



Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education Guidelines on Continuing Pharmacy Education (CPE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In October 2006, the ACPE Board of Directors adopted a revised *Definition of Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy* which better describes the quality of continuing pharmacy education (CPE) required by ACPE and assists accredited providers of CPE in planning activities applicable to the professional development of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. CPE, as defined by ACPE, is an integral and essential component of the broader approach to learning that is continuing professional development (CPD).

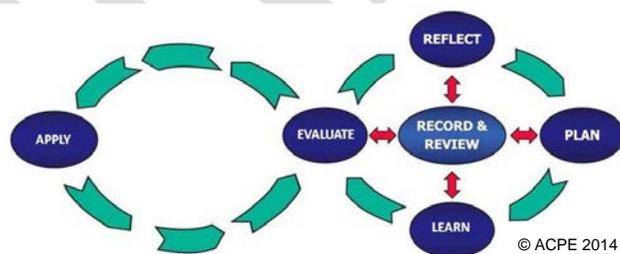
Continuing Pharmacy Education (CPE):

A structured educational activity designed or intended to support the continuing development of pharmacists and/or pharmacy technicians to maintain and enhance their competence. Continuing pharmacy education (CPE) should promote problem-solving and critical thinking and be applicable to the practice of pharmacy.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD):

A self-directed, ongoing, systematic and outcomes-focused approach to lifelong learning that is applied into practice. It involves the process of active participation in formal and informal learning activities that assist in developing and maintaining competence, enhancing professional practice, and supporting achievement of career goals. The CPD approach is cyclical in nature where each stage of the process can be recorded in a personal learning portfolio.

The CPD Cycle



Continuing professional development should include a wide variety of methods for attaining new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values. CPD learning experiences should be based on an assessment of needs and goals (REFLECT), generated from a personal development plan with outcomes-based objectives (PLAN), and evaluated for achievement of objectives and personal and professional impact (EVALUATE). Key to the CPD approach is linking learning to practice (APPLY).

The **REFLECT** stage requires pharmacists to reflect on their personal and professional lives and self-assess their learning needs and goals. Areas requiring professional development should be identified. It is important to pinpoint what specific knowledge or skills are needed. Peer assessment can offer valuable insights to assist a pharmacist in identifying true learning needs.

The **PLAN** stage involves formulating a personal development plan to accomplish identified learning needs. Planning involves the process of defining learning objectives, learning activities, required resources and measures of success, and articulating the plan with colleagues to support learning over an extended period of time. Learning needs should be prioritized based on importance and urgency in order to guide development of a plan specifying both short-term and long-term goals.

In the **LEARN** stage, the pharmacist puts the personal development plan into action to meet identified learning objectives utilizing an appropriate range of learning activities and methods. In the CPD model, the pharmacist is not limited to ACPE-accredited educational activities but may find relevant learning activities from other sources, such as academic programs, or specialized training courses. In the **APPLY** stage, learned knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are then applied into practice.

The **EVALUATE** stage involves the pharmacist assessing how successful the personal development plan has been in meeting stated learning needs by considering outcomes and impact. If learning needs were not fully met, it may be possible to identify further development needs at this stage. Activities that resulted in practice changes or beneficial patient outcomes are analyzed. Personal evaluation leads to reflection, which continues the ongoing cyclical process of CPD.

Documentation of each stage in the CPD cycle in a personal portfolio can support reflection and evaluation and provide evidence of the work involved to others (e.g. employers, professors, regulatory agencies). The portfolio should be simple to use, readily accessible, and developed over time into a comprehensive record of learning experiences which acts as an ongoing tool for review and self-evaluation.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities:

A multitude of educational activities exist in various formats and venues which may benefit pharmacists and pharmacy technicians in their lifelong learning. Types of activities undertaken should be identified and prioritized through the planning process to address educational needs and gaps in practice. Activities that are planned, developed, and implemented by ACPE-accredited providers consistent with the *Definition of Continuing Education for the Profession of Pharmacy* and CPE Standards and Policies can be awarded credit as CPE.

Other types of educational activities and learning opportunities which do not constitute CPE can also prove valuable as part of one's continuing professional development. Attributes of experiences beneficial in CPD involve selecting learning opportunities in response to identified

personal and professional needs and goals which relate to daily practice or areas of professional interest/preference and focus on specific learning objectives and associated outcomes. The following categories describe learning activities which can contribute to one's continuing professional development.

Continuing Education

An individual's professional learning needs and objectives may be addressed through engagement in formal, structured accredited educational activities. These may include:

- Participating in CPE activities by ACPE-accredited providers (i.e. knowledge, application, or practice-based activities)
- Participating in continuing education activities by accredited providers from other disciplines (e.g. ACCME, ANCC, AOA)

Academic/Professional Study

Both structured education and unstructured autonomous learning activities may enhance current competencies or instill new knowledge or skills to address an identified need. These may include:

- Participating in conferences, workshops, retreats
- Undertaking academic coursework or postgraduate education
- Completing certification courses (e.g. advanced cardiac life support, certified diabetes educator)
- Completing an independent study
- Reading and reflecting on healthcare articles and literature
- Leading or participating in journal clubs

Teaching and Precepting

Active involvement in the education and training of others may support advancing one's expertise, the achievement of one's career goals, and enhancement of professional development. Such activities include:

- Developing, presenting, and/or authoring educational content (e.g. academic course, seminar/webinar, publication)
- Teaching and precepting students, residents, or other healthcare professionals
- Peer coaching or mentoring programs (e.g. mentor or mentee)

Workplace Activities

Experiences in one's workplace can offer a number of opportunities for learning. In order to meet the intent of self-directed learning, these activities should address a predetermined need and exceed the ordinary requirements of employment. Examples include:

- Engaging in point-of-care (PoC) learning, i.e. self-directed learning on topics relevant to clinical practice
- Job shadowing
- Preparing for external review, accreditation, or certification

- Implementing performance improvement projects (e.g. current practice assessment, implement PI changes, evaluate impact/change)
- Discussion with peers/colleagues (e.g. small group discussions)
- Consultation with peer and healthcare experts

Scholarly Pursuits

Generating and disseminating knowledge through scholarly activities may enhance professional practice and support achievement of career goals. These may include:

- Conducting research in one's professional field
- Presenting and/or publishing scholarly works
- Serving as content reviewer for publications, dissertation, or other scholarly works
- Test-item writing (e.g. high stakes examinations, peer-reviewed self-assessment activities, or researching, drafting, and defending questions)

Professional/Community Service

Contributions and leadership in professional and community activities may be relevant to the development of personal competence. Such opportunities should align with one's professional or career goals and may include:

- Serving on a committee or holding office in a professional association
- Active involvement in professional associations/organizations
- Active involvement in advocacy events and training
- Volunteer experiences or special interest groups

In summary, when selecting CPD activities, consideration should be given to incorporating a wide variety of learning formats and methods. The breadth of activities selected should meet identified learning objectives and collectively address the competency areas relevant to one's practice.