Continuing Competence Program

Pharmacy Technicians' Guide

November 2015

Table of contents

1. Introduction

The *Health Professions Act* requires the council of the Alberta College of Pharmacy (ACP) to establish a competence committee and a continuing competence program. The continuing competence program is comprised of continuing professional development, competence assessments, and practice visits.

The role of the competence committee is to facilitate the enhancement of pharmacy technicians' professional practice, assess pharmacy technician competence, and address issues related to professional development.

ACP is committed to your continuing professional development and to the excellence of pharmacy practice in Alberta through this competence program. This Continuing Competence Program (CCP) for pharmacy technicians comes into effect January 1, 2016. It is based upon review of emerging continuing competence models for health professionals and recommendations from a working group of pharmacy technicians. The program focuses on quality improvement and implementing newly acquired or reinforced knowledge and/or skill into practice. You will complete and manage the program through the ACP CCP web portal, an online management system designed to enhance and track your learning experience.

This program is intended to support all pharmacy technicians on the ACP register. It is also available to support pharmacy technicians who are currently registered on the associate register and plan to return to an active register at a future date.

This guide provides an overview of the Continuing Competence Program. For additional information please access

- the ACP website for program rules and frequently asked questions, and
- the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) web portal for the online tutorial and user guide.

2. Program overview

Program philosophy
The Alberta College of Pharmacy fosters professional growth that inspires and empowers pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to continuously enhance their practices and support Albertans' health and well-being. With a shared vision of excellent pharmacy practice, ACP and its registrants work together to identify competence goals and milestones signifying success, and ensure that learning transfers into practice.

Guiding principles
The five guiding principles of the Continuing Competence Program are

- **Flexibile:** to accommodate different practice settings and learning preferences and address the full spectrum of learning.
- **Engaging:** to inspire career-long learning, peer-to-peer interaction and opportunities to connect with mentors, thought leaders and subject matter experts.
- **Forward-looking:** to help meet the changing needs of Albertans, integrate with other ACP programs, and provide support throughout careers.
- **Sustainable:** to anticipate growing and diverse populations and use evidence informed tools that can be applied to a diversity of practices.
- **Responsible:** meets legislative requirements and provides reliable measures that facilitate ensuring that regulated members are competent to provide safe and effective care.

Requirements for all pharmacy technicians in Alberta

Maintaining competence is a professional responsibility and the hallmark of self-regulated professionals. In this context, maintenance doesn't mean *staying the same*, it means *keeping up with (or ahead of) the changes around you*.

According to your Code of Ethics, it is your professional responsibility to

- continuously improve your level of professional knowledge and skill,
- take responsibility for maintaining a high standard of professional competence,
- evaluate your individual practice and assume responsibility for improvement, and
- keep informed about new pharmaceutical knowledge.

ACP has created the Continuing Competence Program to help you meet these responsibilities. By identifying appropriate learning activities and implementing that learning into practice, you can continually build your competence and confidence to assure yourself, your patients, and your healthcare colleagues that you are providing quality care throughout your career.

The Continuing Competence Program is a continuing professional development program. All pharmacy technicians must complete the program annually during the course of each CE Cycle to meet requirements to renew their practice permit. The CE Cycle is from December 1 to November 30 of the following year.

By November 30, each pharmacy technician must

1. complete a minimum of 15 continuing education units *(CEUs)*,
2. record all learning on one or more Learning Record(s),
3. implement at least one CEU worth of learning into your practice and document this on an Implementation Record , and
4. complete any required learning that has been assigned by the Competence Committee.

Learning Record

The Learning Record is an online form on the CPP web portal. It must be completed for all accredited and non-accredited learning. On the Learning Record, you will record

- the title of the learning activity;
- the date it was completed;

- the number of CEUs that you are claiming;
- the type of learning activity (group program, workshop, self-study, etc.);
- the competency categories that the learning relates to;
- whether you acquired new knowledge or skills or confirmed that you knowledge or skills are current;
- the key elements that you learned; and
- the impact that the learning will have on your practice.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) may be claimed for either accredited or non-accredited learning activities.

Accredited programs are designed to help you gain pharmacy-specific knowledge or skills. The accreditation process assures you that a program has been reviewed for quality, unbiased content, and relevance to practice. Accredited programs include continuing pharmacy education programs accredited by
- the Canadian Council on Continuing Education in Pharmacy (CCCEP),
- the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), or
- any provincial or territorial pharmacy regulatory authority in Canada.

Non-accredited learning includes a variety of activities pharmacy technicians undertake to improve their practices. These activities include both structured learning in the form of non-accredited independent study programs, group courses, workshops, or conferences as well as informal, mainly independent, learning activities such as reading, research, or discussing practice issues with others. Non-accredited learning also includes those programs accredited for other professionals but not for pharmacy technicians, such as continuing medical education (CME).

As part of the Learning Record, you must either upload a certificate or document of learning or, if no certificate is available or if the learning activity in non-accredited, you will be required to describe the learning activity and explain how it relates to the competency category you chose and to your scope of practice.

The Learning Record also includes one optional question designed to help you devise a potential implementation objective. If you think you may implement the learning documented on this Learning Record, answering this question will help you to determine how you can apply this learning to your practice and draft a potential implementation objective.

You may complete as many Learning Records as you wish. You must document a minimum of 15 CEUs in each CE cycle. There is no maximum number of CEUs.

Implementation Record

The Implementation Record is an online form on the CPP web portal. It documents which learning you have implemented into your practice, why you chose to implement it, and what your objective was for implementing this learning.

Information to be recorded on the Implementation Record	Description or additional information
The learning activities that are relevant to this Implementation Record	All Learning Records that you have completed in the current CE cycle will appear. Click on the relevant Learning Records to select them.

Your implementation objective	Consider the following "LIST" of questions to help determine the details for an implementation objective:
	• **Learning** – what knowledge and/or skill did you want to put to use?
	• **Implementation** – what steps did you need to take to apply this learning to practice?
	• **Specifics** – what details did you consider, e.g., intended audience, timelines, roles and responsibilities, supporting documentation?
	• **Target** – what was the intended outcome of the implementation?
	    ○ improvement in practice, organization and/or delivery of care;
	    ○ transfer of knowledge, skills or abilities to patients or other health professionals; and
	    ○ peer verification of your competence.
	
	Although not required, you are encouraged to state your implementation objective in a SMART format (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based). Information on how to write a SMART objective is available on the CCP web portal.

The domain to which the objective relates	Each implementation objective must be related to one of the following three domains: • pharmacy practice, including but not limited to patient care practice, • medication/device knowledge, or • systems based practice, including collaboration and patient safety.

	Learning in other domains is encouraged; however, the learning you choose to detail on an Implementation Record must be in one of these three domains.
What prompted you to implement this learning into practice	Select one or more items from the list provided on the Implementation Record
A brief description of why you chose this implementation objective	This description should include the knowledge or skill that you applied or implemented, and how it is relevant to your practice.
The steps you took to achieve your implementation objective	Include details such as timelines, the audience, the people involved, and your role if it was a team effort.
The outcome of the implementation	Select one or more of the options provided on the Implementation Record. Provide a brief explanation of your choice.
Upload one piece of documentation that provides evidence of your implementation	Select the type of evidence that you are uploading from the list provided on the Implementation Record.

The Implementation Record also includes one optional question that encourages you to reflect on what you learned as a result of the implementation and what you would do differently. In addition, you are asked to reflect upon whether you identified areas for future implementation objectives or the need for future learning.

You are required to complete one Implementation Record in each CE cycle; however, the CCP web portal allows you to work on up to three Implementation Records in each year.

Self-assessment
In addition to the Learning Records and the Implementation Records sections of the CCP web portal, there is a self–assessment section. Completion of the self-assessment is optional, but we strongly encourage you to use the tools available to reflect on your practice before completing a professional portfolio.

Continuing professional development is a cycle that you may enter at any point.
- Participating in a learning activity may reveal something that you decide you should implement into your practice.
- You may be faced with a question or practice situation that spurs you to complete a learning activity.
- You may receive a request to implement something into your practice that requires you to expand your knowledge or develop new skills.

The self-assessment module includes a number of self-assessment, self-reflection, and planning tools that are intended to help you reflect on your practice and plan your learning and implementation objectives regardless of where you enter the cycle.

Self-assessment tool	Description
Understanding my current work environment	Reflect on your current work environment to help identify potential learning opportunities.
Questions Log	List or log frequently asked questions or challenging questions you encounter in practice to help identify potential learning opportunities.
Practice Self-Assessment	Reflect on statements to assess your current practices to identify learning needs.
Assessment of Professional Competencies (NAPRA)	Assess your performance level according to the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition for each of the NAPRA *Professional Competencies for Canadian Pharmacy Technicians at Entry-to-practice* to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.
Jurisprudence Self-Assessment	Complete 20 multiple choice questions to assess your knowledge of ethics and jurisprudence.
Learning Activity Planning Tool	Answer questions about your learning needs and make plans to complete the learning.
Implementation Objective Planning Tool	Consider potential implementation objectives and plan to implement learning.

3. Navigating the online program

The CCP web portal was created to be easy to navigate and facilitate both participation in and management of the program.

You will access the CCP web portal from the ACP website , using your ACP login and password.

The Learning Records and Implementation Records are designed to be intuitive and easy to complete. Text information is provided for many questions and, if needed, "question marks" are available to open help bubbles to provide additional information. There is also an online CCP tutorial that you can access via the web portal. The tutorial provides additional information about how to complete the program. It includes step-by-step review of different examples.

As you work through the self-assessment tools, learning records, and working copies of the implementation records, you may save a partially-completed or fully-completed record. You may return

to change any of these records or delete a record throughout the CE cycle up until the point that you submit the records to ACP during the online registration renewal period.

The online management system will save your professional portfolio for your reference for three consecutive cycles, starting with the 2015/2016 CE cycle. The online management system will also allow you to print your records from this site if you wish to do so. Please note that program rules state that it is your responsibility to keep your supporting documentation for two years.

Submitting your professional portfolio

The CCP web portal is accessible to you throughout the CE cycle. The process indicator along the left side of the screen will indicate when you have completed all the requirements of the program – in other words, when you have completed your professional portfolio.

Although you may complete your portfolio at any time during the year, you can only submitt it to ACP during the online registration renewal period. Around October 31 of each year, ACP will implement the online renewal system. At that time, if you have completed your portfolio a "Submit to ACP" button will become active. When you are ready, click the submit button. Following submission, you will be able to proceed with the annual online renewal of your practice permit. Please note only one Implementation Record may be submitted. If you are working on more than one Implementation Record, you will be required to select one for submission. Selection is completed by clicking the "selected for submission" button on the list of Implementation Records.

4. Audit of professional portfolio documents

ACP will select a percentage of portfolios to be audited by trained pharmacy technician assessors. You may be selected for audit through random selection or based on late or incomplete portfolio submission, or upon the request of the registrar who has identified an issue arising from a request for registration, issuance of a practice permit, renewal of a practice permit, or the result of a practice visit.

The Competence Committee will oversee the audit of the professional portfolios submitted by pharmacy technicians as part of the continuing professional development program.

Categories within the continuing competence program

Category 1

All pharmacy technicians will complete the continuing competence program annually in **Category 1** unless otherwise directed by the Competence Committee, and notified in writing by the Competence Director.

Category 1 requires you to
- complete at least 15 CEUs,
- record your learning on Learning Records,

- implement at least one CEU of learning into you practice and document the implementation on an Implementation Record,
- complete any required learning that has been assigned by the Competence Committee, and
- submit a portfolio at the end of each CE cycle.

A portfolio consists of your Learning Records and an Implementation Record. You must submit these to ACP via the CCP web portal in order to renew your practice permit.

At the end of each CE cycle, selected portfolios will be audited by peer assessors. The peer assessment is a criterion-based assessment (i.e., based on established criteria). This means the assessment will be as objective and fair as possible. Following the assessment of portfolios, pharmacy technicians will be notified if their portfolio was assessed.

There are three possible outcomes to the assessment:

Outcome 1 - you meet the established standard
o   You will be notified that your portfolio was audited and that the audit was satisfactory. You may be provided with feedback to improve your future portfolios. You will be directed to complete the program on an annual basis in Category 1. You will not be subject to random selection for audit for the next 5 years.

Outcome 2 – you did not meet the established standard but the deficiency was minor in nature
o   You will be notified that your portfolio was audited and that the audit was not satisfactory. You will be provided with feedback on how to improve your future portfolios. You will be placed in Category 2 of the program in the following CE cycle.

Outcome 3 - you did not meet the established standard and your portfolio has significant gaps, errors, or omissions
o   You will be notified that your portfolio was audited and that your portfolio does not meet the established standard and that your case has been referred to the Competence Committee. The Competence Committee will determine whether you will complete the program in the following CE cycle in Category 3 or Category 4.

Category 2

If you are placed in Category 2 of the program, you must complete a new portfolio (Learning Records and Implementation Record) in the following CE cycle using the feedback provided by peer assessors. The portfolios of all pharmacy technicians in Category 2 will be audited. If the portfolio meets the established standard you will not be subject to random selection for audit for the next 5 years. If your portfolio does not meet the established standard your case will be referred to the Competence Committee. The Competence Committee will determine whether you will complete the program in the following CE cycle in Category 3 or Category 4.

Category 3

If you are required to complete the program in Category 3 you will be required to complete a portfolio using the feedback provided by peer assessors and to complete any additional activities as directed by the Competence Committee. You will be subject to an audit at the end of the CE cycle.

Category 4

A pharmacy technicians in Category 4 must undergo a competence assessment as directed by the Competence Committee within the timelines prescribed by the committee.

5. Conclusion

ACP has created the Continuing Competence Program to assist you to meet your responsibilities as outlined in the Code of Ethics. It is intended to help you identify and document appropriate learning activities and implement that learning in your practice. It is your responsibility to become familiar with the program and to participate in it annually to demonstrate that you are working to maintain and enhance your competence.

You can obtain additional program information via the ACP website or by contacting the ACP office.

Alberta College of Pharmacy
1100-8215 112 St. NW
Edmonton, AB   T6G 2C8
Telephone: 780-990-0321
Telephone: 1-877-227-3838
Fax: 780-990-0328
Email: competence@abpharmacy.ca