members, representatives from the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada, CACME accredited university CPD offices, CPD researchers, CPD technology experts, patient partners, representatives of sister organizations, representatives of CFPC Chapters, CFPC staff, and NCCPD members. The group met multiple times over the last year. Their work included reviewing data and evidence relevant to the current Mainpro+ program as well as the results of a member survey.

A series of recommendations were developed by the Working Group that were sent to a subgroup of CFPC members as well as other stakeholders for feedback and refinement. This feedback was then used in the development of seven final recommendations that were presented to and approved by the NCCPD at their April meeting.

As a final step, these recommendations will be presented to the CFPC Board of Directors for final approval. The Board-approved recommendations will be implemented by July 2024. This will allow time for the required technology updates as well as a marketing and communication plan for members and stakeholders with respect to any changes to the Mainpro+ program.

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## Certification Standards Working Group

In anticipation of the need to revise the Mainpro+ Certification Standards to align with changes to the Mainpro+ program based on the MSWG recommendations, the NCCPD approved the creation of a Certification Standards Working Group to examine the current certification standards and processes and make recommendations for improvement. The goals of this working group will include:

- Reviewing the existing standards to ensure alignment with MSWG recommendations
- Examining how the certification standards can improve equity, diversity, and inclusion in CPD development and delivery
- Creating standards that reflect the post-pandemic world of CPD
- Simplifying the process for certification wherever possible
- Ensuring that certification standards continue to safeguard CPD from bias of all kinds and that relationships with sponsors remain at arms' length and transparent

This working group will begin its work in June 2022 with the intention of bringing recommendations to the NCCPD by fall 2023. The working group will be made up of key stakeholders including CACME-accredited CPD offices, eligible CPD provider organizations, Mainpro+ program reviewers, NCCPD members, patient partners, and CPD researchers.

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## Certification of multitherapeutic days

In December 2021 the CFPC placed a hold on approving ethical reviews for separately certified activities that were combined by third parties or multiple providers to create a new multi-session day/conference event. This hold was put in place until the NCCPD could meet and discuss a formal policy.

At their April meeting the NCCPD made the following decision with respect to events like these:

- Effective immediately, CPD activities (in any delivery format) that include two or more individually certified Mainpro+ activities must be certified in their entirety and must conform to certification standards. These activities must be planned and organized by an eligible CPD provider organization with a scientific planning committee, valid needs assessment, learning objectives, and overall activity evaluation. If sponsors are sought for these activities, the sponsorship agreements must be arranged with the eligible provider organization responsible for the activity.

A list of eligible CPD provider organizations can be found on page six of [Understanding Mainpro+ Certification](#). Any Mainpro+ certified activities being delivered in this combined format at events that have not been formally certified by the CFPC will not be eligible for Mainpro+ credits.

In researching the multitherapeutic day issue, CPD staff discovered some concerning violations regarding sponsorship and content solicitation for activities such as these, necessitating a reiteration of what is and is not permissible within our standards. It is important for CPD providers to note that it is a violation of the Mainpro+ Certification Standards to include content created by health care/pharmaceutical industry (HPI)

organizations or agencies working on their behalf in Mainpro+ certified activities. It is also a violation to solicit content for Mainpro+ certified activities as part of a sponsorship prospectus as this represents the tagging of sessions to a specific sponsor.

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## Status of medical communication companies and medical education companies that also provide marketing and communication services

While investigating issues and violations related to the multitherapeutic days, CFPC staff raised concerns regarding the involvement of medical communication companies in practices that do not align with the Mainpro+ Certification Standards.

In response to communications issued by the CFPC with respect to the multitherapeutic day hold, we received several communications from medical communication companies involved in certified CPD activities making it clear that these organizations were working directly with the pharmaceutical company sponsors of Mainpro+ certified CPD activities.

Staff of these organizations repeatedly referred to pharmaceutical companies as their clients or indicated they were representing specific pharmaceutical clients in the delivery of CPD activities. CPD staff performed an audit of currently certified programs and discovered that some medical communication companies were working with eligible provider organizations while others appear to be operating as hybrid medical education/medical communication organizations and submitting directly to the CFPC for certification.

To ensure that the CFPC is compliant with the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities, and to demonstrate closer alignment with organizations with which we hold reciprocal agreements such as the American Academy of Family Physicians, the NCCPD approved the following clarifications and changes to Mainpro+ certification policy with respect to the role of medical communications companies and companies that provide similar services.

To clarify, organizations that provide services for the HPI including but not limited to providing support for advisory boards, brand promotion, marketing, or who work directly with the HPI on educational program development are ineligible to act as a provider for Mainpro+ certified CPD activities and may not submit applications to the CFPC or Chapters for Mainpro+ certification or ethical review.

The following revision to our Mainpro+ Certification Standards was also made:

- Eligible CPD providers may engage medical communication companies for logistical support of Mainpro+ certified CPD activities only when those medical communication companies are not hired by the program sponsor(s) for work related to the same activity. Providers found to be working with communications companies under contract with program sponsors for the same event will be issued Mainpro+ standards violations.

We realize these clarifications and changes may impact work already in progress. To allow for transition, we will allow medical communication and hybrid medical communication/medical education companies who are already working with eligible providers to continue to submit applications and ethical reviews to CERT+ **until January 1, 2023**. After that date we will no longer accept applications from these types of organizations under any circumstances. Beginning **November 1, 2022**, we will no longer accept applications for certification or ethical review from medical communications or hybrid medical communication/education companies who are working independently with scientific planning committees.

These policy updates have been shared with the provider organizations impacted in our system as well as with Innovative Medicines Canada.

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## CERT+ Application Updates

In June 2022 two major enhancements will be launched in the CERT+ application platform. Both enhancements

are designed to improve the data we collect and ensure the CFPC remains compliant with the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities and aligns with other accrediting organizations in Canada.

The first enhancement will allow us to better classify the CPD providers in our system. All users of the system will be invited to complete classifying questions on first login after June 23rd. These questions will help us understand the organizations for which individuals work and will determine whether or not they are eligible to submit applications for Mainpro+ certification. A similar classification process will be launched for the organizations accountable for the CPD activities reviewed. Current organizations in our system are being classified by CPD staff and will be indicated as eligible or ineligible organizations. All ineligible organizations will be notified of their status prior to June 23rd. There is an opportunity to appeal and/or modify any classification by contacting the Mainpro+ certification team. Classifications will be based on the list of eligible provider organizations found on page six of [Understanding Mainpro+ Certification](#). These classifications will provide us with significantly better data regarding who creates CPD for family physicians in Canada and will help inform policy and strategy for the CFPC CPD going forward.

The second enhancement launching on June 23rd is an update to the CERT+ application questions. These updates will help us collect cleaner and more relevant data regarding the funding of CPD for family physicians and will improve our ability to review applications for compliance with the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities. The revised questions include using radio buttons and drop-down lists in place of open text as well as some additional questions and upload requirements. Beginning June 23rd applicants must indicate whether an activity intends to include exhibitors (in person or virtual) and provide copies of the exhibitor/sponsor prospectus for review as well as copies of sponsorship agreements. These will become mandatory uploads if the presence of sponsors and/or exhibitors is indicated on an application. These changes will apply to all new and in-progress applications on June 23rd.

If you have any questions about these enhancements to the platform, please contact the Mainpro+ certification team at [certplus@cfpc.ca](mailto:certplus@cfpc.ca).

## Ethical Review Requirements for Live Virtual CPD Activities

In a previous issue, we provided scenarios for how to submit ethical reviews for live virtual CPD activities. After receiving further questions, we have updated the scenarios below. Please note that ethical review is required for any live CPD activity with for-profit support. As a reminder, the following components are evaluated for ethical review.

- The logistical components of sessions (i.e., 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 electronic 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 (i.e., 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 Conflict of Interest (COI) forms and COI slides for speakers, moderators, and facilitators for the session being reviewed

Understanding where and in what circumstances ethical review is needed for live virtual CPD can be complicated. Here are a few scenarios to help providers better understand what to do. Please note these scenarios apply to programs that have for-profit financial support and are subject to ethical review.

Scenario description	Ethical review expectations
1. Physicians participate in a live webinar from their clinic, with a meal delivered by a sponsor representative. This could be happening at multiple clinics across the country for the same live webinar.	A separate ethical review is required for each clinic in which this scenario is occurring for the live webinar session. The ethical review submission should include details of the meal costs and who is delivering the food.
2. Physicians viewing a live webinar in a restaurant or hotel with a sponsor representative present.	A separate ethical review would be required for each specific venue where this scenario is taking place (same process as with live in-person restaurant or hotel presentations).
3. Physicians viewing a live webinar in a restaurant or hotel with no representative of a sponsor present.	Same requirements as scenario 2.
4. Physicians viewing a live webinar from home or their clinic with food delivered by a delivery service and no contact from sponsor representative.	A single ethical review submission per province/territory where this scenario is taking place is required. This could be combined with the ethical review submitted for scenario 1 above.
5. Physicians viewing a live webinar from home or their clinic with no food delivery or contact with sponsor representative.	A single ethical review submission based on the province/territory from which the webinar is determined to be delivered is required. This could be based on the location of the provider organization.

Please note that for live in-person activities, an ethical review is required for each date and location an activity is taking place.

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## Save the Date

### CPD in Focus Live

English – Wednesday, June 15, 2022  
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (ET)

French – Wednesday, June 15, 2022  
2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (ET)

These live webinars will explore the contents of the *CPD in Focus* newsletter in depth and allow program providers to pose questions and seek clarifications. Webinar attendees are invited to submit questions or cases for consideration. English speakers can send

their questions or cases for consideration to this survey <https://survey.alchemer-ca.com/s3/50145768/CPD-in-Focus-LIVE>, while French speakers can submit to this survey <https://survey.alchemer-ca.com/s3/50145769/CPD-in-Focus-LIVE-French>. Cases and questions will be incorporated into the webinar content based on time available and relevance to the majority of the target audience. Cases must be submitted by May 31, 2022 for consideration.

Register for the [English webinar](#). Register for the [French webinar](#). The webinars will be recorded for those unable to attend live. You must be registered to receive the recording.

## What We Are Reading: A CPD bibliography

Below are scholarly literature titles and other CPD-related articles that have recently come to our attention. These publications have attracted our interest because they address recent trends in CPD, support the principles of Mainpro+ Certification Standards, or introduce unique concepts in adult learning. We hope you find this information helpful as you develop CPD activities.

Adashi EY, Cohen IG. Industry-Sponsored Speaker Programs End of the Line? *JAMA*. 2021;325(18):1835-1836.

Aminu M, Phillips E, Kolanko C. The Role of Digital Competence in CME Uptake: A Short Communication. *J Eur CME*. 2021;11(1):2019436.

Levinson W, Wong BM. Aligning continuing professional development with quality improvement. *CMAJ*. 2021;193(18):E647-E648.

McBride A, Collins C, Osborne B, McVeigh H. Does continuing professional development enhance patient care? A survey of Irish based general practitioners: Successful implementation of mandatory CPD in Irish General Practice. *BMC Med Educ*. 2022;22(1):220.

Ng V, Gupta A, Erlich D. Brought about by necessity: how the pandemic accelerated a transformation of continuing professional development, Education for Primary Care. *Educ Prim Care*. 2022;33(1):2-5.

Windrim RC, Gan E, Kingdom JC. The Impact of COVID-19 on Continuing Professional Development: Go Green and Go Home? *J Obstet Gynaecol Can*. 2022;44(3):231-233.



## Meet the Continuing Professional Development Team

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