

Guidelines of Suitable Activities for the RACMA CPD Program

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Introduction

Medical practice is founded on the goal of providing the best possible healthcare for patients and the community. Medicine is constantly evolving, and to maintain your expertise and professional interest, you must continue to develop professionally throughout your career from before graduation until after you retire.

The Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators (RACMA, the College) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program is designed to ensure that, as a medical administrator and leader, you maintain the expertise required to meet the demands of your role.

This document describes the principles of choosing activities which are suitable for inclusion in your CPD portfolio to enhance your knowledge, skills and competencies as a medical leader. The basis of adult education and the framework within which CPD activities should be conducted are outlined and, within these guidelines, you should choose the activities that best meet your professional needs.

The college strives to provide its members with an environment that optimises their development. The college's CPD resources, and numerous examples of appropriate activities are detailed in the [RACMA Catalogue of CPD Resources](#). Your jurisdictional CPD coordinator, the CPD lead fellow, and the college office are also available to assist in determining if an activity is appropriate for the program. They can be contacted at CPD@racma.edu.au

Adult Education and its Guiding Principles

CPD is adult education and is of most benefit if it meets the following principles

a. The learner is an active contributor to the educational process

Adult education emphasises the active involvement of the learner in the educational process. This principle recognises that adults bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to their learning activities, making them valuable contributors. CPD activities should be designed to encourage participation, dialogue, and collaboration, allowing learners to share their insights and experiences. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhances the overall learning experience.

b. The activity should closely relate to understanding and solving real-life problems

Effective CPD activities are those that are closely aligned with real-life challenges faced by medical administrators and leaders. By focusing on practical, real-world issues, CPD activities become more relevant and meaningful to learners. This principle ensures that the knowledge and skills gained through CPD can be directly applied to improve practice and outcomes in the workplace. Activities such as case studies, simulations, and problem-solving exercises are particularly valuable in this regard.

c. The activity extends the learner's current knowledge and experience

CPD activities should build on the existing knowledge and experience of the learner, providing opportunities for growth and development. This principle acknowledges that adult learners have a foundation of skills and understanding that can be expanded upon. CPD activities should challenge learners to think critically, explore new concepts, and acquire advanced competencies.

This approach encourages continuous professional growth and adaptation to changing demands in the field of medical administration.

d. Learning is self-directed reflecting the learner's needs

Adult learners are typically self-directed and motivated by their personal and professional goals. CPD activities should be designed to support this self-directed approach to learning, allowing learners to identify their own needs and interests. This principle emphasises the importance of flexibility and choice in CPD programs, enabling learners to select activities that are most relevant to their individual circumstances. Self-assessment tools, individualised learning plans, and modular course options can help facilitate self-directed learning.

e. The activity should be subject to reflection and self-assessment

Reflection and self-assessment are critical components of the learning process for adults. CPD activities should incorporate opportunities for learners to reflect on their experiences, evaluate their performance, and identify areas for improvement. This principle encourages a continuous cycle of learning, where individuals can assess their progress, set new goals, and pursue further development. Reflection exercises, feedback mechanisms, and peer review processes can enhance the effectiveness of CPD activities.

Framework for CPD Activities

Activities accepted for the RACMA CPD program must meet the following criteria:

a. Conforming to the College values of professionalism, integrity, excellence and respect

The RACMA values of professionalism, integrity, excellence, and respect should underpin all CPD activities. These values guide the conduct and expectations of medical administrators and leaders, ensuring that they uphold the highest standards of practice. CPD activities should reinforce these values, encouraging learners to embody them in their professional roles. This principle helps to create a culture of excellence and ethical behaviour within the field of medical administration.

b. CAPE activities are consistent with the principles of good medical practice

Participants in the RACMA CPD program are required to undertake activities annually in the CAPE domains of:

- Culturally safe practice
- Addressing health equity
- Professionalism, and
- Ethical practice.

These activities must be consistent with the principles described in the Medical Board of Australia's [*Good Medical Practice: a code of conduct for doctors in Australia*](#) or The Medical Council of New Zealand's [*Good Medical Practice*](#). A guideline to the interface between the principles of good practice and the CAPE domains is available on our [website](#).

This requirement emphasises the importance of aligning CPD activities with best practices, evidence-based guidelines, and the core principles of medical practice. By mapping CPD activities to these concepts, learners can be confident that their professional development efforts are enhancing their ability to provide high-quality care.

c. Within the CPD categories of Reviewing Practice, Measuring Outcomes and Education

CPD activities should fall within the categories of reviewing practice, measuring outcomes, and education. These categories encompass a wide range of learning opportunities that are essential for maintaining and improving professional competencies.

- Reviewing practice involves reflective activities such as your professional development plan, conversations with a colleague, peer or employer, peer reviews, and case discussions.
- Measuring outcomes focuses on undertaking audits, assessing the impact of practice changes and identifying areas for improvement.
- Education encompasses formal learning activities such as courses, workshops, and conferences.

d. Related to the scope of practice and competencies of medical administration and leadership

CPD activities should be related to the scope of practice and competencies of medical administration and leadership. This principle ensures that CPD programs are relevant to the specific roles and responsibilities of medical administrators. Activities should address key competencies in domains such as collaboration and teamwork, communication, ethics and professionalism, health advocacy and cultural safety, learning, teaching and informed decision-making, medical and health system expertise, medical leadership, and medical management. See also: [RACMA Scope of Practice](#)

This targeted approach enhances the relevance and impact of CPD activities.

e. Measurable by time taken

The number of hours credited for an activity should reflect the actual hours required for completion. The college suggests the maximum hours for each type of activity, but the only caps are 5 hours each for the professional development plan and annual conversation and 8 hours for wellness training.

f. Verifiable through documentation

CPD activities should be verifiable through appropriate documentation, ensuring that learners can provide evidence of their participation and achievement. This criterion emphasises the importance of accountability and transparency in CPD programs. Documentation methods such as certificates, attendance records, reflective journals, and assessment reports can help verify the completion and outcomes of CPD activities. This approach supports the recognition of professional development efforts and the maintenance of accurate CPD records.

g. Subject to reflection, self-assessment and evaluation

CPD activities should be subject to ongoing reflection, self-assessment, and evaluation. This principle encourages continuous improvement and adaptation of CPD programs to meet the evolving needs of learners and the profession. Reflection exercises, self-assessment tools, and evaluation processes help learners to critically analyse their experiences, identify strengths and areas for development, and set new goals for future learning. This approach fosters a culture of continuous professional growth and lifelong learning.

h. Special requirements and restrictions

Professional Development Plan (PDP)

A PDP is mandatory and credited for the time taken to complete with a cap of 5 hours per year. The PDP is a 'road map' guiding the selection of relevant CPD activities and must have specific examples of proposed activities in each of the categories of:

- CAPE
- Reviewing practice
- Measuring outcomes and
- Education

Each activity must have a verifiable goal and timeframe.

The PDP must also have an overview of your career goals for the next 12 months.

Having a PDP ensures that CPD is focused on the activities that will provide most benefit to the participant, based on their identified development needs. The PDP is most effective when it incorporates specific goals that are achievable, of high benefit and appropriate to the work setting.

Annual Conversation

An annual structured conversation with a colleague, employer, or mentor is a mandatory requirement of the RACMA CPD program and credited for the time taken to complete with a cap of 5 hours per year.

The conversation should include:

- Constructive feedback and sharing of best practice
- An opportunity to explore your satisfaction in your current role
- The setting of performance targets
- Reflections on your development needs
- Your goals for learning and professional activities for the next year
- A review of self-care and health and wellbeing issues
- Longer-term career aspirations

Wellness Education

RACMA recognises the link between well-being and professional performance. This includes activities that enhance self-awareness, resilience and the skills required to manage both personal and professional wellbeing.

Reflections on your wellbeing are mandatory components of the PDP and Annual Conversation. Additional wellbeing education activities may be included in your CPD portfolio with a cap of 8 hours credit per year. These are courses, webinars or readings which guide you to techniques to achieve greater wellbeing in areas such as stress management, team functioning, confidence building and emotional intelligence. The activity must be professionally facilitated and comply with all other requirements for CPD including documentation of attendance or a reflection on the learning achieved.

Wellbeing activities by themselves, such as following hobbies, going on holidays, sporting activities, surfing, yoga, nutrition regimes or your personal healthcare are not approved CPD activities.

Conclusion

The principles and criteria outlined in this document provide a comprehensive framework for designing and implementing CPD activities suitable for inclusion in the RACMA CPD program. By adhering to these principles and criteria, CPD activities can effectively support the ongoing professional development of medical administrators and leaders, ensuring that they are well-equipped to meet the demands of their roles and contribute to the delivery of high-quality healthcare. The RACMA CPD program is committed to promoting a culture of excellence, ethical practice, and continuous learning, and these principles serve as a foundation for achieving these goals.

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