Guidelines for the Recognition of Educational Events for External Continuing Professional Development
The Irish College of General Practitioners

About the Irish College of General Practitioners

The Irish College 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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Guidelines for the Recognition of Educational Events for External Continuing Professional Development

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1. Background

The Medical Practitioners Act 2007 places a statutory obligation on all registered medical practitioners to maintain their professional competence by participating in recognised professional competence schemes (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 maintain and develop the competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes of the individual practitioner, which are essential for meeting the changing needs of patients and the healthcare delivery system. These schemes also encourage participants to plan, record and reflect on professional development needs, as part of their pursuit of lifelong learning.

The scheme consists of two elements:

- Continuing professional development
- Clinical audit

This guide has been prepared to help individuals and organisations who are seeking recognition of educational events/activities 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 record 50 credits across four CPD 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

One clinical audit

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

3. What events require recognition for external CPD?

(a) Events organised in Ireland

Educational events 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 among 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 event recognised by one PGMTB will be automatically accepted by the other PGMTB as evidence of a doctor’s participation in that event.

(b) Events organised outside of Ireland

CPD recognition for an event outside of the jurisdiction of Ireland must be sought from the local jurisdiction. Organisers who wish to host an event in Ireland must seek approval from the relevant Irish PGMTB. Irish organisers seeking recognition for an event hosted abroad should contact the EACCME for information on the European accreditation of the relevant local jurisdiction.
(c) Multidisciplinary events
Where an event is of educational interest to multidisciplines, 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 of the PGMTB, further approval from the other PGMTB is not required. Please note that this only relates to CPD events that are multidisciplinary in nature.

4. Activities which may not be recognised for external CPD
Events that are not recognised include an AGM, dinner or business meeting.

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 event programme
- Opening/closing speeches: Not eligible
- Other disciplines: Sections of an event aimed specifically at other health professionals

5. What activities do not require CPD recognition?

(a) Internal 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 from the ICGP to support the recording of internal activities. Please contact professionalcompetence@icgp.ie or download from the eportfolio.

(b) Personal/research and teaching categories
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: One credit equals one hour of educational activity. This applies to all CPD categories.

6. Application process for external CPD recognition
Completed applications for CPD recognition, including supporting documentation (refer to the checklist on the application form) should be submitted to carol.white@icgp.ie at least four weeks prior to the event.

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 event. It is advisable, however, to submit your application as early as possible, particularly if you wish to advertise your event as being recognised for CPD following a review and confirmation by the ICGP.
In the event that some details are awaited (e.g., confirmation of speakers), draft copies of documentation are acceptable to avoid delaying the submission. Final documentation, however, must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the event and again, it is the responsibility of the applicant to submit in a timely manner.

(a) Preparing the application

Event organisers should apply for CPD recognition to the PGMTB most relevant to the content of the event. An application for CPD recognition need only be made to one of the PGMTB.

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

The event organiser/administrator must supply the following information at least four weeks prior to the event:

Title of Event
The full title of the event must be provided.

Location/Venue and Date
The full name and address of the venue and date of the event is required.

GP/Medical Organiser Contact Details
The medical organiser is responsible for ensuring the scientific validity and objectivity of the educational content of the event.

Clear evidence of GP input must be evident and details must be provided in the application.

Applicant Contact Details
The applicant is the person responsible for contacting delegates, registration, and the issuing of CPD attendance certificates following the event, and is the point of contact for purposes of the application and the event.

Please note: Upon confirmation of CPD recognition by the ICGP, event details and CPD recognition are forwarded to the ICGP web editor for inclusion on the ICGP website event calendar and CPD listing. In this regard, it is essential that the named applicant be the point of contact for any potential queries from the public.

Objectives
Describe the learning outcomes to be acquired as a result of attending the event and how they link to the eight domains of good professional practice. It is necessary to indicate in the application which of the eight domains of good professional practice apply to the event (refer to Section 2).

Programme/Schedule/Agenda
This should include:
- The full title of the presentation(s)
- The name, title and organisation of the presenter(s)
- The start and finish time of each presentation, break and Q&A session
- An outline of the educational content

Format and Method of Evaluation
Indicate the teaching method(s) that will be used, e.g., lectures, workshops, tutorials, discussion groups, MCQs, etc. Indicate whether a feedback form, quiz, or other form of assessment will be used to gauge the effectiveness of the activity.

Sponsorship
Provide a list of sponsors and how they are connected to the event, e.g. an unrestricted grant, an honoraria, the sponsorship of prizes, breaks, meals, etc. A sponsorship declaration should indicate that the educational component of the activity is unbiased and the arrangements for the activity are compliant with the guidelines of the Irish Pharmaceutical Healthcare Association (www.ipha.ie) and the ICGP sponsorship policy (www.icgp.ie/cpd_recognition). Event organisers are advised to familiarise themselves with these guidelines and policy.

Where events are commercially funded it is important that the nature of the relationship between the sponsor and individual speaker(s) is clarified.

All paid speakers (and 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 may not feature a company logo, or product brands/images.
(b) Application fee

The following is the fee schedule for the processing of applications for CPD recognition of external events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Fee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored* single event**</td>
<td>€500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored multiple events***</td>
<td>€1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event(s) supported by an unrestricted educational grant****</td>
<td>€150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsponsored event(s) with a registration fee</td>
<td>€100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsponsored event(s) with no registration fee</td>
<td>No Charge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Typically a GP led and organised event, e.g. faculty meetings, clinical society meetings, CME small group meetings)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Applications by commercial organisations.

**Subsequent dates of the same event (i.e. the format/duration are the same; regional speakers are permitted) available at the time of application.

***As above but subsequent dates are not available at the time of application, e.g. national programmes. A full schedule of dates, venues and speakers must be submitted within a three-month period following the date of ICGP approval. Otherwise, a new application will be necessary for subsequent dates.

****Applications must be submitted by the organiser.

Application fees are non-refundable.

(c) Promotion of the event

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 event.

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

The applicant must submit the completed application form and attach supporting documentation (refer to the checklist on the application form) to carol.white@icgp.ie at least four weeks in advance of the event. The payment of the fee must be submitted on receipt of the invoice. On submission, the applicant will be sent an email confirming receipt and an approximate timeframe for review/assessment. Typically, this may take up to four weeks following receipt of final documentation. Should further information be required, the applicant will be informed as soon as possible following receipt of the application. It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that details are provided.

The application is reviewed to determine the validity and objectivity of the event.

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

On approval, the applicant is provided with event details, including the allocation of external CPD credits and GMS study leave sessions, and conditions, where applicable. A sample attendance register and template certificate of attendance are also provided.

Please note:

- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure all details for the event are present and correct so as to ensure timely/accurate details are provided to the ICGP website editor to include on the ICGP website event calendar and CPD listing.

- All dates and venues on the website listing are privy to the public and queries regarding event availability, etc. 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 on the website event 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 where applicable) and to maintain signed registers on a central file for a six-year period quoting the ICGP reference. Copies may be requested by the ICGP.

• Issue certificates of attendance to delegates who have signed the register at the conclusion of the event. The delegate’s name should be printed on the certificate.

e) Documentation

On approval of the event for CPD recognition, the ICGP provides confirmation of recognition showing the following:

• The title of the event

• The name and address of the organiser

• The approval date. Please note that ‘approval’ refers to the event applied for at the time of application only. In relation to programmes, approval applies for one year from the date of approval

• The allocation of external CPD credits and GMS study leave sessions (this relates to a HSE study leave allowance for GPs with a GMS listing)

Confirmation of CPD recognition and documentation will be issued by email unless a specific request is made for printed material.

Event details and CPD recognition will be forwarded to the ICGP web editor for inclusion on the ICGP website event calendar and CPD listing. In this regard, it is essential that the named applicant be the point of contact for any potential queries from the public.

Certificate of Attendance

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 event

• Venue

• Date and time of the event

• Number of external CPD credits and GMS study leave sessions allocated

• ICGP approval reference number

• Organiser name and contact details

Delegates should be advised of the following:

• It is necessary to sign the event register (per session/day, where applicable)

• CPD credits are allocated to the full event. Credit can only be claimed for the time the delegate attends the event (i.e. one credit per hour of the educational session(s) attended)

• A certificate of attendance must be retained as a record for up to six years as it may be requested as proof of attendance

Distributing Certificates of Attendance

• Delegates must not receive their certificate of attendance until the event is complete

• Certificates may only be distributed to delegates who have signed the event register(s)

Sample Attendance Register

• The attendance register should show the title, date and location of the event, and the ICGP approval reference number. Full day events must also identify the sessions applicable on the register where half day attendance is optional

• Organisers must keep the register safely for a period of six years as they may be asked to produce it at a later date

• It is recommended that the filed register be attached to the certificate of approval for the particular event

• If the event is run over a number of days, organisers must provide a separate register for each day. Where delegates attend on a half day basis, registers should also be provided for both morning and afternoon sessions. A copy of all registers must be maintained by the organiser for up to six years

(f) Appeals

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

Dr Margaret O’Riordan
Medical Director
Irish College of General Practitioners
4/5 Lincoln Place
Dublin 2
7. FAQ

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

Q. What is an internal educational activity?
A. Internal activities take place in a doctor’s practice, department, or hospital on a regular basis. It is not necessary to apply to the ICGP or any other PGMTB for approval of such activities.

Q. What is an external educational event?
A. Academic, scientific meetings and symposiums which take place outside the doctor’s practice.

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 event?
A. CPD recognition should be sought for external events only.

Q. What information should I provide when applying for CPD recognition?
A. The information required is listed on the application form for recognition of educational events for external CPD. All sections on this form must be completed and accompanied by the items listed on the form.

Q. I am organising an annual general meeting and symposium for my faculty. Can I have recognition for the full event?
A. No. Recognition for CPD can only be applied to educational events. You may seek recognition for the symposium portion of your event.

Q. I am organising a multidisciplinary event. Can the ICGP give overall recognition?
A. There is a mutual arrangement with the PGMTB whereby approval by one is recognised by all.

Q. I am organising an event abroad. Can the ICGP recognise this for CPD?
A. The ICGP considers events which take place within the jurisdiction of Ireland. If you are organising an event in another country, you are advised to contact the EACCME or the local jurisdiction.

Q. We organise the same event every year. Can CPD recognition be carried forward?
A. No. Recognition only applies to the event applied for at the time of application and in the case of national programmes, for up to one year from the date of approval.

Q. My delegates attended an overseas event. Can the ICGP give approval for this?
A. The ICGP cannot consider/recognise events 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 event 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 events (e.g. annual scientific meetings)?
A. As doctors may be prevented from attending every day of a particular event, it is vital that a separate sign-in sheet and attendance certificate are available for them each day.

Q. Some of the delegates attended for only part of the meeting....
A. Doctors are expected to record only the time they attended the event. It is the individual’s responsibility to maintain an accurate record. Credits are awarded to the event, 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.

Event
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 event. Providers of CPD recognised events are required to give these to participants at the conclusion of the event.

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

Professional Competence Scheme (PCS)
The scheme will consist of two elements initially:

- 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 event providers to event participants in order for the participant to communicate, and the provider to determine the relevance, quality and effectiveness of an event.

External CPD
Where the GP participates in an educational event 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