



Irish College of General Practitioners

***Guidelines for the Recognition
of Educational Activity for External
Continuing Professional Development***

August 2016

About the Irish College of General Practitioners

The Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) is the professional body for education, training, research and standards in general practice.

College Activities

- *Teaching, training and education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels*
- *Accreditation of specialist training programmes in general practice*
- *Operates a professional competence scheme under arrangement with the Medical Council*
- *Examining body for membership in general practice (MICGP)*
- *Continuing education and professional development*
- *Research*
- *Practice management support through training, advice and consultancy*
- *General practitioner health*
- *Public relations and media liaison on behalf of the profession*
- *General practice publications, guidelines and protocols*
- *Advice and support to members*
- *Advocacy on behalf of the profession with external agencies*

Contact Us

Irish College of General Practitioners

4-5 Lincoln Place, Dublin 2

Tel: 01 6763705, Fax: 01 6765850

Email: info@icgp.ie

Web: www.icgp.ie

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Contents

1. Background
2. What does the term 'continuing professional development' (CPD) mean?
3. What activity requires recognition for external CPD?
 - (a) Activity organised in Ireland
 - (b) Activity organised outside Ireland
 - (c) Multidisciplinary activity
4. Activities which may not be recognised for external CPD
5. What activities do not require CPD recognition?
 - (a) Internal category
 - (b) Personal/research and teaching categories
 - (c) Courses leading to MSc or similar certification
6. Application process for external CPD recognition
 - (a) Preparing the application
 - (b) Application fee
 - (c) Promotion of the event (d) Procedure for approval (e) Documentation
 - (f) Appeals
7. FAQs
8. Glossary/Terms

Applying for CPD Recognition of GP Educational Activity

Summary

- CPD recognition is granted by the ICGP where the activity is deemed relevant to the scope of General Practice, is organised specifically for the purposes of External CPD and which takes place in Ireland.
- Internal CPD refers to practice based evaluation and development type activity and does not require recognition by any of the training bodies. This category is self-recorded by the individual doctor who determines activity relevant to their own scope of practice.
- Please familiarise yourself with the guidelines to ensure your application complies. Failure to do so could result in a lengthier review period or rejection.
- Log-in as an applicant using your ICGP ID and PIN at www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition. First time applicants must register their details in order to obtain an ID and Pin.
- Payment of the application fee in the sum of €300 is automated and credit card payment will be necessary at time of application and is non-refundable. An invoice and receipt is available to download on receipt of payment. Please note that, if eligible, a fee waiver will be granted (i.e. for non-sponsored/non-funded/not for profit CPD activity).
- The minimum deadline for receipt of applications is **four weeks prior to the event taking place**. We recommend, however, that you allow time for printing of material, etc. if wishing to advertise your activity as recognised for CPD, following approval by The ICGP.
- Applications submitted for consideration are assumed to be compliant with the relevant guidelines/policy, therefore, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the activity is eligible for consideration. Please note that launches and/or activity organised to promote products/services are **not** considered eligible.
- In accordance with the Medical Council standards that relate to the maintenance of professional competence it is necessary to provide details of a GP, independent of the activity sponsor and/or private/commercial organisation, to ensure relevance of the CPD activity to general practice and who is satisfied that sponsorship arrangements, content, etc. comply with relevant guidelines/policy.
- A reciprocal arrangement across all the Irish Postgraduate Medical Training Bodies exists for multi-disciplinary activity. Therefore it is only necessary to apply to the most relevant training body for CPD recognition. The application should be submitted to the training body to which the activity is most relevant and/or which specialty will be the target/majority audience. Applications submitted to the ICGP are on the basis that the activity predominantly refers to the specialty of General Practice. CPD certificates of attendance for activity recognised by another training body are accepted by all the training bodies as evidence of a doctor's participation in that activity.
- Please note that ICGP approval of an activity for External CPD purposes does not constitute a professional association between the ICGP and the activity organiser. Published material for the recognised activity must never imply such an association.
- For assistance contact Michelle Dodd on email CPDRecognition@icgp.ie or phone The ICGP on 016763705.
- Further details are available at www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition

1. Background

The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 places a statutory obligation on all registered medical practitioners to maintain their professional competence by enrolling on a recognised professional competence scheme (PCS).

These Schemes are designed to promote self-directed and practice-based learning activities rather than supervised training. As well as promoting personal professional development, the schemes aim to support the General Practitioner to maintain and develop their competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes, which are essential for meeting the changing needs of patients and the healthcare delivery system. The Schemes encourage participants to plan, record and reflect on professional development needs, reflective of their scope of practice and as part of their pursuit of lifelong learning.

The professional competence requirements set by the Irish Medical Council consists of two elements:

- Continuing professional development activities
- Clinical/Practice audit

This guide has been prepared to help individuals and organisations who are seeking recognition of educational activity for external CPD credits by the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP).

2. What does the term 'continuing professional development' (CPD) mean?

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the educative means of updating, developing and enhancing how registered doctors apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in their working lives. This includes professional (both clinical and non-clinical) competencies as identified in the eight domains of good professional practice as defined by the Medical Council (IMC CPD Guidelines for Doctors 2011) as follows:

- Patient safety and quality of patient care
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Management (including self-management)
- Professionalism
- Relating to patients
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Scholarship
- Clinical skills

**Registered doctors are required to complete and record
50 CPD Credits & One Clinical/Practice Audit
Per Year**

**The CPD credit must be obtained across the four
categories per year as follows:**

External – Maintenance of knowledge and skills:
Minimum of 20 credits per year

Internal – Practice evaluation and development:
Minimum of 20 credits per year

Personal Learning – Minimum of five credits per year

Research and Teaching – Two credits (desirable) but up to five credits can be recorded

The balance of credits can be made up under any of the mandatory categories.

**One credit equals one hour of educational activity.
This rule applies to all CPD categories.**

3. What activities require recognition for external CPD?

(a) Activity organised in Ireland

Educational activity organised specifically for the purpose of CPD are eligible under the External CPD category.

This includes, for example, conferences, courses, clinical meetings, workshops, online courses, faculty and CME small group meetings, lectures, etc.

Please note there is a reciprocal arrangement between the postgraduate medical training bodies (PGMTB) whereby it is only necessary to apply to, and receive recognition for external CPD credits from, one PGMTB. Your application should be submitted to the PGMTB that best reflects the focus of the educational activities. A CPD certificate of attendance for an activity recognised by one PGMTB will be automatically accepted by the other PGMTB as evidence of a doctor's participation in that activity.

(b) Activity organised outside of Ireland

CPD recognition for an activity outside of the jurisdiction of Ireland must be sought from the local jurisdiction.

Organisers who wish to host an activity in Ireland must seek approval from the relevant Irish PGMTB. Those seeking recognition for an activity hosted abroad should contact the EACCME for information on the European accreditation of the relevant local jurisdiction.

(c) Multidisciplinary activity

Where an activity is of educational interest to multi-disciplines, all PGMTB have agreed to mutually recognise and accept the other PGMTB recognition (refer to above). Therefore, where approval has been granted and CPD credits have been awarded by one training body all medical doctors are entitled to record their participation for External CPD. Please note that this arrangement only relates to CPD activity that is multi-disciplinary.

4. Activity which *may not* be recognised for external CPD

The following activities will not be counted as educational time for the purposes of CPD:

- General: Registration time, breaks, lunch, award prize giving ceremonies, announcements
- Product promotion: Activities organised primarily to promote a product or service which might be deemed as promotional are not eligible for consideration for CPD

- Unmoderated poster viewing: Poster viewing sessions may only be recognised for CPD if a medical moderator is present at all times. If the session is moderated, this should be clearly stated in the activity programme
- Opening/closing speeches: Not eligible
- Other disciplines: Sections of an activity aimed specifically at other health professionals.

5. What activities *do not* require CPD recognition?

(a) Internal CPD category

An activity that relates to practice development and evaluation does not require recognition by the ICGP. Many practices or GPs participate in regular activities including practice meetings, clinical case discussions, chart reviews or patient surveys, clinical clubs, PCT/HSE meetings, peer review groups, quality improvement projects, significant event analysis, multidisciplinary meetings, etc. These activities are deemed to be internal for the purposes of CPD and therefore it is not necessary to seek recognition.

It is a requirement of the PCS, however, that doctors provide evidence of having undertaken such activities and the ICGP recommends that the organisers undertake to document the activity. This can be as simple as keeping a record of the date, the nature of the activity, who attended, key discussion points and intended actions/ developments. This needs to be held in a central place for six years (i.e. it can be uploaded onto the GP's ePortfolio or held in a central file in the practice) in the event of being audited by the Medical Council.

Templates are available on the PCS page of the ICGP Website – www.icgp.ie/pcs

(b) Personal/research and teaching CPD category

These categories are self-recorded and do not require recognition by the ICGP.

(c) Courses leading to MSc or similar certification

It is unnecessary to apply for CPD recognition for a full or part time course leading to MSc or similar certification.

Please note: The ICGP PCS committee agreed that 40 external CPD credits can be recorded per year for these courses.

6. Application process for external CPD Recognition

Applications must be completed on-line and it will be necessary to log-in at: www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition.

Completed applications, including supporting documentation, should be submitted at least four weeks prior to the activity.

Please read these guidelines to ensure your application complies with the CPD requirements.

Where applicable, it will also be necessary to refer to the ICGP sponsorship policy at www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition and the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association guidelines at www.ipha.ie.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to submit the application at least four weeks prior to the activity. It is advisable, however, to allow time for printing of material, etc. if wishing to advertise your activity as recognized for CPD, following approval by The ICGP.

In the event that some details are not available at the time of completing the online application (e.g. confirmation of speakers), draft copies of documentation must be submitted to avoid delaying the submission. Final documentation must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the activity and again, it is the responsibility of the applicant to submit in a timely manner.

(a) Preparing the application

Organisers of educational activity should apply to the most relevant PGMTB in terms of the educational focus of the CPD activity and/or whose discipline will be the target/majority audience. Applications submitted to the ICGP are on the basis that the activity predominantly refers to the specialty of General Practice.

A mutual arrangement across the training bodies for multi-disciplinary activity applies and therefore, it is only necessary to apply to one body.

Please note that CPD recognition cannot be given for activities retrospectively.

Applications must be submitted at least four weeks in advance of the CPD activity taking place and the following information must be included:

Title of Activity – Full title of activity must be provided.

Location/Venue and Date – Confirmed dates and venues must

be provided.

Medical or Lead Organiser Details - Responsible for ensuring the scientific validity and objectivity of the activity. Medical organiser required for clinical activity.

Independent GP Details: Responsible for ensuring activity is educationally relevant to general practice and that the sponsorship arrangements, content, etc. comply with relevant guidelines and policy.

Applicant Contact Details - Responsible for contacting delegates, registration, and the issuing of CPD attendance certificates following the activity, and is the point of contact for purposes of the application and the activity.

Please note: Following approval by the ICGP, details of the activity and CPD recognition are included on the ICGP activities calendar and the ePortfolio recognised activities list. In this regard, it is essential that the named applicant is the point of contact for any enquiries.

Knowledge/Skills/Attitudes Addressed and Learning Outcomes - Provide specific details in relation to above and the learning outcomes to be acquired following participation in the activity.

Domains of Good Professional Practice – Provide relevance ratings of the activity to each domain.

Programme/Schedule/Agenda - This should include:

- The full title of each presentation/session
- The name, title and organisation of the facilitator/s
- The start and finish time of each presentation/ session, Q&A, discussion, break, etc.
- An outline of the educational content.

Please note that a copy of the presentation/s may be required in order to assess suitability/eligibility for CPD.

Teaching Methods – Details of teaching method(s) that apply, e.g. lectures, workshops, tutorials, discussion groups, MCQs, etc.

Evaluation – Indicate form of evaluation that applies e.g. feedback form, quiz, or other form of assessment in order to gauge the effectiveness of the activity. A random sample of evaluations will be reviewed in any one year.

Sponsorship - Provide a list of sponsors (to include applicant if a private/commercial organisation) and how they are connected to the activity, e.g. organiser, unrestricted grant, providing honoraria, sponsorship of prizes, refreshments, etc. All sections of the sponsorship declaration section must be ticked to indicate that the educational component of the activity is unbiased and the arrangements for the activity are compliant with the IPHA (Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare

Association) and ICGP guidelines. Applicants are advised to familiarise themselves with relevant guidelines and policy.

Where activity is commercially funded it is important that the nature of the relationship between the sponsor/s and individual speaker/s is clarified.

All paid speakers, including speakers with any conflicts, should have a conflict of interest slide in their presentation that indicates the nature of their conflict. Information with regard to honoraria is also required.

Slides, educational material, modules, etc. may not feature any form of product branding or commercial logo.

b) Application fee for the processing of applications

An application fee of €300 applies to all private/commercial applicants and sponsored/funded activity and is payable by credit card at time of application. Invoice/receipts are available to download from the CPD application dashboard.

Please note that a waiver of fee may be granted for activity which is unsponsored/unfunded. Other conditions of waiver may apply – please contact CPDRecognition@icgp.ie for further details if uncertain.

(c) Promotion of the activity

The use of The ICGP title or logo is not permitted under any circumstances.

Wording such as “applied for CPD recognition” or “recognised for CPD”, as appropriate, may be used in material associated with the activity.

Organisers should not specify the number of credits approved or whether credits have been approved on printed or other published material until such time as confirmation has been issued by The ICGP.

(d) Procedure for approval

It will be necessary to log-in using the IDs and PINs allocated to you at: www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition to complete the on-line form and attach supporting documentation (refer to the checklist of items section of the form) at least four weeks in advance of the activity.

On submission, the applicant will be sent an email confirming receipt and an approximate timeframe for review/assessment. Typically, this may take between 2-4 weeks depending on volume of applications, level of supporting documentation and need to follow up eg requests for further information e.g. presentations, review requirements, etc.

The application is reviewed to determine the validity and objectivity of the activity and relevance to general practice.

The applicant is notified of the review outcome – i.e. approved/refused – via email.

On approval, the applicant is provided with the allocations for External CPD and GMS study leave, and relevant conditions, where applicable.

A sample attendance register and template certificate of attendance/participation is available to download from the CPD application dashboard.

Please note:

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all details for the activity are timely and accurate for purposes of The ICGP website facility.
- All dates and venues on the website listing are privy to the public and queries regarding the activity will be directed to the applicant. In this regard, it is essential that any changes in dates/venues be notified to The ICGP as soon as they arise
- Disclaimer: While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided for The ICGP website activity calendar, The ICGP cannot accept any responsibility or liability for information provided by outside organisations.

It is the organiser's responsibility to:

- Provide delegates with registers to sign (per session/day/half day where applicable) and to maintain signed registers, or participation logs and assessments for on-line activity, on a central file for a six-year period quoting ICGP CPD recognition reference. Copies may be requested by the ICGP in the event of an audit.
- Undertake an evaluation process. A template evaluation form is available if another process is not in place. Please note these forms must be kept by the organizer for one year after completion of the activity. A random sample of evaluations will be reviewed in any one year.
- Issue certificates of attendance/participation to delegates at the conclusion and/or successful completion of the activity, and who have signed the attendance registers where applicable.

Please note: The delegate's name must be printed on the certificate.

e) Documentation

Following ICGP approval of the activity for CPD, details will be forwarded by email advising of the allocation of External CPD credits and GMS study leave (this relates to a HSE study leave allowance for GPs with a GMS listing).

Conditions of approval, where applicable, will also be notified.

Please note that CPD recognition refers to the activity specified at the time of application only and does not infer recognition for subsequent activity. In relation to blanket recognition, the maximum period of approval is one year, following which it will be necessary to re-apply.

Details of the activity will then feature as recognised for CPD on the ICGP activity calendar and will be available for GPs to view and also to record on their ePortfolio (unless blanket recognition applies). In this regard, it is essential that the applicant provides relevant contact details for potential queries from the public and ensures that all details are timely and accurate.

Certificates of Attendance/Participation

A template certificate of attendance is provided which should be printed on the organiser's headed paper (not product paper). Organisers may use their own layout but the attendance certificate must contain the following information:

- Name of delegate
- Title of activity
- Venue
- Date and time of the activity
- External CPD credits and GMS study leave approved
- ICGP CPD Recognition reference number
- Organiser name and contact details

Delegates should be advised of the following:

- It is necessary to sign the attendance register (per session/day/half day where applicable)
- It is necessary to complete a post activity evaluation process
- CPD credits are allocated for the entire activity. It is the responsibility of the individual participant to record External CPD credits commensurate with their actual attendance/participation (i.e. one credit per hour of qualifying educational activity).
- The certificate must be retained as proof of attendance for up to six years as it may be requested for audit purposes.

Distributing Certificates of Attendance/Participation

- Delegates must only be provided with certificates at the conclusion of the activity and names must be printed by the organiser.
- Certificates may only be distributed to delegates who have signed the activity register and/or successfully completed the activity.

Attendance Register

- The attendance register should show the title, date and location of the activity, and the ICGP CPD Recognition reference. Full day/multiple day activities must also identify the days/sessions where applicable.
- Organisers must keep the register safely for a period of six years as they may be asked to produce it at a later date in the event of an audit.
- If the activity is run over a number of days, organisers must provide a separate register per day. Where delegates can opt to attend sessions then separate registers are required per session.
- Sample registers are available to download on the documents tab on the application system

Evaluation Form

- The evaluation form should show the title, date and location of the activity, and the ICGP CPD Recognition reference.
- Organisers must keep the completed evaluations on a central file for a period of six years as a copy may be requested at any time over this period for audit purposes.
- A template evaluation form can be downloaded from the documents tab on the application system and provided to each delegate to complete at the conclusion of the activity.

(f) Appeals

If an application is refused, the organiser may appeal the decision in writing. Such appeals should be directed to:

Dr Brendan O'Shea
Director of the PRC
Irish College of General Practitioners
4/5 Lincoln Place
Dublin 2

7. FAQs

Doctors participating in CPD and meeting organisers should be aware of the distinction between internal and external educational activity/activities.

Q. What is an internal educational activity?

A. Internal activities are activities that develop and improve the quality of clinical practice. Therefore, only the doctor will know if an activity is suitable to record in this category as they will know if they have had to evaluate an element of their practice and/or put changes in place to bring about a practice development/ improvement.

Internal credits are not 'awarded' by a company or organisation but rather are allocated by the individual GP who documents activity considered to be internal. Examples of this type of activity are a chart review, journal club, practice meeting, primary care team meeting, case discussion or significant activity analysis.

In this regard, it is not necessary to apply to the ICGP or any other PGMTB for approval of such activities.

Q. What is an external educational activity?

A. External activities refer to the maintenance of knowledge and skills and which take place outside the GP's practice, such as courses, conferences, seminars, webinars, e-learning with assessment, etc. This category requires formal recognition by the relevant PGMTB.

Q. What is a personal learning activity?

A. Where the GP undertakes an individual activity and determines the education benefits gained.

Q. When should I seek CPD recognition for an educational activity?

A. CPD recognition should be sought for external activities only for purposes of External CPD.

Q. What information should I provide when applying for CPD recognition?

A. The information required is available to view at www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition.

Q. I am organising an annual general meeting and symposium for my faculty. Can I have recognition for the full activity?

A. No. Recognition for External CPD can only be applied to educational activity. You may seek recognition for the educational component of your activity. Business sessions/AGMs may be recorded under Internal CPD up to maximum 6 credits per annum.

Q. I am organising a multidisciplinary activity. Can the ICGP give overall recognition?

A. There is a mutual arrangement with the PGMTBs whereby approval by one is recognised by all for multi-disciplinary activity.

Organisers of educational activity should apply to the most relevant PGMTB body in terms of the educational focus of the CPD activity and/or whose discipline will be the target/majority audience. In this regard, applications submitted to The ICGP are on the basis that the activity predominantly refers to the specialty of General Practice.

Q. I am organising an activity abroad. Can the ICGP recognise this for CPD?

A. The ICGP considers activities which take place within the jurisdiction of Ireland. If you are organising an activity in another country, you are advised to contact the EACCME or the local jurisdiction.

Q. We organise the same activity every year. Can CPD recognition be carried forward?

A. No. Recognition only applies to the specific activity applied for at the time of application and in the case of blanket recognition, for up to one year maximum.

Q. My delegates attended an overseas activity. Can the ICGP give approval for this?

A. The ICGP cannot consider/recognise activity which do not take place under its jurisdiction. However, the ICGP will recognise certificates of attendance issued by any of the Royal Colleges or equivalent bodies and also by the EACCME. Delegates should ensure that they sign attendance registers for all sessions attended and obtain attendance certificates from the organisers prior to departure. The activity may then be recorded as External CPD at one credit per hour of the session(s) attended.

Q. What about attendance certificates for multi-day activities (e.g. annual scientific meetings)?

A. If participants can opt to attend certain sessions/days, etc. it is necessary to provide a separate sign-in sheet accordingly. Attendance certificates should be prepared in accordance with actual attendance however it is the responsibility of the participant to record their CPD credits in accordance with actual attendance/participation.

Q. Some of the delegates attended for only part of the meeting

A. Doctors are expected to record only the time they attended the activity. It is the individual's responsibility to maintain an accurate record. Credits are awarded to the activity, not the individual.

Q. What about training courses?

A. In the case of short training courses where daily attendance is mandatory, one attendance certificate is issued to cover the course.

Q. My speakers have done a lot of work preparing their presentations. Are they entitled to some extra credit?

A. Doctors can claim five credits under Research and Teaching for preparation of a presentation for an academic or scientific meeting. Organisers do not issue certificates or other documentation in respect of preparation for a presentation. It is the responsibility of the individual doctors to record this activity themselves.

8. Glossary/Terms*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The educative means of updating, developing and enhancing how doctors apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in their working lives. This includes professional (both clinical and non-clinical) competencies as identified in the eight domains of good professional practice.

Activity

An educational session for GPs which is based upon identified needs and has a purpose or objectives, and is evaluated to ensure the needs are met.

Attendance Certificate

A record of a participant's attendance at an activity. Providers of CPD recognised activities are required to give these to participants at the conclusion of the activity.

Attendance Record/Register

A signed list of attendees at an activity, which must be kept on a central file by activity providers for six years following the activity, and sent to the Professional Competence Department on request.

Professional Competence Scheme (PCS) The scheme consists of two elements:

- Continuing professional development (CPD)
- Clinical audit

Multi-source feedback will be added to the scheme at a later stage in accordance with Medical Council guidelines.

EACCME

European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.

Evaluation Form

A form given by activity providers to activity participants in order for the participant to communicate, and the provider to determine the relevance, quality and effectiveness of an activity.

External CPD

Where the GP participates in an educational activity where peers or providers ensure a regional, national or international context.

ICGP

Irish College of General Practitioners.

Internal CPD

Where the GP participates in a routine, local, educational activity with colleagues within a practice, hospital or other local organisation. It is not necessary to seek recognition for internal CPD.

Personal Learning

Where the GP undertakes an individual activity and determines the education benefits gained.

*Adapted from: The Federation of Royal Colleges of Physicians Continuing Professional Development Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Professional Competence Department

Tel: +353-1-6763705

Email: professionalcompetence@icgp.ie