Continuing Competence Program

Pharmacist's Guide
July 2014

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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 pharmacists' professional practice, assess pharmacist 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 revised Continuing Competence Program (CCP) for pharmacists comes into effect July 1, 2014 and replaces the RxCEL competence program. It is based upon review of emerging continuing competence models for health professionals and your feedback. The program focuses on quality improvement, and the implementation of newly-acquired or reinforced knowledge and/or skill into practice. It is completed and managed 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 pharmacists on the ACP clinical register. It is also available to support pharmacists who are currently registered on the associate register and plan to return to the clinical register at a future date.

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

- the ACP website (**abpharmacy.ca**) for program rules and frequently asked questions, and
- the Continuing Competence Program (CCP) web portal for the on-line CCP 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

- **Flexibility:** to accommodate different practice settings & learning preferences addresses 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 pharmacists on the ACP clinical register

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 continuing professional development program. All pharmacists on the clinical register 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 June 1st to May 31st of the following year.

By May 31st each pharmacist must complete the following:

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 of 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 Canadian Council on Continuing Education in Pharmacy (CCCEP), Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), or any Provincial and Territorial Pharmacy Regulatory Authority in Canada.

Non-accredited learning includes a variety of activities pharmacists 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 includes those programs accredited for other professionals but not for pharmacists, such as continuing medical education (CME).

As part of the Learning Record you will be required to either upload a certificate or document of learning or, if no certificate is available, you will be required to describe the learning activity and explain how it relates to the competency category chosen.

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 assist 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. Learning records 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 on-line 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 choose them

Your implementation objective	Consider the following "LIST" of questions to help determine the details for an implementation objective:
	• Learning – what knowledge &/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, eg) intended audience, timelines, roles and responsibilities, supporting documentation?
	• Target – what was the intended outcome of the implementation?
	    ○ improvement to my professional practice,
	    ○ improvement in organization and/or delivery of care, or
	    ○ transfer of knowledge, skills or abilities to patients or other health professionals.
	
	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, • medical knowledge, or • systems based practice, including collaboration and patient safety. Learning in other domains is encouraged, however the learning chosen to implement must be in one of these three domains.

What prompted you to implement this learning into practice	Select one or more 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 fits into your practice.
The steps you took to achieve your implementation objective	including 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 following from the list provided on the Implementation Record:
	• Improvement to my professional practice.
	    o Incorporated a new step or tool into my patient care process.
	    o Managed drug therapies and completed care plans.
	• Improvement in organization and/or delivery of care.
	    o Implemented a new or revised policy, procedure or program.
	• Transfer of knowledge, skill or ability to patients or other health professionals.
	    o Executed a health promotional activity or educational session.
	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 following from the list provided on the Implementation Record: • records of care with, all identifying information removed; • counselling or education tools, resources, poster, article, paper; • presentation, facilitation documentation; • policies and procedures; or • other (please specify).

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 encouraged you to use the tools there to reflect on your practice prior to completing a professional portfolio.

Each practice is unique and each individual is the best person to identify their own learning needs. Continuing professional development is a cycle that you may enter it 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 to reflect on your practice to plan your learning and implementation objectives regardless of where you enter the cycle.

Self-Assessment Tool	Description of Explanation
Understanding my current work environment	Questions that ask you to reflect on your current work environment to help identify potential learning opportunities.
Questions Log	A place to list or log frequently asked questions or challenging questions encountered in your practice to help identify potential learning opportunities
Clinical Practice Self-Assessment	Reflect on statements to assess your current clinical and dispensing 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 Pharmacists at Entry-to-practice* to identify areas of strength and areas for improvement.
Ethics and Jurisprudence Knowledge Assessment	Complete 15 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 for the implementation of learning.

3. Navigating through the online program

The CCP web portal was created to provide an online management system for the Continuing Competence Program that is easy to navigate and facilitates both participation in and management of the program.

You will access the CCP web portal from the ACP website, member's area, using your ACP log in 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. An on-line CCP Tutorial has also been created. It can be accessed via the web portal. The tutorial provides additional information regarding how to complete the program. It includes step by step review of three 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.

For your reference, the online management system will save your professional portfolio for three consecutive cycles, starting with the 2014/2015 CE Cycle. Please note that program rules state that it is your responsibility to keep your supporting documentation, for a period of two years. The online management system will also allow you to print your records from this site if you wish to do so.

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 it can only be submitted to ACP during on-line registration renewal period. Around April 30 of each year ACP will implement the on-line 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 on-line 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 pharmacist 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 clinical pharmacists as part of the continuing professional development program.

Categories within the continuing competence program

Category 1

All pharmacists on the clinical register 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 that 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, pharmacists 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 pharmacists 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 clinical pharmacist 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 assist you to identifying and document appropriate learning activities and the implementing that learning into 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.

Additional information can be obtained via the ACP website or by contacting the ACP office.