CONSEIL QUÉBÉCOIS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
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DES MÉDECINS

CQDPCM'S CODE OF ETHICS FOR CPD

Second edition

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IMPLEMENTATION

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FOREWORD

The CQDPCM is a non-profit consultative body whose origins date back to 1975. Known at the time as the Conseil de l'éducation médicale continue du Québec (CEMCQ), it adopted its current name in 2005.

The CQDPCM's mission is to promote excellence in continuing professional development (CPD) for quality care for the population of Quebec, as well as to formulate and support best practices in line with advances in pedagogy and medical research. It interacts with all CPD stakeholders (individuals and organizations), particularly CPD activity organizers. It also plays a promotional and encouraging role in supporting educational innovation and research in CPD, facilitating networking among interested parties and the transfer of knowledge.

In 1995, an ethical guide outlined the relationship between medical organizations and commercial companies with regards to continuing medical education. In 2003, the CQDPCM pioneered the publication of the first Code of Ethics for Continuing Professional Development (CPD). An update led to the Code currently in force since January 1, 2016. Beyond the update, medical organizations then tightened the application of the Code of ethics.

This second edition of the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* aims to clarify various aspects of its content.

The CQDPCM is composed of the following organizations:

REGULAR MEMBERS

- Collège des médecins du Québec
- Quebec College of Family Physicians
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
- Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec
- Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec
- Médecins francophones du Canada
- Université de Montréal
- Université de Sherbrooke
- Université Laval
- McGill University

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

- The Canadian Medical Protective Association

INTRODUCTION

The *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* stems from the concerted desire of CQDPCM members to facilitate and support the development of high-quality medical training and to clarify the rules governing interactions between medical organizations and funding organizations.

The industry's contribution to the advancement of innovations and their application in the medical world is undeniable. Given this reality, the importance for physicians to maintain their independence and professional autonomy takes on its full meaning. All CPD activities must be planned, carried out, and managed for the purpose of training, not promotion; they must therefore never be used to promote a particular product or service.

One of the objectives of the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* is to avoid any real or potential conflict of interest involving organizers, resource persons, and participants in a training activity. The Code also aims to prevent any interference by a funding organization in the scientific content or messages of a CPD activity.

In this context, the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* serves as a reference framework for the application of educational, ethical, and administrative standards that must govern the conduct of every organization or individual involved in the development of CPD activities. All CPD stakeholders must ensure that the educational activities they organize or participate in are designed primarily to help physicians acquire, master, or perfect knowledge and competencies to improve the quality of services provided to the population. To this end, the CQDPCM offers supplementary reading materials such as the *Vade-mecum en développement professionnel continu* and several best practices guides, available on the CQDPCM website.

This edition is divided into two main sections: the **guiding principles** that govern the various aspects of CPD and the **standards and requirements**. A glossary is available at the end of the document.

APPLICABILITY

Interactions between physicians and funding organizations, including commercial companies, can take many forms. They include research and promotion of products and services, consulting, and CPD. The ethical rules presented in this document provide a framework for CPD activities.

The *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* applies to every CPD activity accredited by an organization approved by the Collège des médecins du Québec, regardless of where the activity is held. It also applies to every CPD activity held in Quebec whose target audience consists primarily of physicians practising in the province, regardless of the accrediting organization.

Clarification Regarding National or International Activities

An activity held in Quebec that is aimed at a national or international audience **and** is offered by a national or international organization is exempt from the requirement to comply with the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD*; it is instead subject to the ethical standards of the organization that accredits it.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles establish the foundations of the essential ethical standards applied to each phase of the process of creating a CPD program, from its design and implementation to its evaluation. They encompass the actions, whether direct or indirect, of all those involved in this process.

Consequently, the principles of scientific rigor, educational independence, and social responsibility must take precedence.

» 1. SCIENTIFIC RIGOR

Scientific rigor is a fundamental principle in the design and implementation of CPD programs. Organizers and resource persons ensure that content is based on the best available data, validated scientific studies, and up-to-date medical practices. The constant integration of scientific advances into these programs aims to provide physicians with accurate and relevant knowledge for their clinical practice.

Thus, CPD activities encourage the pursuit of scientific excellence, fosters critical thinking, and promotes an evidence-based approach. This approach helps maintain and improve the quality of healthcare provided by physicians, while supporting an ethical commitment to rigor and integrity in the practice of medicine.

» 2. EDUCATIONAL INDEPENDENCE

The principle of pedagogical independence in CPD refers to the guarantee of autonomy and intellectual freedom in the design, implementation, and presentation of training activities. The content, teaching methods, and contributors involved in these programs must be selected in such a way as to ensure the transparency of the processes and the impartiality of the information provided.

Transparency

Transparency in CPD activities is one of the key elements of scientific integrity. Organizers must be committed to preparing these events without favoring personal or organizational interests and must demonstrate this through transparent accounting. Analysis of financial or in-kind contributions received, accompanied by detailed accounting of associated expenses, enables CPD activity organizers to ensure transparency, build trust, and enable informed participation.

Impartiality

As a fundamental pillar of CPD credibility, impartiality guides organizers to provide objective, balanced information that is free from any bias toward specific products, services, theories, or approaches. This principle aims to preserve the quality of training by limiting external influences, thereby reducing potential conflicts of interest that could compromise the objectivity of the content taught. The principle of impartiality ensures the integrity and quality of CPD programs and promotes informed participation.

» 3. SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

All CPD stakeholders actively participate in the principle of social responsibility by engaging in responsible and socially committed practices guided by the values of accountability, fairness, and collaboration.

Accountability

CPD must remain constantly attentive and accountable to adapt to the evolving needs of the healthcare system, the communities it aims to serve, and societal issues. Organizers and stakeholders involved must demonstrate their commitment to responding appropriately and knowledgeably to these changing and emerging needs, while ensuring ongoing evaluation of the impact of the training provided. CPD should strive to minimize its environmental footprint through sustainable practices and responsible use of resources and aim to promote responsible and environmentally friendly medical practices.

Equity - Diversity - Inclusion

Equity is an important value in CPD. Organizers must promote the design of diverse programs that meet the needs of the different communities served. CPD must promote diversity and inclusion in all aspects of its operations, including the selection of content, trainers, and teaching methods. The goal is to ensure that diverse perspectives, experiences, and identities are represented to foster an educational environment that is inclusive, safe, respectful, and conducive to learning for all. This principle encourages active participation, critical thinking, and innovation in medical learning.

Collaboration

The active participation of various CPD stakeholders is essential to ensure comprehensive coverage of training needs. The growing involvement of other healthcare professionals and patient partners in the development of CPD activities for physicians is consistent with a comprehensive vision of population health, in which interprofessional collaboration and citizen participation are key elements. This inclusive collaboration promotes a holistic approach to health, enriches perspectives, and encourages more integrated and effective medical practices.

STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS

» 1. SCIENTIFIC CONTENT OF THE CPD ACTIVITY

Responsibility for organizing a CPD Activity

MEDICAL ORGANIZATION

The medical organization is at the heart of CPD activities. Its role is to set up the scientific and organizing committees that will be responsible for CPD activities. It is the only entity authorized to receive educational grants. The medical organization is represented by physicians with expertise in CPD.

In general, a medical organization is defined as an organization with more than one healthcare professional, including at least one (1) physician. This category includes:

- Healthcare institutions, as well as their medical departments and services
- Medical clinics
- Faculties of medicine and their departments
- Professional associations and scientific societies
- Other medical organizations at the provincial or national level

The following are excluded from this list:

- Government departments or agencies
- Communications companies
- Pharmaceutical companies
- Companies that manufacture medical devices, orthotics, appliances, or supplies
- Medical laboratory companies
- Companies that manufacture dietary supplements or non-prescription health products
- Patient foundations or patient organizations

In the case of training courses organized by other health professionals for their members, the presence of one (1) physician would not be required, although application of the *CQDPCM'S Code of Ethics for DPC* is recommended. In this context, the medical organization is represented by the health professionals concerned, who also have expertise in CPD.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The Organizing Committee is responsible for planning, implementing, and managing a CPD activity. It interacts with the Scientific Committee. It has the right to ask questions and make suggestions but has no decision-making power regarding the content and resource persons for the CPD activity.

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The Scientific Committee is independent. The Scientific Committee must maintain its full autonomy and decision-making power. It ensures compliance with the **methodical approach to education** and decides on the content, resource persons, and educational approach, while interacting with the Organizing Committee and ensuring that the latter's right to question is maintained. In certain circumstances, the Scientific Committee may act as the Organizing Committee.

Methodical Approach to Education

All CPD interventions must follow a methodical approach. All stages and elements of the methodical approach used in CPD are overseen by the Scientific Committee, as follows:

TARGET POPULATION

The target population must be clearly defined; a representative of the target population must participate in the design and development of the content and delivery of the activity.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A needs assessment must be conducted to identify the learning needs (e.g., perceived, unperceived, normative, institutional, etc.) of the target population. Existing reports on needs analysis and those from various sources must be rigorously analyzed by the Scientific Committee, which will accept or reject them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Specific learning objectives must be defined based on the identified needs. It is expected that the Scientific Committee will draft the learning objectives and propose them to the speakers, not the other way around. It is appropriate to seek the collaboration of speakers to improve the objectives, particularly if they find that certain needs are not covered by the initial objectives, and to ensure that they are realistic for the duration of the presentation.

TYPES OF TRAINING ACTIVITIES AND THEIR CONTENT

The Scientific Committee is responsible for selecting the program and themes, the format of activities, and the choice of topics that will enable the objectives to be achieved.

The Scientific Committee is responsible for the entire program, the teaching methods chosen, and the content of all materials distributed during a CPD activity.

Activities must encourage interaction so that the audience can actively participate in their training.

Prior to the delivery of a training activity, the Scientific Committee should review, to the extent possible, all content elements to ensure that bias mitigation measures have been applied. The content of CPD activities and programs must be objective, balanced, and designed in such a way that various recognized assumptions and opinions can be presented. It must include scientific information based on the best available data that can contribute to the improvement of the participants' professional practices.

Generic names of drugs should be preferred in all scientific communications to avoid commercial bias. However, since brand names are usually easier to remember than generic names and are more familiar to participants, it is difficult to exclude them from a presentation. If this is the case, the generic name must always be accompanied by the commercial name (the latter in parentheses).

RESOURCE PERSONS

The Scientific Committee is responsible for selecting speakers and other resource persons.

The Scientific Committee and the resource persons hired are jointly responsible for ensuring that the content is balanced and nuanced. Resource persons must commit to developing relevant content based on the best available data. The Scientific Committee, which is aware of any resource person's failure to comply with this obligation, must intervene and make the necessary corrections.

It is desirable that resource persons provide participants with a list of references to enable them to further their learning. However, any use of published material (texts, tables, figures, results, etc.) must comply with copyright and intellectual property laws and regulations. It is therefore recommended that all resource persons be informed of this requirement when the Scientific Committee entrusts them with the mandate.

ACTIVITY EVALUATION

Participants must evaluate the CPD activity. There are three mandatory questions to include in the evaluation form:

1. Compliance with the *CQDPCM'S Code of Ethics for CPD*.
2. Disclosure of actual or potential conflicts of interest at the beginning of the presentation.
3. The presence or absence of bias (commercial or other) during the activity.

In addition to developing the evaluation form and ensuring that it is completed by participants, the Scientific and Organizing Committee must analyze the summary of results after the activity. It is also recommended that feedback on the results of this evaluation be provided to the resource persons.

» 2. LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTIVITY

Social Activities

Social activities, related to sports or other pursuits, that accompany CPD activities or programs can serve to enhance informal learning by promoting exchanges between participants and resource persons, whether on the subject of the activity itself or on common professional interests. They are permitted but cannot take place at the same time as, or in competition with, the accredited educational program. Scientific activities must always take precedence over social activities.

In addition, the cost of social activities (with the exception of meals included in educational activities) must be entirely paid for by the participants and their companions, if applicable. These social activities must also be reasonable. Registration fees for scientific activities must be separate from social activities.

Social activities may not be funded by funding organizations. These same funding organizations may not participate directly or indirectly in the planning, support, or funding of social events.

Meals

Any meal included in a training activity is part of the activity and may be offered to participants or included in the registration fee. Any meal that constitutes a social activity (e.g., President's banquet, gala dinner, etc.) must be paid for by participants and their companions. However, serving a reasonable meal during a CPD activity taking place at lunchtime is acceptable, as is serving a reasonable meal or cocktail before or after a training activity. Persons accompanying participants to a meal offered as part of a CPD activity must pay the full cost of their meal.

It should be noted that organizations that provide grants should not be labeled as "sponsors" of meals, breaks, or cocktails.

Draws, Prizes and Other Incentives

As part of a CPD activity, the organizer may hold a draw. The prize must be an acceptable educational tool, and the primary intention must be to help healthcare professionals and their patients, not to confer a personal benefit on anyone.

In the case of other incentives, a distinction must be made between incentives with a commercial purpose (such as a passport aimed at increasing traffic in the exhibitors' hall) and those aimed at facilitating the educational process (completing a survey to identify needs or evaluate the activity). The former are to be avoided. In the latter case, the incentive is considered not as a gift, but rather as compensation for the time spent completing the survey. Under the auspices of the organizer, the nature of this compensation, whether individual or collective (raffle), must be reasonable and educational in nature. It is at the discretion of the organizer.

Gifts

As part of a CPD activity, gifts may not be given to participants. A gift is defined as an object, money, or other personal benefit offered to someone without anything being required in return. Gifts do not include conference materials provided by the organizer (e.g., pens, notepads, etc.), as these materials are used by the organizers to facilitate the smooth running of the activity.

Any material offered to participants other than that used by the Organizing Committee and resource persons to achieve the learning objectives of the CPD activity is considered a gift. Exhibitors may not distribute promotional items, prizes, gifts, electronic gift cards, food, candy, product samples, or branded items (pens, magnets, etc.).

OLA/Satellite Activity

OLA

An OLA (other learning activity) is a non-accredited activity originating from the pharmaceutical industry. These activities do not comply with the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* at various levels, the three main ones being:

- Scientific content with the appearance of commercial bias
- Speaker and resource person fees paid directly by the sponsor or pharmaceutical company
- Non-compliance with the methodical approach

Satellite Activity

Satellite symposia are non-accredited activities organized by commercial companies (OLA) that take place in proximity (in space or time) to accredited programs. These activities are prohibited in conjunction with an accredited activity.

Exhibitor Area

Funding organizations may be offered exhibition space for rent. Exhibits must not influence planning or interfere with the presentation of the educational program. Representatives are not permitted to sell products or services.

All commercial booths and displays must be in a dedicated room separate from educational activities. No non-accredited training activities may take place in the commercial area (OLA or satellite symposium).

If the activity takes place virtually, the online/virtual exhibition hall must be on a separate tab or page from the scientific content broadcast page. The landing page must appear in a new window or tab and require action on the part of the participant to access it, informing the user that this content is not part of the accredited scientific program.

Reception Area

The reception area must be separate from the exhibitors' area. No posters with sponsors' logos may be displayed at the reception area for a scientific activity.

Webcasting Platform

The educational, ethical, and administrative criteria for virtual activities are the same as for in-person activities. To this end, all training activities must comply with the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD*.

Sponsor logos may not appear on the conference webcast platform. Commercial advertisements, as well as sponsor promotional materials, are only permitted in the exhibitor area. The webcast platform is under the exclusive control of the organizer, who is responsible for data security, and may not belong to the sponsor.

» 3. MANAGEMENT OF BIASES AND POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

In the interests of transparency, independence, and integrity, it is the duty of the Scientific Committee to adhere to the rules surrounding the prevention, disclosure, and management of actual or potential biases and conflicts of interest.

Definitions

An **affiliation** is the act of joining or being associated with a group. Any affiliation with one or more organizations, whether for-profit or non-profit, may create a conflict of interest due to its mission, objectives, members, or interests.

A c**onflict of interest** refers to a set of factors where judgment and/or a decision concerning a primary interest (e.g., patient welfare, the validity of research, or the quality of medical education) is unduly influenced by a secondary interest (e.g., personal or organizational gain, including financial gain, academic or professional advancement, or any other benefit to family members, friends, or colleagues).

A **potential conflict of interest** is a conflict that arises when there is an appearance of a conflict of interest to outside observers, regardless of whether an actual conflict of interest exists (e.g., personal relationships or business arrangements that **appear to conflict** with professional responsibility or the *Code of Ethics for Physicians*).

An **actual conflict of interest** is a conflict that arises when two or more interests **are clearly in conflict** (e.g., personal relationships or business arrangements that conflict with physicians' professional responsibilities or the Code of Ethics for Physicians).

A **bias** is a viewpoint, orientation, or influence that can color objectivity and alter the content of a training activity. A bias can lead to an actual or potential conflict of interest.

Conflict of Interest and the Code of Ethics of Physicians

The *Code of Ethics of Physicians*, particularly the following articles, applies to physicians participating in CPD activities:

Section 63
A physician must safeguard his professional independence at all times and avoid any situation in which he would be in conflict of interest, in particular when the interests in question are such that he might tend to favour certain of them over those of his patient or where his integrity and loyalty toward the latter might be affected.

Section 80
A physician may not be party to any agreement or accept any benefit that could jeopardize his professional independence, particularly in the context of continuing medical education activities.

Section 81
A physician who organizes a continuing medical education activity or acts as a resource person in the context of such an activity must inform the participants of his affiliations or financial interests in a commercial enterprise in the performance of this activity.

Prevention of conflicts of Interest

To prevent potential conflicts of interest, Scientific Committees must implement the following measures:

- Obtain declarations of potential conflicts of interest from all resource persons involved in the CPD activity (see glossary).
- Disclose three items to participants:
  - The program's funding sources
  - The potential conflicts of interest of the members of the Organizing Committee, the Scientific Committee, and the resource persons
  - The means used by the Scientific Committee to mitigate bias and potential conflicts of interest
- Propose measures to mitigate potential conflicts of interest, if necessary.

Independence of Resource Persons

CPD resource persons, who are responsible for planning, delivering, and managing CPD activities and programs, must maintain their independence and avoid placing themselves in a conflict of interest situation. Resource persons' honoraria must be paid by the organizer of the CPD activity.

Before agreeing to participate in a CPD activity, the resource person must obtain information about the organizer's conflict of interest policy and comply with it. They must clearly disclose to the organizer and participants any affiliations, sponsorships, financial support, or other ties to the content that may affect the objectivity of the activity or program. Actual or potential conflicts of interest may be related to for-profit or non-profit organizations.

Resource persons must present balanced and objective scientific information, demonstrate the advantages and limitations of the topics they teach, and, where appropriate, report on differences of opinion within the scientific community, while avoiding promoting specific products or services. Finally, they should ideally abstain from participating in activities that, under the guise of a CPD activity are in fact OLA activities and give preference to accredited activities.

No form of financial or other gratification should be given by third parties to resource persons for the purpose of gaining access to them or exerting any influence over them.

Recognition of Potential Biases

Any affiliation with a for-profit or non-profit organization may introduce bias due to its mission, objectives, members, or interests.

Examples include for-profit organizations such as commercial companies (e.g., medical equipment companies, communications or event planning agencies, pharmaceutical companies) or certain medical laboratory companies. A nonprofit organization may also exert influence or interference that must be taken into account (e.g., governments, their departments and agencies, foundations, scientific societies, or patient and interest groups).

It is also important to understand that bias is not always negative. For example, an organization may have a positive bias toward ethical medical practice, safety in care, or the promotion of a medical specialty. On the other hand, commercial bias cannot be tolerated and therefore has no place in CPD. Other perspectives (political, religious, beliefs, etc.) must also be considered by those organizing CPD.

The organizer of a CPD activity must be aware of and vigilant about biases, whether positive or negative, concerning resource persons and medical organizations in the context of a CPD activity. They must ensure that the CPD activity is well balanced, is not unduly influenced by such biases, and is free of any inappropriate bias.

In the event that an educational grant is obtained, it is recommended that the medical organization obtains funding from multiple sources, rather than from a single organization, to minimize the risk of potential bias.

Declaration of affiliations and Disclosure of Conflicts of Interest

All resource persons must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest to the CPD provider organization. This written declaration must detail all relationships with for-profit or non-profit organizations over the previous two years, whether or not they are related to the topic of the activity.

Resource persons are required to disclose (verbally and in writing on a slide) to participants, at the beginning of the CPD activity, any financial and organizational affiliations. Ultimately, whether there is an affiliation, a disclosure must be made to participants at the beginning of the training activity.

With these disclosures known to participants, they can exercise their critical thinking skills and make an informed judgment about the content of the presentation.

Mitigation and Management of Conflicts of Interest

The Scientific Committee is required to review statements of potential conflicts of interest from speakers, facilitators, or moderators prior to the start of the CPD activity to determine whether measures are necessary to manage actual or potential conflicts of interest. The Scientific Committee must have and apply a procedure for mitigating conflict of interest disclosures should it be informed of any such conflicts prior to or during the CPD activity.

Participants' Obligations

Participants in a CPD activity must exercise critical judgment when it comes to the presentations and educational materials made available to them, particularly regarding the content (objectivity and balance) or the points of view presented as part of the activity or program. They should be alert to potential biases and bring to the attention of the organizers any potential conflicts of interest or biases (commercial or otherwise) of the resource persons involved in presenting a CPD activity or program.

Participants will be asked to judge, when evaluating the activity, the disclosure of potential conflicts of interest and the presence of commercial bias.

Verification of an Activity

Although the accrediting body is not required to be systematically present at every CPD activity it accredits, it remains responsible for ensuring that the activity complies with this Code. Therefore, it is recommended that accrediting bodies or their delegates, particularly in cases of doubt regarding compliance with the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD*, ensure that the activity complies with this Code of Ethics by, for example, conducting random unannounced visits or by any other means.

» 4. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Responsibility for the financing arrangements for CPD activities lies with the representatives of the medical organization. Any contribution, including those from commercial sources, must be provided in the form of an educational grant payable to the medical organization responsible for the activity. In accordance with the principle of transparency, any educational grant must be mentioned in the program and disclosed at the beginning of the activity by means of a slide listing the names of the sponsors, all in the same font, without logos.

Educational Grants

An educational grant is financial assistance or support that an organization (for-profit or non-profit) provides to a medical organization for the purpose of carrying out a CPD program or activity. This assistance is outlined in a letter of agreement or contract. The grant is provided without the donor organization having any say in the scientific content of the activity or the choice of resource persons. The grant may take the form of money, goods, or services. The sponsor may not directly assume the costs for the following services:

- Accommodation or transportation for resource persons
- Fees for resource persons
- Webcasting or videoconferencing services
- Audiovisual services for conferences or symposia
- Room rentals or meals for conferences or symposia

Rental of a Kiosk Space

Renting a kiosk space as part of a CPD activity does not constitute an educational grant. This rental must be covered by a separate contract. Kiosks are grouped together in an area called the "exhibitor zone," which is the responsibility of the organizer and not of commercial companies.

Resource Persons

Remuneration may be paid to resource persons for a CPD activity. It must come from the medical organization responsible for the CPD activity, not directly from the funding organization. Resource persons must not accept any remuneration from a funding organization. This remuneration must not be granted to other persons, such as the spouse or family members of these resource persons, or to participants in a CPD activity, their spouses, or family members.

Requests for reimbursement of resource persons' transportation and accommodation expenses will be handled by the medical organization in accordance with the travel expense reimbursement policies already established for its own employees or members.

Participants

Participants (or their spouses or family members) in a CPD activity, including a training of trainers, may not receive financial compensation for their participation, unless they are acting as employees, delegates, or representatives of an organization, or unless they are covered by an agreement that provides for a salary, compensation, and reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses incurred for this purpose.

» 5. PROMOTION OF THE ACTIVITY

Promoting an educational activity is an opportunity for organizers to attract as many participants as possible. It is therefore one of the essential steps to ensuring the success of the activity by guaranteeing a significant participation rate. However, it is the responsibility of the Scientific Committee to ensure that the promotion of the activity to the target audience is carried out in accordance with the principles of educational independence. The intention is to promote the training activity to its target audience without interference from the various interests of the funding organizations.

Program

The program for a CPD activity is generally hosted on a website or application. It specifies the organization responsible for the activity, the target audience, the objectives of the activity, the content and format of the presentations, as well as the members of the Scientific Committee and Organizing Committee, contact persons, and general information (date, location, schedule, etc.). The sponsors of an activity may be named at the bottom of the program, without logos, using the same font and without categorization. Any advertising or reference to a product, brand, or company is prohibited on the website or app for a CPD activity. The website may not be linked to or owned by the sponsor.

The accreditation statement must be included on the program and invitation once the event's accreditation by the accrediting body has been confirmed. However, mention that an accreditation request has been made must not appear.

Invitation

The invitation to participate in a CPD activity can be distributed to the target population in various forms (e.g., email, web page, social media, etc.). Several of these methods are usually used by the Scientific Committee for a single activity to reach as many potential participants as possible.

The invitation essentially contains preliminary information about the CPD activity program, such as the date, location, names of some speakers and session titles, and a link to the program and/or registration website. This information helps recipients assess their interest in the activity and plan their participation. Regardless of the medium used, the invitation may not contain any advertising or references to a product, trademark, or company. However, it is possible to thank or name the sponsors at the bottom of the invitation, without a logo, using the same font and without categorization.

Registration

Registration confirms participation in a CPD activity by collecting, where applicable, contact information and session choices and processing registration fees, in full compliance with current legislation governing the management of personal information. The management of registrations for a CPD activity may be delegated to a third party but may not, under any circumstances, be assumed by a funding organization or its representatives. The platform used for registrations must not be associated with a funding organization, and participants' contact information must not be disclosed to these organizations under any circumstances. The registration website must not contain any form of advertising or reference to products, trademarks, or companies.

Platforms belonging to a funding organization are prohibited. These platforms violate the principle of educational independence, since promotion of the activity is associated with the sponsor's name and logo. Advertising is prohibited for all activities related to the preparation and delivery of a CPD activity.

Platforms belonging to a third party other than the funder allow for sound management of registrations for CPD activities. They thus have the advantage of freeing up time that the Scientific Committee can use to perfect its programming, while respecting the principle of educational independence to which the entire event is bound.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

By adhering to the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD*, member organizations and all those involved in CPD commit to complying with its various conditions.

Questions and Comments

Anyone attending a CPD activity who believes that the *CQDPCM's Code of Ethics for CPD* has not been respected, or anyone informed of a proven or suspected breach of any of its provisions, may contact the accrediting organization or write to info@cqdpcm.ca to submit comments or questions regarding the interpretation of the Code.

GLOSSARY

ACCREDITED CPD ACTIVITY
Educational activity that complies with the accrediting body's administrative, educational, and ethical standards. CPD activities may be individual or group-based, synchronous or asynchronous. They may be held in person or virtually. They include activities that assess professional practice. It should be noted that the terms “recognized” (reconnue), “accredited” (accréditée), “approved” (agréée) or “certified” (certifiée) are sometimes used.

ACCREDITED ORGANIZATION
Any organization accredited as a CPD provider (university, professional association, scientific society, or other) by the Medical Studies and Accreditation Committee (CÉMA) of the Collège des médecins du Québec (CMQ).

ACCREDITING ORGANIZATION
Any organization (regional, provincial, or national association, or faculty of medicine) that awards CPD credits for activities it organizes or that receives requests for CPD credits for activities offered by another entity.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF A FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
Consulting services provided by healthcare professionals to for-profit corporations. The committee's activities are not intended to train consultants and therefore are not to be considered a CPD activity.

COMPETENCIES
Medical competencies are defined by the set of characteristics that enable a physician to execute the role of medical expert by demonstrating, for example, competencies of scholarship, professionalism, communication, collaboration, health promotion, and management. As a medical expert, physicians must also possess skills in their fields of expertise to provide high-quality services so that patients and the healthcare system can reap the expected benefits.

CONTRACT
A contract is an agreement of will by which one or more persons bind themselves to perform a service for one or more other persons (source: Civil Code of Québec, section 1378). For example, a medical organization could agree to provide a company with space to set up a booth during a CPD activity in exchange for a predetermined sum of money.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICIANS
Any step that is taken by a physician to acquire, maintain, or improve his knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Continuing Professional Development is an individual or group action taken in response to a need or an interest. It is part of the training cycle and aims to improve the quality of care provided to the population.

CPD PROGRAM
A set of CPD activities aimed at the same target population. CPD programs cover all competencies recognized by the medical profession, including the CanMEDS competencies.

EXHIBITOR
A person or organization that has a contract with a CPD provider organization to display and share information about its services and products in an exhibition hall defined as the exhibitor area.

FUNDING ORGANIZATION
Organization, whether for-profit or non-profit, that provides a grant for the delivery of the CPD program or activity.

LETTER OF AGREEMENT
A letter of agreement is a document used to establish a preliminary mutual understanding between parties. It is generally less binding than a contract and does not have the same legal force. The letter of agreement usually sets out the main points of agreement between the parties, such as objectives, guiding principles, responsibilities, deadlines, costs, etc.

ORGANIZER
Any person or organization responsible for planning, implementing, and managing a CPD activity on behalf of a medical organization, with the assistance of a Scientific Committee and an Organizing Committee.

RESOURCE PERSON
Any person who is involved in a CPD activity as an expert, speaker, member of the Scientific Committee or Organizing Committee, facilitator, moderator, actor, or patient partner.

CONTACT

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