Canadian Ophthalmological Society | Société canadienne d'ophtalmologie
EYE PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS OF CANADA | MÉDECINS ET CHIRURGIENS OPHTALMOLOGISTES DU CANADA

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Co-development of Accredited Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities

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What is an Accredited CPD Provider?

- An Accredited CPD Provider is a physician organization that has received authorization from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC) to accredit CPD activities. The Canadian Ophthalmological Society (COS) is a physician organization and an Accredited CPD Provider. COS has been granted an accreditation period of eight years (the maximum granted by RCPSC).
    - COS has been approved for an 8-year accreditation cycle effective January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2035.

What is a "physician organization"?

- A physician organization is defined by the RCPSC as a not-for-profit group of health professionals with a formal governance structure, accountable to and serving, among others, its specialist physician members through continuing professional development, provision of health care, and/or research.
- Organizations that meet the RCPSC definition of a physician organization can apply directly to an Accredited CPD Provider for accreditation of CPD activities.

What is a "non-physician organization"?

- A non-physician organization is any group not led by physicians. Non-physician groups include but are not limited to:
    - Disease-oriented patient advocacy organizations, pharmaceutical companies or their advisory groups, medical and surgical supply companies, medical communication companies, government departments, political, legal or financial organizations, other not-for-profit or for-profit organizations, or small groups of physicians working together to develop educational programming.
- Organizations that do not meet the RCPSC definition of a physician organization can co-develop activities with a physician organization or with an accredited CPD Provider.

What is co-development?

- Co-development is the process by which two or more organizations, at least one of which must be a physician organization, prospectively collaborate to develop and implement an educational activity, learning resource or tool.
- Programs can be co-developed:

    - By two physician organizations (one of which may or may not be an Accredited CPD Provider); or
    - By a physician organization and a non-physician organization.
- In all cases, the physician organization must apply for accreditation from an Accredited CPD Provider (e.g., COS).

In co-development, what are the roles and responsibilities of the physician organization and the other non-physician organization partner(s)?

- In a relationship of co-development, the physician organization will be responsible for monitoring the development of the CPD activity from initiation to completion, ensuring the activity meets the accreditation standards according to the Maintenance of Certification (MOC) Program of the RCPSC.
- The physician organization assumes ultimate authority and accountability for content, implementation, educational and ethical standards, as well as the program finances.
- All partners (i.e., other physician organizations and/or non-physician organizations) in a co-developed activity may provide funding for the activity in the form of an educational grant and/or in-kind support.
- By agreeing to co-develop a CPD activity, the partners agree to observe and comply with the following in order to ensure the accreditation standards are met:
    1. Co-developed CPD activities must be introduced to the physician organization from the idea stage. COS will not accredit activities that were already being developed or delivered prior to the involvement of the physician organization. COS will not co-develop an activity that is already in development.
    2. The physician organization will appoint a physician (a member of the target audience and member of the physician organization) to the scientific planning committee as the representative who will provide accreditation oversight and guidance. This representative will participate fully in the activities of the scientific planning committee, including needs assessments, program design, implementation, and evaluation.
        - This representative may be expected to report to the Accredited CPD Provider, as part of the accreditation application
    3. Representatives from non-physician organizations (e.g., industry) are **prohibited** from sitting on the scientific planning committee.
    4. The CPD activity must be based on an identified need of the target audience and fit within the CPD priorities identified by the physician organization.
    a. The scientific planning committee must employ a needs assessment strategy to describe gaps in knowledge, skills, performance or health outcomes.
    b. Learning objectives are developed by the scientific planning committee based on the identified needs. The physician organization and other non-physician organization partners may work together to complete a needs assessment; however, the physician organization will remain in control of the interpretation of the needs assessment.

- There should be dually signed agreements between all co-developing groups to clearly outline the roles and responsibilities specifically relevant to the development and delivery of the co-developed activity.
- It is the responsibility of all partners to have read and understood the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities.*

What are the roles and responsibilities regarding budgets and payments in co-development?

- The CPD activity budget must be developed in collaboration with the physician organization. The physician organization must review and approve all expenses related to the CPD activity. The co-developing groups agree to share all dually signed agreements (e.g., between physician organizations, continuing medical education companies, industry partners or other sponsors) with the Accredited CPD Provider as part of their accreditation application.
- Any financial support for a CPD activity from a non-physician organization must be provided in the form of an educational grant and be provided without any influence on program content.
- The physician organization may take recommendations as identified by a non-physician organization partner, however final topic titles, presenters, learning objectives and delivery format are determined at the complete discretion of the scientific planning committee of the physician organization.
- All funds for the activity are managed through the physician organization. The physician organization assumes responsibility for the distribution of funds for all faculty speakers, including the payment of honoraria, travel, accommodation, and any activity-related expenses. The physician organization will manage payments to any communications firms or agencies brought on to support the project – these should not be paid directly by a non-physician organization partner but managed by the physician organization.
- Co-development partners and sponsors will be acknowledged for their support of the CPD activity in accordance with accreditation standards and the *National Standard for Support of CPD Activities*.

How will partners' financial support of the co-developed activity be acknowledged?

- To recognize the contribution of all partners in the co-development of a CPD activity, the following statement must be used in addition to the accreditation statement on activity materials:
  This program was co-developed by [insert physician organization] and [insert non-physician organization partner's name] to achieve scientific integrity, objectivity and balance.
- Sponsorship of a program can be listed separately.
- A program sponsor could also be one of the co-development partners.

What is sponsorship?

- Sponsorship is the process by which an individual, group, corporation or organization provides financial and in-kind support for the development, delivery or evaluation of an accredited CPD activity, learning resource or tool.

- The following statement recognizes and discloses to participants all financial and in-kind support received from sponsors of CPD activities:
  This program has received an educational grant or in-kind support from [insert names of funding organizations].

What is the RCPSC *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities*?

- This document sets the standards that will guide the development, delivery, and evaluation of accredited CPD activities. The *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* will guide the ability of CPD providers and other stakeholders to:
  - safeguard high-quality CPD from commercial influence,
  - outline a clearly defined role for sponsors of CPD activities, and
  - standardize development and delivery of CPD activities for both family and specialist physician audiences.
- The intent of the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities* is to safeguard the integrity of accredited CPD activities from the influence of sponsoring organizations that could lead to bias.
- The Standard applies to all situations where financial and in-kind support is accepted to contribute to the development, delivery and/or evaluation of accredited CPD activities.
- Adherence to the Standard is required for the approval of all accredited CPD activities included within the Canadian national/provincial CME/CPD accreditation systems for physicians.

Does the implementation of the National Standard eliminate or replace the Canadian Medical Association's "Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry"?

- Physicians participating in CPD activities must still adhere to the CMA's "Guidelines for Physicians in Interactions with Industry".
- Wherever discrepancies exist between the National Standard and CMA's "Guidelines for Physicians in Interaction with Industry", the more stringent of the two standards shall prevail.

If a CPD provider hosts an accredited CPD activity in the province of Quebec, are both the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM) Code of Ethics and National Standard applicable?

- Activities accredited for RCPSC MOC credits must always comply with the *National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities*. Wherever discrepancies exist between the National Standard and the CQDPCM's Code of Ethics, the more stringent of the two standards shall prevail.

What are the different kinds of CPD that are accredited by COS?

- **Section 1: Group learning activities** held in Canada, such as conferences, workshops and seminars. This applies to all face-to-face group learning activities, as well as web-based group learning activities.

- **Section 3: Self-assessment programs:** Tools that enable physicians to assess aspects of their knowledge or practice and to identify opportunities to enhance their competence through further learning activities. **Simulation programs:** Programs that approximate real-life situations, allowing participants to demonstrate (and receive feedback on) their application of knowledge (scientific and tacit), clinical reasoning, communication and problem-solving, as well as their ability to collaborate and work effectively in a health care team.

For more information on each type of activity, please visit: https://www.cosprc.ca/resources/type/for-planners/where-does-my-learning-activity-fit/

For more information

- Please contact education@cos-sco.ca
- Please familiarize yourself with the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities: https://royalcollege.ca/content/dam/document/standards-and-accreditation/national-standard-accredited-activites-e.pdf
- Please familiarize yourself with the RCPSC's policies for co-developing an activity: https://royalcollege.ca/en/standards-and-accreditation/cpd-accreditation/group-learning/co-develop.html
- Please see the COS document entitled "Guiding Principles for Co-development of an Accredited Activity with COS" available at: https://www.cosprc.ca/guiding-principles-for-co-development-with-cos/
- Please see the COS document entitled "COS Policy on Accrediting Co-developed Activities" available at: https://www.cosprc.ca/cos-policy-on-accrediting-co-developed-activities/
- To submit an activity for review, please visit: https://www.cosprc.ca/getting-accredited

Last updated October 2026