

HONG KONG COLLEGE OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE

Principles and Guidelines on Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuous Professional Development (CPD) (for cycle from 2020 to 2022)

1. Objective

The purpose of CME/CPD is to maintain a high standard of professional practice through professional developments and keeping Fellows informed and up-to-date on current medical advances in the specialty. CME/CPD is a continuous life-long learning process for Fellows and comprises activities that serve to :

- (a) maintain, develop or increase the knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the practice of Fellows that may change over the years,
- (b) enhance professional performance to enable the delivery of quality professional care and safe standard of practice to the patients, and public that Fellows serve, and;
- (c) ensure that Fellows will remain competent throughout their professional career.

2. General Principles

2.1 The CME Sub-committee of the Education Committee will deal with CME/CPD matters including accreditation of CME/CPD activities.

2.2 The College will seek and receive formal approval from the Education Committee of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (HKAM) before implementation of CME/CPD programme.

2.3 Before making any change to establish CME/CPD programmes the College will also seek approval of the HKAM Education Committee.

2.4 All Fellows, whether residing in Hong Kong or overseas, must fulfill the full requirements of the CME/CPD programme by the end of each cycle. Fellows who hold multiple Fellowships under different Colleges of the HKAM must fulfil requirements for each of these Fellowships in accordance with HKAM requirements.

2.5 Fellows must respond to call for CME/CPD returns, and submit all returns within the defined period of time to enable the compilation of CME report of the College for forwarding to HKAM.

2.6 Fellows failing to submit return on time will be regarded as CME/CPD non-compliant. Subsequent request to review late submissions may be subject to an administrative fee.

- 2.7 Fellows should ensure compliance with CME/CPD requirements as failure to do so is subject to sanctions of HKAM, which may include suspension of HKAM or HKCCM Fellowship.
- 2.8 It is the duty of Academy Fellows to keep themselves up-to-date in all areas of their practice. Fellows are encouraged to devise a personal professional education and development portfolio to help them monitor and achieve the objectives of CME/CPD. The College would provide assistance if and when required.
- 2.9 All notices sent to the address last provided by a Fellow to the College will be deemed to have been received by that Fellow, and it is the responsibility of a Fellow to update the College of his contact address whenever it is changed.
- 2.10 The HKAM Education Committee may recommend to the HKAM Council the suspension of a Fellow who has failed to comply with CME/CPD requirements by the end of the cycle, unless the Committee is satisfied that there are relevant and exceptional circumstances, and that the shortfall can be remedied within an acceptable time.

3. The Cycle

- 3.1 A cycle of CME/CPD assessment shall consist of 3 years.
- 3.2 Fellows will commence their first cycle on the first day of the month immediately after their admission to Academy Fellowship; and the required CME/CPD points for the first cycle will be counted on a pro-rata basis.
- 3.3 If the first cycle is shorter than 3 years:
- i) normal capping on individual CME/CPD categories will still apply; but
 - ii) the minimum requirements of individual CME/CPD categories, if any, will be waived.
- 3.4 Notwithstanding 3.2 above, if a doctor has been certified for Specialist Registration and already started a CME/CPD cycle prior to his admission as an Academy Fellow, there will be no change in this CME/CPD requirements of existing cycle.
- 3.5 The College would report to the Education Committee of the Academy any HKAM Fellow who fails to comply with CME/CPD requirements at the end of the cycle. The HKAM Education Committee would then consider sanction.

4. Requirements for a Cycle

4.1 The minimum CME/CPD requirement is 90 points in a 3-year cycle. CME/CPD points accumulated in excess of the requirement for one cycle cannot be carried forward to the next cycle.

4.2 Fellows holding multiple Fellowships under different Colleges must fulfil requirements for each of these Fellowships.

5. Measurement of Activities

One point of CME/CPD activity is normally equivalent to one hour of participation in a Formal College Approved Activity (FCAA).

6. Accredited CME/CPD Activities

6.1 Participation as an attendee in FCAA

- a) One credit point may be earned by one hour of Passive Participation at a FCAA, with a maximum of 10 points per FCAA (including postgraduate courses).
- b) Fellows may apply to the CME Sub-committee for accreditation of events not listed in FCAA including overseas conference.

6.2 Chairing/Presenting at FCAA

- a) Active Participation refers to chairing or presenting in a FCAA.
- b) Chairing a FCAA may be awarded 2 Points; and for presenting, 3 Points if no collection of data is involved, 6 Points if collection or analysis of data is involved.

6.3 Self-study

- a) Self-study is accepted as a form of CME/CPD.
- b) Self-study refers to reading from the list of College approved journals and keeping a record or summary of the readings.
- c) One hour of self-study is awarded 1 Point.
- d) Self-study may be accredited a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.4 Publications

- a) 10 Points would be awarded to the chief author and 5 points for the co-author for a refereed paper.
- b) For non-refereed paper, the credit points for the chief author and co-author are 5 & 3 respectively.

- c) Such publication should be in indexed journals or journals published by the Academy or its constituent Colleges, or other College approved journals.
- d) No credit point will be awarded for the publication of materials / activities which have earned credit points under other categories eg 6.5, 6.6, 6.9.

6.5 *Research*

Research activities are accepted as a form of CME/CPD subject to documentary description of the Fellow's role in the research activities eg scoping the evidence, developing methods and report preparation. No more than 5 points may be credited for each research project submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.6 *Development of New Methods or Services*

The development of new methods, eg in key areas relevant to work, or development or implementation of an evidence-based approach for health practice, are accepted as a form of CME/CPD. No more than 5 points may be credited for each item submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.7 *Undergraduate Teaching and Postgraduate Teaching*

Undergraduate teaching and postgraduate teaching activities may be accepted as a form of CME/CPD, subject to the provision of evidence of implementing quality assurance activities such as major review, ongoing quality monitoring and benchmarking. The provision of evidence for the quality assurance activities will be required as and when considered necessary to substantiate the application for CME accreditation. The total CME points accredited will be subject to a maximum of 15 points in a cycle..

6.8 *Examiner*

Participation as an examiner in College recognised examinations is counted for CME/CPD Points, with 10 Points for each recognised examination.

6.9 *Quality Assurance and Medical Audits*

Quality assurance and improvement activities, such as CQI projects, organisation review and audit, clinical audit, peer review of operative practice, activities that examine and evaluate health service delivery, etc, are accepted as a form of CME/CPD. No more than 5 points may be credited for each activity submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.10 *Mortality and Morbidity Meetings*

Participation in mortality and morbidity meetings or structured quality improvement meetings that audit individual/group/medical practice is accepted as a form of CME/CPD. One point may be credited for each hour of attendance, which is counted as a separate category from 6.1.

6.11 Postgraduate Courses

Attending a course leading to post-graduate qualification can be accepted as a form of CME/CPD, with a maximum of 10 points per course.

6.12 Development of CME/CPD Materials

Participation in development of CME/CPD materials for self-study or e-learning can be awarded CME/CPD points. No more than 3 points may be credited for each item submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.13 Activities for Improvement of Patient /Medical Care

Participation in learning/activities that enhances the ability to practise community medicine both as an individual doctor and as part of the health care team eventually leading to improvement of health care services including preventive and promotive care, patient management, clinical and other skills learning, simulator and virtual reality learning is accepted as a form of CME/CPD. Patient safety enhancement programme is also accepted as a form of CME/CPD. No more than 5 points may be credited for each item submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.14 Grand Rounds in Training Units

Participation in accredited grand rounds in training units can be awarded CME/CPD points. One point may be credited for each hour of attendance.

6.15 Review of Journals Research Studies

Participation in reviewing articles submitted for publication under the list of College approved journals; or review of research studies for Ethics Committee are accepted as a form of CME/CPD. No more than 5 points may be credited for each item submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

6.16 Other Non-medical Professional Activities for Improvement of Work-related Skills

Participation in learning/activities that enhances the ability to practise community medicine e.g. information technology, presentation skills, leadership skills, interpersonal and communication skill training, etc can be awarded CME/CPD points. For each hour of attendance in such activities, one point may be credited with a maximum of 5 points per cycle.

6.17 Hands-on Clinical/Field Attachment Programme

Hands-on clinical/field attachment programme of training units for a continuous period of over one week is accepted as a form of CME/CPD. No more than 5 points may be credited for each programme submitted for accreditation, subject to a maximum of 10 points per year.

7. Minimum CME/CPD Requirements for a Cycle

The minimum CME/CPD requirement is 90 Points in the **3-year cycle from January 2020 to December 2022. The maximum CME points obtained from participation as an attendee in FCAA (passive participation) is capped at 75.** CME/CPD points accumulated in excess of the requirement for one cycle cannot be carried forward to the next cycle. The minimum number of Points to be achieved each year is 10.

It is strongly recommended that Fellows should maintain a balanced CME/CPD profile with a mix of different activities, including at least 5 points in a cycle from activities in categories from **6.4** to **6.17**, in order to capture the full benefit of different types of CME/CPD activities.

8. Exemptions

8.1 *Retired from Active Practice*

- a) The College will consider application for CME/CPD exemption from a Fellow only if he has formally submitted a written declaration to the College that he has retired from active practice in and outside Hong Kong. For HKAM Fellows, the information will be provided to HKAM.
- b) HKAM requires that a Fellow holding multiple Fellowships cannot claim retirement from active practice for one specialty while still practising the other specialties. A Fellow can apply for suspension of a Fellowship for which he chooses not to continue with CME/CPD.
- c) HKAM stipulates that a retired Fellow who subsequently wishes to resume active practice will be required to have obtained the minimum number of creditable CME/CPD points for one CME/CPD cycle counting back from the date of application in order to resume medical practice. Should a retired Fellow resume medical practice before he can fulfil the CME/CPD requirements as aforementioned, he will lose his status as retired Fellow and his Fellowship will be suspended accordingly.

8.2 *Acute/Prolonged Illness and Permanent Disability*

- a) A Fellow who falls behind CME/CPD because of acute/prolonged illness or permanent disability can be exempted from the CME/CPD requirements, on condition that he is not in active practice.
- b) An illness can be accepted as “prolonged illness” provided a sick leave of at least 6 months has been formally granted within a 3-year cycle (pro-rata count may apply in case the cycle is less than 3 years);
- b) Partial exemption will be considered on a case by case pro-rata basis depending on the extent of the illness and its impact on practice. The guiding principle of exemption is that when a Fellow is not in active

practice because of the illness, CME/CPD requirement of that total period of “not in active practice” will be exempted for CME/CPD in that cycle, while pro-rata count of CME/CPD requirement will be applied to the period(s) during which the Fellows are in active practice.

9. Certification

- a) The College will certify completion of CME/CPD requirements for Fellows upon receipt of the completed CME/CPD reports for submission to HKAM at the end of the second year of each cycle and upon completion of each cycle.
- b) HKAM will issue the CME certificate for each cycle to HKAM Fellows who have fulfilled CME/CPD requirements.
- c) The College will maintain a registry of Fellows who have fulfilled CME/CPD requirements.

10. Non-compliance

10.1 Non-compliance That Is Remediable

- a) HKAM requires that a Fellow must:
 - i) have achieved not less than two-thirds of the required number of points for a cycle; OR
 - ii) be certified to have suffered from a medical condition which HKAM Council considers as a reasonable cause for the CME/CPD non-compliance.

HKAM may, at its discretion, accept other conditions if supported by the College of the Fellow on reasonable grounds.

For remediable non-compliance, HKAM will inform the Medical Council of Hong Kong as soon as possible after the end of cycle.

- b) The Fellow must engage in a remedial programme to make up for the deficiency.
- c) The reason for non-compliance and the remedial programme must be endorsed by the HKAM Education Committee and Council.
- d) The remedial programme must be completed within the time specified by the appropriate College. In any case, the remedial programme must be completed within 12 months from the end of the cycle concerned.
- e) The next cycle should follow immediately after the previous cycle without any break, i.e. the Fellow will have to undergo normal and remedial CME/CPD at the same time.

10.2 Non-compliance That Is Not Remediable

For HKAM Fellows who have obtained less than two-thirds of the required number of points for a cycle without acceptable reasons, a recommendation for Fellowship suspension will be made. Reinstatement of Academy Fellowship shall be subject to the conditions stipulated in the Academy policy paper entitled "Reinstatement of Fellowship".

11. Appeal

Fellows who do not agree with the decisions of the CME Sub-committee on the applications for accreditation may appeal to the Education Committee in writing, stating the reasons for disagreement. The decision of the Education Committee shall be final.