Frequently Asked Questions for Practitioners

The CPD Program

1. **What is the CPD Program?**

   The Accreditation Department (AD) of the Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners (QCHP) has developed a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program for all healthcare practitioners. This Program consists of two major components. The first is a CPD Framework which includes a balance of self-directed and practice-based learning activities. The second component is a CPD credit system with credit requirements that all healthcare practitioners must achieve to maintain licensure within the State of Qatar. A sub-component of the CPD credit system is the hybrid CPD accreditation system that establishes accreditation standards and processes for CPD activities and CPD provider organizations.

2. **What is the purpose of the CPD Program?**

   The CPD Program is designed to support and enable continuous learning and improvement that will benefit not only individual healthcare practitioners, but enhance the quality of care provided to patients. The development of a CPD Framework and credit system are two essential components of a national continuing professional development system.

3. **What are the anticipated benefits of the CPD Program?**

   All licensed healthcare practitioners will benefit from a CPD Program that supports them to manage and demonstrate their commitment to continuing professional development. The provision of a CPD ePortfolio will enable healthcare practitioners to record the continuing professional development activities they have completed, the knowledge, skills and competencies that were acquired or sustained, the areas where performance was improved and the overall impact of CPD on their professional practice.

4. **What evidence is there that this makes a difference to patient care?**

   There is ample evidence that engaging in CPD activities contributes to sustaining competence and enhanced performance over time. Studies have demonstrated a correlation between engagement in CPD and the outcomes of a comprehensive peer review of a physician’s practice. The CPD research literature has demonstrated that group learning, self-learning and various forms of assessment can have a small but important impact on behaviour change and patient outcomes.

   Engaging in CPD will not only enable the achievement of measureable practice outcomes for healthcare practitioners but demonstrate the value and commitment of the health professions in fostering a culture of best practice - all are paramount to improve healthcare quality and patient safety.
5. **What role has the Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners been assigned within the CPD Program?**

In 2013, the Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners (QCHP) was established by an Emiri Decree as the regulatory body for all healthcare professionals practicing in the state of Qatar. The Accreditation Department was founded to ensure that the governance, operations and activities of medical education in the healthcare sector in the state of Qatar meet accepted professional and ethical standards through a well-defined and structured CPD accreditation process for providers and programs.

6. **When will I be required to participate in the CPD Program?**

The implementation of the national CPD Program for the State of Qatar is anticipated to begin on March 7, 2016. The policies governing the CPD Program have concluded the following:

- The start date of the CPD cycle will be personalized to coincide with the date of licensure in the State of Qatar.
- Participation in the CPD Program will be mandatory for all licensed healthcare practitioners.
- All healthcare practitioners must meet the minimal requirements to maintain their license to practice.

Given these policies, there will be a need to adjust the initial cycle length and credit expectations for healthcare practitioners who have already been licensed to practice in the State of Qatar at the time of the launch of the CPD Program.

The following table describes the annual and cycle requirements expected for healthcare practitioners depending on their current licensure date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duration between 07 March 2016 and Licensure Renewal Date</th>
<th>Actual Dates</th>
<th>CPD Cycle Requirements</th>
<th>Category Specific Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 months</td>
<td>(from 07 March 2016 to 06 June 2016)</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Not Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 months to less than 6 months</td>
<td>(from 07 June 2016 to 06 September 2016)</td>
<td>10 credits</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months to less than 9 months</td>
<td>(from 07 September 2016 to 06 December 2016)</td>
<td>20 credits</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months to less than 12 months</td>
<td>(from 07 December 2016 to 06 March 2017)</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
<td>Not required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months to less than 15 months</td>
<td>(from 07 March 2017 to 06 June 2017)</td>
<td>40 credits</td>
<td>20 credits in category 1, 20 credits in category 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 months to less than 18 months</td>
<td>(from 07 June 2017 to 06 September 2017)</td>
<td>50 credits</td>
<td>25 credits in category 1, 25 credits in category 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months to less than 21 months</td>
<td>(from 07 September 2017 to 06 December 2017)</td>
<td>60 credits</td>
<td>30 credits in category 1, 30 credits in category 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 months to less than 24 months</td>
<td>(from 07 December 2017 to 06 March 2018)</td>
<td>70 credits</td>
<td>35 credits in category 1, 35 credits in category 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 years and beyond</td>
<td>07 March 2018 and onwards</td>
<td>80 credits</td>
<td>40 credits in category 1, 40 credits in category 2 or 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Up to maximum of 10 credits (in any category) for learning activities completed between 07 September 2015 and 06 March 2016 can contribute to your first CPD cycle requirements.
Additionally, the QCHP-AD has determined that healthcare practitioners will be permitted to transfer up to 10 credits (in any category) that they completed in the 6 months prior to the launch of the CPD Program. This ability to transfer credits is only applicable for the first CPD cycle.

**Participation**

7. **Who is required to participate in the CPD Program?**

All healthcare practitioners in part-time or full-time practice in the State of Qatar are required to complete the annual and cycle-specific requirements of the CPD Program to maintain their registration and renewal of licensure with the Ministry of Public Health.

8. **Are non-practicing clinicians in the State of Qatar required to participate in the CPD Program?**

Exemptions from participating in the CPD Program are only granted to healthcare practitioners who are retired from clinical practice and not participating in any related professional activities (such as healthcare administration, research or education). Healthcare practitioners who do not have clinical care roles but are engaged in healthcare administration, research or education must participate in the CPD Program.

9. **What is a CPD cycle?**

Each CPD cycle is two years (24 months) in duration unless an extension is granted as per the QCHP-AD’s Cycle Appeals Process Policy. The start date of an individual CPD cycle will align with each healthcare practitioner’s date of licensure.

10. **What are the cycle requirements?**

To maintain licensure the QCHP-AD has established three mandatory requirements for all healthcare practitioners in the State of Qatar. Healthcare practitioners have to ensure they complete each of the requirements described below:

1. **The annual CPD requirement:** Healthcare practitioners must complete and document a minimum of 40 credits each year.
2. **The CPD cycle requirements:** Healthcare practitioners must complete and document a minimum of 80 credits every two years.
3. **Healthcare practitioners must complete and document at least 40 credits in Category 1 and 40 credits across Category 2 and/or Category 3, in any combination.**
11. How will healthcare practitioners demonstrate their participation in CPD activities?

Healthcare practitioners will record their learning activities in the QCHP-AD’s CPD ePortfolio (which will be ready for use on March 7, 2016). In order for CPD activities to be counted, recorded in the CPD ePortfolio, the healthcare practitioner will be required to upload the relevant supporting documentation (as defined by the QCHP-AD CPD Framework).

12. What if my employer does not offer CPD activities?

While all employers are encouraged to provide CPD activities to their staff, it may not be possible for all employers. In this case, the QCHP-AD encourages employers who regularly provide CPD activities to their staff to open registration to all healthcare practitioners. A list of CPD activities accredited for Category 1 and Category 3 credits is available on our website at www.qchp.org.qa. Additionally, practitioners may seek CPD activities that meet the requirements of the QCHP-AD CPD Framework offered online or outside of Qatar. There are also self-learning options within Category 2 of the Framework that may be more widely available. The QCHP-AD will closely monitor the availability of CPD activities for all healthcare practitioners.

13. What if my employer is not allowing me to take CPD activities offered during work hours?

Employers are strongly encouraged to provide protected time for their staff to attend or participate in CPD activities and to provide these activities at a reasonable cost (or free of cost). Healthcare practitioners can also pursue learning activities on their own across all 3 categories in the CPD Framework.

14. Will online CPD activities be included within the CPD Framework?

Web-based activities could be available across the 3 categories of the CPD Framework depending on the delivery method chosen by the CPD program developer. For example, the QCHP-AD has collaborated with BMJ Online Learning to provide free access to their learning modules for all licensed healthcare practitioners. Read more here.

15. Is attendance at international conferences / international activities outside the State of Qatar accepted?

Yes, CME/CPD activities attended outside Qatar which are accredited by recognized international accrediting bodies as well as those accrediting bodies with whom the QCHP-AD has mutual agreement can be included within the CPD Framework. A provisional list of such accrediting bodies for different scopes/disciplines of practice will be available soon. In order for CPD activities to be recorded in the CPD ePortfolio, the practitioner will be required to upload the relevant supporting documentation (as defined by the QCHP-AD CPD Framework) which is to be provided by the CPD provider.
16. What happens if I do not meet the requirements of the CPD Program?

Healthcare practitioners who fail to meet the minimum annual requirement of 40 credits will be notified by the QCHP-AD at the end of the first year of non-adherence and provided with information on how to seek assistance. All non-adherent participants will be required to provide evidence of participation through a validation program in the remaining year of their cycle.

Non-adherent healthcare practitioners will be monitored and informed of their status throughout the remainder of their CPD cycle.

Healthcare practitioners who have not met the minimum requirement of 80 credits by the end of their CPD cycle will be subject to having their licensure in the State of Qatar terminated for non-compliance. An opportunity to appeal the termination of their licensure will be provided.

17. I participate in the CPD Program outside of the State of Qatar. Will you accept my participation in this program to maintain my licensure with the Ministry of Public Health?

No. Once launched, all healthcare practitioners licensed to practice in the State of Qatar must participate in the QCHP CPD Program to maintain their Ministry of Public Health license to practice.

18. Can I claim credits for teaching or giving presentations?

You may record your “preparation” for formal teaching activities that you deliver under Category 2 - Self-Directed Learning Activities. Note that the hours eligible for CPD credit would be any “new” learning acquired while preparing or researching for your teaching sessions or presentations. It is important to note that the credit hours claimed are not simply the number of hours that you spend delivering your presentation or teaching sessions; rather the CPD credit hours are associated with the preparation you do in advance of these sessions.

19. Can I claim credits for working/clinical rounds?

No. Typically, working/clinical rounds are not formal CPD activities. Rather, they are bedside visits by a healthcare practitioner—to evaluate treatment, assess current course and document the patient’s progress or recuperation. Only accredited learning rounds that have met the QCHP-AD CPD activity accreditation standards are eligible for credit under Category.