



Continuing Professional Development:

Frequently Asked Questions

It is a regulatory requirement for all members of the College to report their **continuing professional development (CPD)** activities to one of the three approved CPD tracking bodies:

- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada: www.royalcollege.ca
- College of Family Physicians of Canada: www.cfpc.ca
- Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada (formerly known as the General Practice Psychotherapy Association): www.gppaonline.ca

The following FAQs address the most commonly asked questions, including exceptional circumstances where the College has determined that compliance may not be feasible.

1. Who needs to report their CPD?

The Quality Assurance Regulation (*O. Reg. 346/11* under the *Medicine Act* - Section 29, Part 1) requires all members of the College to “participate in a program of continuing professional development that includes a self-assessment component and that meets the requirements for continuing professional development set by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC)” or the Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada (MDPAC).

These requirements have been communicated regularly with all members since 2012 and a grace period was allowed to give members time to comply with the regulation. After several years of seeking voluntary compliance, we must ensure that members are participating in CPD in accordance with the regulation.

2. What organizations are approved by the College for the purpose of tracking CPD?

All members of the College are required to report their CPD activities to either the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, or the College of Family Physicians of Canada, or an organization approved by the College that meets the CPD requirements of the national bodies. Currently, the Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada is the only College-approved organization that meets the CPD requirements of the national bodies. Only members whose practice is fifty percent or more primary care mental health, psychiatry or psychotherapy can enrol with the Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada to track their CPD.

If you are reporting your CPD to an international organization, you are still required to enrol with one of the three approved organizations. However, you may not have to participate in any additional CPD. The RCPSC now recognizes over 75 international CPD systems as substantively equivalent with the MOC (Maintenance of Certification) Program in Canada and the CFPC recognizes CPD achieved through the American Board of Family Physicians as equivalent. We would advise you to speak to a specialist at the RCPSC or the CFPC to verify if your international CPD has parity here.

3. What proof of enrolment do you require?

The College requires receipt of the official confirmation document (electronic or paper) you receive from the tracking organization that includes the organization's logo, assigned ID number, statement of confirmation, signature of the approving staff person and the specific category for enrolment (if joined as a member or for the purposes of tracking CPD only).

4. My practice is unique and I do not believe the CPD organizations offer activities that will be relevant to me. Do I still have to join?

Yes, you still have to join one of the organizations. The three approved CPD tracking organizations do not all offer CPD activities; they set requirements for the types and number of activities for one-year and five-year periods and track completion of those activities. It is up to you to identify CPD relevant to your practice and complete a sufficient number of those activities on a regular basis. Specialists at the CFPC and RCPSC are available to assist in identifying what might constitute meaningful learning opportunities for your practice. CPD can be taken in many areas other than clinical knowledge such as communication or practice management skills.

5. Are there any circumstances where the regulation may not apply?

All members of the College are required to participate in CPD and track their activities with one of three approved CPD tracking organizations.

There are three circumstances, however, where the College has determined that it is unlikely that compliance is feasible:

- 1) if you are ill/on disability;
- 2) if you have fully retired from the practise of medicine in any form; or
- 3) if you are only practising outside Ontario.

In these three cases, a Cease to Practise Undertaking has been created to address circumstances where members cannot comply. It requires that you will not practise any form of medicine in Ontario, or use your certificate of registration professionally in any form or setting. If you sign a Cease to Practise Undertaking, you are not required to sign up with one of the CPD tracking organizations.

6. I meet the criteria for the Cease to Practise Undertaking. Who should I contact to initiate the process?

If you meet the criteria for the Undertaking and wish to choose this option, please contact the Physician Advisory Service at 416-967-2603 or Toll Free: 1-800-268-7096 Ext. 606.

The Undertaking requires that you forward a request to the General Manager of the Ontario Health Insurance Plan ("OHIP") that your billing number be deactivated for the duration of the Undertaking. If your OHIP billing number is currently inactive, please contact the Service Support Contact Centre (MOHLTC) at 1-800 262-6524 or SSContactCentre.MOH@ontario.ca to confirm and forward a copy of this correspondence for our records.

7. Will the terms of my Cease to Practise Undertaking be Available to the Public?

Yes. Once signed, the Undertaking constitutes specified terms, conditions or limitations on your certificate of registration.

Your class of registration will automatically change to the Restricted class.

All the terms of the undertaking and the basis for it, i.e. out-of-province, illness or retired from practice, will be included on the College's public register.

8. Will other organizations and jurisdictions in which I practice be informed I have voluntarily signed this undertaking?

Yes. The College will provide notice of your undertaking to OHIP, Ontario hospitals, other Canadian medical licensing authorities, all US state medical boards (via the Federation of State Medical Board organization), and other international medical regulators. The notice will indicate that your undertaking is voluntary and non-disciplinary.

If you presently have hospital privileges or are licensed in another jurisdiction, we strongly encourage you to contact these organizations in advance and inquire about the implications of your Undertaking with them.

9. What if I sign the Undertaking and change my mind or my circumstances change, and I want to practise medicine in Ontario?

If you have signed the Undertaking and wish to re-enter practise in Ontario, you will need to meet the following conditions:

- Provide a minimum of forty-five days' notice to the CPSO of your intent to return to the practice of medicine
- Provide the College with proof you have enrolled in a program of CPD that meets the requirements for CPD of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, the College of Family Physicians of Canada, or an organization approved by the College that meets the CPD requirements of the national bodies (currently, the only College-approved organization is the Medical Psychotherapy Association of Canada).
- The College approves your return to the practice of medicine

10. What happens if I do not comply with the CPD regulatory requirement or sign a cease-to-practise undertaking?

If you do not comply, your certificate of registration may be administratively suspended.

You would be sent a notice of intention to suspend that provides sixty days in which to comply. Failure to comply would trigger administrative suspension.

Upon suspension your certificate of registration would immediately expire and your authority to practise medicine in Ontario would cease entirely.

Once suspended you could not resume practice until the following conditions have been met:

- You apply for a new certificate;

- You satisfy current credentialing and fee requirements;
- You submit proof of compliance with the CPD requirement; and
- You are issued a new certificate.

No assurances could be offered as to your eligibility for a new certificate of registration.

11. Can I resign from CPSO membership, instead of complying with the CPD requirement or signing the Cease to Practise Undertaking?

Yes. If you are retired, out of province, or have otherwise ceased to practise and do not intend to resume practice in Ontario in the foreseeable future, you may resign from membership.

Once resigned, your CPSO registration immediately expires. Your authority to practise in Ontario, including your prescribing of medications, immediately ceases.

If you resign and wish to regain CPSO registration in the future, you would need to apply and meet all requirements in force at that time. No assurances could be offered as to your future eligibility for registration.

12. Where can I view the regulation requiring I participate in CPD?

The complete text of the regulation is available here (see section 29):

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/940114#BK6>

If you have questions about the regulation, please contact the Physician Advisory Services at 416-967-2603 or Toll Free: 1-800-268-7096 Ext. 606.

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