
MPC Program

with

Learning Sites for Health Professionals

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Message from Secretary General of Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization



The Maintenance of Professional Competence Program was established by the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization (KIMS) in September 2000 with the aim of widening the acceptance of the importance

of lifelong learning by health professionals among practitioners in Kuwait as well as those in the other GCC countries. While the concept of lifelong learning had been highlighted in the keynote addresses delivered at the Annual Meetings of the GCC Health Ministers, the healthcare services administrators in the respective countries had also taken the necessary steps to promote it among the health professionals in the member countries.

Steps that had been taken by KIMS to achieve the goal of promoting lifelong learning include the addition in the KIMS website a section dealing with the CME activities scheduled to be held in the GCC countries and the establishment of the GCC Committee for CME/CPD for dealing with issues in continuing education and continuing professional development. These moves had been further strengthened with the publication of several editions of reference documents and guidelines in CME/CPD, the launch of the electronic and hardcopy versions of the journal

Bulletin of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization with its emphasis on lifelong learning and continuing professional development, the establishment of a scheme for reciprocal recognition by the GCC countries of participation in CME/CPD activities provided by authorized institutions, the provision of consultation services to GCC countries for establishing formal CME/CPD schemes and CME Centers to administer them, and the publication of reference guidelines on learning sites for health professionals aimed at promoting adult learning and lifelong learning by health professionals, which coincided with the Annual Meetings of the GCC Health Ministers.

The measures that have been put in place for promoting CME/CPD go hand in hand with the mission of KIMS of achieving excellence in postgraduate medical education and continuing education. They would thus contribute to providing the health professionals with the opportunity for developing their competencies in the different fields of medicine and medical practice.

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Preface

MPC Program with Learning Sites for Health Professionals is the previously published *Manual on MPC Program* now coming out in its Third Edition. It describes the essential features of the MPC Program administered by the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization (KIMS), and deals with the information of importance to health professions practitioners who wish to engage in CME/CPD activities and the procedures expected of CME/CPD organizers who plan to conduct accredited CME/CPD activities. While highlighting the updates and revisions that are being introduced into the scheme, the publication also has a section listing online sites that would interest health professionals. The latter, in effect, constitutes the Second Edition of *Online Learning: A CPD Guide for Health Professionals*, which now includes a selection of sites of special interest to members of the nursing profession.

The updates introduced into the MPC Program and the publication of an expanded list of online learning sites highlight the increasing importance of the role of CME/CPD in all health professions and the desire of KIMS to widen its scope of coverage of the different categories of health professions that would benefit from the MPC Program.

It is the policy of KIMS that health professionals use online facilities for communication as well as for their own continuing education as far as feasible and wherever facilities are available. The MPC Program, too, relies on the electronic media to a considerable extent for giving information on the program itself and for communication between the CME Center and CME/CPD participants and CME/CPD organizers. The promotion of the use of online sites by health professionals for their CME/CPD is a further element in this approach.

The previous editions of *MPC Program* and *Online Learning* had been widely distributed among many of the countries in the GCC region in response to the requests received. We are pleased that the guidelines incorporated in the MPC Program and the essential elements of the scheme that operates in Kuwait had been the focus of interest of the CME authorities in many of the other GCC countries embarking on establishing their own CME programs.

The release of the First Edition of *Online Learning: A CPD Guide for Health Professionals* coincided with the Meeting of the Health Ministers of the GCC Countries held in January 2005. The present edition, too, comes out at a time when the Health Ministers of the GCC countries are preparing to meet at a forum at which important policy matters pertaining to healthcare services and medical education, including continuing professional development in the member countries, will be taken up for discussion.

Future updates of the implementation of the MPC Program will appear in the website of the CME Center at www.kims.org.kw/cme. This site also provides information on participating in CME/CPD as well as on organizing CME/CPD activities. Additionally, it gives the opportunity for publications released by KIMS, including those dealing with the MPC Program, to be downloaded in PDF format.

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1. Mission of CME Center

Mission Statement of the CME Center

The Maintenance of Professional Competence Program (MPC Program) administered by the CME Center of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization has been designed with the aim of assisting practitioners in the health professions to keep abreast of the developments in their specialties and other fields that affect their practice. It is expected that the program will ultimately result in the patients and the community receiving an optimum level of health care services.

The MPC Program has the following main objectives:

1. To ensure that all health professionals participate in accredited educational activities;
2. To demonstrate to patients, the public and peers that health professionals are committed to lifelong education;
3. To ensure that all practitioners receive opportunities for professional development;
4. To provide a standardized system for documenting participation.

Adult Education

A concept that is relevant when dealing with the topic of CME/CPD is adult education. It may also be pertinent to ask ourselves whether the education of adults differs from adult education.

All learning activities created by one agency for another group of people may be referred to as education. Some may view education as consisting of programs having wide rather than narrow goals, thus excluding training and indoctrination from education.¹

The education of adults is often described as all forms of education for those above a

specified age that identifies adulthood. This cutoff point may be 16, 18 or 20 years of age according to different sources. The term adult education is restricted to what can best be learned as adults because they rely on experience or relate to adult roles. These definitions would still leave some subjects such as literacy, sports, art and languages falling under one or the other.

The difference between the education of adults and adult education may lie more with the approach to learning than with what is being learned. Therefore adult education could consist of all forms of education that treat the student participants as adults—capable, experienced, responsible, mature and balanced people.

CME/CPD and Adult Learning

CME/CPD is likely to be effective when the activities that are planned are based on the principles of adult education. The main factors that have an influence on planning effective education for health care practitioners are listed below:²

1. Adults learn best when actively engaged in the learning process and where the learning builds upon their prior knowledge and experience.
2. The subject content that adults learn must be relevant to the practice or some other aspects of the work.
3. Adults learn best when they feel that the learning is necessary to solve a practical problem related to their professional performance.
4. Adult learners tend to be independent and to maintain responsibility for their learning.

2. Definition of CME and CPD

For many years CME (Continuing Medical Education) activities of varying degrees of sophistication and academic and scientific standards have been conducted by educational or scientific institutions, professional organizations and commercial establishments. Practitioners attended them depending on their background, expertise, interest and availability. However, until formal CME schemes were established, the strategies used to grant recognition to and assess the quality of the activities varied considerably. Often there was no mechanism to monitor the progress of the practitioners in CME.

In the field of medicine the term CME referred to the educational activities that the practitioners attended after they had completed the phase of basic undergraduate education and any specific post-graduate training that they had desired. The subject content dealt with in these CME activities was chosen, in most cases, from the medical disciplines.

The scope of CME has expanded with the acceptance that competent practice as a physician or other health professional required the practitioner to possess skills and attributes in many fields outside the body of knowledge in one's own profession. In addition, many topic areas such as communication skills, management, team work and leadership, and IT skills are relevant to many different professions and therefore, now get included under CME. Learning methods in CME include formal courses, conferences and workshops, as well as self-directed activities such as preceptorship and directed reading. These methods have more recently been supplemented with a wide variety of IT-based learning approaches.

During the past decade the expression Continuing Professional Development (CPD) gained acceptance as more appro-

priate than CME to describe the continuing education that health professionals undertake. CPD signifies a wider range of professional skills than learning in medical subjects. Moreover, many non-physician practitioners find the phrase more appropriate to reflect their interests and activities.

Both terms CME and CPD are in use today, often synonymously. Irrespective of the term used to refer to the continuing education of health professionals, the broad aims of CME as well as CPD are to provide the educational means to the practitioners so that they are adequately equipped to perform effectively in their professional roles. Therefore, when assessing the effectiveness of CME, the emphasis should be on the outcome of participation with respect to the healthcare needs of the patient and the community, rather than on whether the participants were satisfied with how the individual activities were organized and presented.

Role of CME/CPD in Practice

An extensive review of the literature on CME, coupled with opinions of recognized experts in the field, by Davis and his co-workers showed that the majority of the interventions studied were associated with an improvement in physician performance or health care outcome.³⁻⁵

When granting re-licensure, hospital privileges, specialty recertification, professional society membership and recognition for other professional activities, a number of institutions today use CME/CPD as evidence of competence for practice as a health professional.

Three aspects that contribute to the effectiveness of CME/CPD activities have been described:^{6,7}

-
- Predisposing features, which influence individuals to change. One way in which this may be achieved is by providing relevant information;
 - Enabling features help practitioners to apply the new competencies in the practice setting. Equipment and other resources required may be made available to the practitioner to introduce new procedures;
 - Reinforcing features would confirm the positive outcomes of any changes implemented. This may be undertaken by providing appropriate feedback and with reminders. For example, compliance with guideline recommendations

by hypertension patients may be improved with reminders to practitioners.⁸

Predisposing features alone are moderately successful in improving performance. When either enabling or reinforcing features were combined with predisposing factors, the effectiveness of the activities is markedly increased. When CME/CPD activities are planned after an adequate needs assessment and are directly related to practice, they tend to be more effective than when these factors are not considered. The effectiveness is further enhanced if the predisposing, enabling and reinforcing strategies are incorporated.

3. MPC Program and Maintenance of Professional Competence

The program that has been established for continuing medical education and continuing professional development of healthcare practitioners in Kuwait is called the MPC Program. MPC stands for maintenance of professional competence, reflecting the overall goal of continuing education.

The education that most practitioners in the fields of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, nursing or other health professions undertake can be divided into three phases: undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing. Maintenance of Professional Competence (MPC) represents the third phase – the education that health professionals may engage in after they had completed the formal training that they had to undergo to become eligible to enter a profession and, if applicable, received postgraduate training in a specialty of their choice.

Maintenance of Professional Competence involves educational activities that serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, professional performance and relationships that physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses and other health professionals use to provide services to patients, the public, or the profession. It comprises all education related directly to professional duties and assists the practitioner to discharge the professional responsibilities effectively. Furthermore, it is considered by many today that continuing education should be inculcated as a habit early during undergraduate education and that the undergraduate should acquire the necessary skills of lifelong learning at this stage in the career.

CME/CPD Cycle

The scheme of CME/CPD is structured so that it runs in five-year cycles. Practitioners registered in the MPC Program are

required to acquire the following minimum number of CME/CPD credit points within the five-year cycle:

Medical and dental practitioners	: 250
Pharmacy practitioners	: 125
Practitioners in other health professions	: 125

The first five-year cycle of the MPC Program began in September 2001, and will end in December 2006 (The CME Year, which initially ran from September of one year to August the following year, has since been changed to extend from January to December). As formal CME/CPD under a central administrative authority was a new concept that was being introduced, the administrators included two concessionary features in the scheme:

- i. An extra year, i.e. September 2000 to August 2001, was added to the first five-year cycle;
- ii. Practitioners who registered at any time within the first year, i.e. September 2001 to August 2002 had their registration treated as coming into effect from September 2001.

In the case of practitioners who were in service when the scheme was introduced but did not register before end of August 2002, and for those who commenced practice in Kuwait in or after September 2002, the date when the five-year CME/CPD cycle begins is taken as the date on which they applied for registration.

Some practitioners may be able to reach the total requirement of the five-year cycle of 250 or 125 CME/CPD credit points, as the case may be, within a short period of time (e.g. 2 years or less). They would yet be expected to engage in appropriate CME/CPD activities throughout the remaining years in the 5-year cycle, and be able to show documentation of evidence of involvement when requested.

Re-appointment for Service and CME/CPD Cycle

If a practitioner who is employed in Kuwait terminates his service and is re-appointed at a later date, he or she starts on a new CME/CPD cycle with effect from the new date of appointment. The

practitioner is required to submit an Application for Registration giving the current data.

Practitioners terminating their services in Kuwait may request for a CME Status Certificate to certify the current CME/CPD status.

4. Administration of MPC Program

The Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization (KIMS) is designated by the Ministry of Health of the State of Kuwait as the authority that is responsible for planning and implementing the MPC Program. The MPC Program falls within the overall administrative supervision of the Secretary General of KIMS.

The CME Center of KIMS deals with the routine administration of the MPC Program. Organizations or institutions designated as *CME/CPD Providers* bear the responsibility for the individual courses, symposia, conferences and other learning activities conducted by the respective organizers. The Director of the CME Center is responsible for the day-to-day running of the MPC Program, under the overall supervision of the Secretary General of KIMS. The CME Center functions in consultation with the CME Council and the Accreditation Committee of KIMS. The CME Council is constituted by the CME/CPD Officers appointed by KIMS to represent the different medical specialties and fields of study.

CME/CPD Officer

The CME/CPD Officers of KIMS coordinate all CME/CPD activities in the respective specialties. While some subspecialties have a CME/CPD Officer who is a specialist in the same subspecialty, in others the coordination of their CME/CPD activities is handled by a CME/CPD Officer appointed for a related specialty.

The main functions of the CME/CPD Officer are to:

1. Serve as the link between the CME Center of KIMS and the Faculty/specialty concerned with respect to the implementation of the MPC Program;
2. Collaborate as a member of the CME Council of KIMS with the Director of

the CME Center in implementing the MPC Program in the specialty concerned;

3. Communicate with CME/CPD Providers and organizers in the specialty (or specialties) and submit to the CME Center an annual schedule of CME/CPD activities that the Faculty/specialty wishes to undertake during the incoming KIMS academic year;
4. Conduct meetings and seminars with practitioners in the specialty, as and when required, to describe how the MPC Program operates and to explain the responsibilities of the individual practitioners with respect to participation in CME/CPD activities;
5. Communicate with CME/CPD organizers in the specialty to ensure that they are aware of the procedures that they need to observe prior to, during and on conclusion of CME/CPD activities;
6. Participate actively in assisting the CME Center of KIMS to give adequate publicity to CME/CPD activities that are organized by the accredited CME/CPD Providers;
7. Assist the CME Center in CME/CPD credit validation of practitioners who had registered in the MPC Program and participated in CME/CPD activities;
8. Assist practitioners and the CME Center in assessing CME/CPD activities conducted abroad on whether the activities match the basic requirements and guidelines of the MPC Program to be accepted under the MPC Program, and if so, the amount of credit that could be assigned;
9. Assist the CME Center in monitoring the implementation of the MPC Program.

The CME/CPD Officer will be familiar with CME/CPD activities in the specialty that comes within his or her purview. Practitioners registered in the MPC Program as well as organizers of CME/CPD activities are advised to contact the CME/CPD Officer to obtain basic information about accredited CME/CPD activities or for clarifications on any aspect of the MPC Program.

Healthcare, academic and scientific institutions may appoint their own CME/CPD Coordinators to facilitate the organization of CME/CPD activities within the respective institutions. The CME/CPD Officers of KIMS liaise with these CME/CPD Coordinators, where applicable, to assist in the smooth running of the MPC Program.

CME/CPD Provider

The CME/CPD Provider is an institution that receives accreditation from the CME Center for planning and conducting CME/CPD activities.

A number of institutions and organizations that function at a national level has been accredited as CME/CPD Providers.

When CME/CPD activities are to be organized, a specific content expert serves as a CME/CPD organizer and takes overall responsibility for the activity. He or she deals with the different aspects concerned with organizing the CME/CPD activity.

Accreditation

Accreditation is the system used by CME/CPD authorities to ensure that CME/CPD activities meet the accepted standards of education and scientific merit. In general, a CME/CPD activity needs to satisfy the following requirements for it to be accredited:^{6,7}

- Presents clear aims to potential participants;
 - Demonstrates the relevance of the aims to educational needs of practitioners;
 - Is structured and includes varied learning approaches;
 - Is able to cater to the varying needs of participants, and provide individual feedback;
- Gives details of the proposed evaluation of the program.

5. Participation in CME/CPD Activities

Once CME/CPD organizers register the proposed CME/CPD activities with the CME Center, they take the necessary steps to get the announcements regarding them prepared and circulated. They will also indicate that participants are eligible to claim CME/CPD credit points. Prospective participants should contact the organizer of the event for details on scheduling, venue, registration procedure, and for any updates. Practitioners interested in attending the activity that has been announced by the CME/CPD organizer apply direct to the organizer for enrolment.

The CME Center provides basic information about the activities through the CME Center website, www.kims.org.kw/cme, and the *Bulletin of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization*.

Practitioners may attend CME/CPD activities in two broad groups:

- i. Activities in own specialty;
- ii. Activities that would improve performance, although the topics are not necessarily in their own specialty.

Certificate of Participation

Each participant who satisfactorily completes a CME/CPD activity receives a Letter of Attendance (or Certificate of Participation) from the organizer, which can be used as evidence of participation. This document will indicate the number of credit points that may be claimed by the participant and other relevant details.

The CME Center requires the organizer to devise a feasible method to ensure that those who do not complete the CME/CPD activity satisfactorily do not receive certificates of participation.

The organizer additionally maintains a list of the names of those who attended the sessions. The CME Center will

request for copies of this documentation during the verification of CME/CPD participation and when monitoring the implementation of the MPC Program.

A portfolio where all the relevant documents and other details of CME/CPD involvement may conveniently be kept is available through the authorized supplier (Visit www.kims.org.kw/cme).

Certificate of Completing CME/CPD Requirement

Practitioners who gain the credit point total announced as the requirement within a 5-year cycle will receive a document from the CME Center to certify that they have completed the CME/CPD credit point requirement. This certificate will be issued at the end of the CME/CPD cycle, and will count in progress through the professional career in Kuwait.

Attending CME/CPD Activities in Fields Not Related to Practice

Practitioners should not claim CME/CPD points for attending activities in subject areas that are unlikely to contribute to improving own practice. Therefore, if any CME/CPD points are claimed for participation in activities which will not have any positive impact on own performance, the CME Center will disregard them when calculating credit point totals.

Exemption from CME/CPD Requirement

Trainees enrolled in postgraduate training programs conducted or approved by KIMS, and practitioners registered in advanced degree programs in the fields of medicine, dentistry, pharmacy or nursing are exempted from having to satisfy the credit point requirement announced under the MPC Program. Instead, when

evidence of maintenance of professional competence needs to be submitted to the authorities, trainees in approved programs may mention the training programs in which they are registered.

For satisfying the administrative requirements of the Ministry of Health, trainees in approved training programs are entitled to receive a *CME/CPD Status Certificate* on account of training.

Trainees who wish to attend any CME/CPD activities for their own education may do so through application to the organizer concerned.

Although KIMS exempts trainees from having to acquire the minimum CME/CPD credit point total of the CME/CPD cycle, some training centers require trainees enrolled in training programs administered by them to engage in continuing education during the training period. It is important, therefore, that trainees obtain the relevant information from the authorities concerned and satisfy such requirements.

Combining CME/CPD Credit Points from Category 1 and Category 2

The total of CME/CPD credit points that has to be collected in a five-year cycle is 250 for physicians and dentists, and 125 for pharmacists and other health professions practitioners. This target may be reached based only on activities falling within Category 1, or by combining the CME/CPD credit points accumulated from those included under Category 1 and others in Category 2. However, the maximum accepted from Category 2 activities is 40% of the total requirement, i.e. 100 credit points for physicians and dentists, and 50 for pharmacists and other health professions practitioners.

When practitioners submit data on credit point status, applications that report CME/CPD credit points gained based on Category 2 activities need to be supported by a document that authenticates the validity of the information provided. This could be a signed statement from the Head of the Unit, Division or Department to which the applicant is attached, or from the CME/CPD Officer of the concerned specialty. Practitioners need to forward such a statement to the CME Center when requested.

6. Classification of CME/CPD Activities

The CME/CPD activities that are accepted within the MPC Program fall into two categories. The category under which a given CME/CPD activity gets classified and the number of CME/CPD credit points assigned to it are related to a number of factors which include:

- CME/CPD Provider and the organizing institution;
- Extent to which the activity is structured;
- Organizational resources required for planning and conducting the event;
- Degree of involvement of the participants in the learning opportunities;
- Choice of scheduling and the venue as regards accessibility to the target group.

Category 1

Under Category 1 are included formal learning opportunities that are organized by recognized educational or scientific institutions, or professional groups that have been accredited as CME/CPD Providers by the CME Center. They are usually highly structured, and will have definite scheduling of sessions, with identified specialists taking over the responsibility for presenting the learning activities.

Symposia, workshops, seminars, conferences, practicals or clinical training sessions of workshops and conferences, lecture series and group learning sessions that are arranged by the accredited CME/CPD Providers fall under this group. At present the following function in the capacity of accredited CME/CPD Providers: Faculties and Scientific Committees of KIMS, Health Sciences Faculties of Kuwait University, Specialty divisions of the Ministry of Health that function at the national level, and health professions associations and their specialty societies.

For all Category 1 activities, a designated CME/CPD organizer on behalf of the CME/CPD Provider has to submit a formal application for the activity to be registered under the MPC Program. It is essential that the activity is registered with the CME Center in advance of the scheduled date of the sessions for participants to claim CME/CPD credit points. In addition, the organizer has to ensure that the announcements and the attendance certificates issued to the individual participants indicate the Registration Number of the activity and the CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed.

Category 2

Activities included under Category 2 are divided into for sub-sections:

- i. Ongoing activities at healthcare or scientific institutions;
- ii. Activities planned and conducted for local participant groups;
- iii. Self-learning activities undertaken by health professionals;
- iv. Personal Learning Plans and Practice Improvement Plans.

All CME/CPD activities that are conducted by regional healthcare divisions or by hospitals or their departments for local participant groups fall within Category 2.

In the event of a regional division or local hospital or one or more of its departments conducting a symposium, seminar or conference for a national level participant group, the overall responsibility for the activity needs to be borne by a relevant CME/CPD Provider if the activity were to be accredited under Category 1. Moreover, activities conducted by accredited CME/CPD Providers on an ongoing basis (e.g. weekly, bi-monthly, monthly etc.) will also be registered as Category 2 activities.

All CME/CPD activities coming under Sub-section i or Sub-section ii of Category 2 need to be registered with the CME Center through advance application. If such activities are to be continued during subsequent years, the CME/CPD organizer needs to inform the CME Center at the beginning of the year so that the registration could be renewed.

An essential feature in activities that fall under Sub-section iii or Sub-section iv of Category 2 are that they are of a self-learning nature. These activities do not need registration under the MPC Program. The amount of CME/CPD credit that may be claimed on individual activities will be determined on a case-to-case basis in consultation with the individual practitioner and the CME/CPD officer of the concerned specialty.

Category 2 activities may be less structured as regards the learning process, and may have relatively lower levels of organizational inputs than those falling under Category 1.

Many of the ongoing educational and scientific activities conducted at health care institutions or scientific bodies will fall within Category 2. Practitioners may acquire Category 2 credit points by :

- i. Attending lecture series and other similar educational activities conducted at the institutional level;
- ii. Participating in patient care review activities, journal clubs, clinical meetings, mortality/morbidity meetings, and case conferences;
- iii. Teaching of medical, dental, pharmacy, nursing or other health professionals;
- iv. Writing questions for use in examinations;
- v. Using self-assessment examinations and reviews;

- vi. Using approved self-instructional materials, including computer-assisted instruction;
- vii. Using distance learning programs/web-based learning;
- viii. Reading scientific papers in journals and other related professional publications;
- ix. Conducting research in health-related disciplines;
- x. Publishing medical/dental books or articles, books and exhibits related to medicine/dentistry;
- xi. Undertaking self-directed study as preparation for examinations.

The maximum number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed on CME/CPD activities undertaken through web-based/online learning is 5 points within a 24-hour period.

Physicians and dentists are eligible to claim a maximum of 100 points (40% of the total requirement) based on CME/CPD activities that fall under Category 2. Pharmacists and practitioners in other health professions are eligible to claim a maximum of 40 points based on activities in Category 2. When practitioners submit claims for CME/CPD credit points in Category 2, the application has to be authenticated through a signed statement from the Head of the Unit, Division or Department to which the applicant is attached, or from the CME/CPD Officer of the concerned specialty. In the case of research and publications the references or other relevant information need to be sent as evidence of the activities.

Practice audits, Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) and strategies to deal with specific problems in the practice setting

Practice Audits include patient care reviews or audits that practitioners initiate for reviewing any specific aspects of their practices or utilization of the

resources. The audit is undertaken with the aim of assessing current procedures and identifying areas that warrant improvement. Activities that are included in this group may take the form of practice audits and patient surveys, institution audits, and utilization studies.

Practitioners are eligible to claim CME/CPD credit on practice audits and Personal Learning Plans (PLP's) they develop and the learning undertaken after having identified their learning needs. A similar avenue that is open for acquiring CME/CPD credit points is putting in place a strategy or plan (referred to as a Practice Improvement Plan or PIP) by the practitioner after identifying a problem or deficiency in the work setting that can be dealt with using the resources available to or obtainable by the practitioner and evaluating the ensuing results.

Practitioners who intend to claim CME/CPD credit points on practice audits, PLP's or PIP's are required to submit the relevant documentation to the CME Center before undertaking the activity. After the proposal is perused by the CME Center a CME/CPD credit value will be assigned in consultation with the practitioner. The practitioner will then become eligible to claim the credit points upon submitting a report at conclusion.

Category 1 and Category 2 Credit Points and Total Requirement

The total of CME/CPD credit points that has to be collected in a five-year cycle is 250 for physicians and dentists, and 125 for pharmacists and practitioners in other health professions. The practitioners may reach this target based on activities falling within Category 1, or by combining the CME/CPD credit points gained from activities included under Category 1 and others in Category 2. However, the maximum allowed from Category 2 activities is 40% of the total requirement, i.e. 100 CME/CPD credit points for physicians

and dentists, and 50 for pharmacists and other health professions practitioners.

When practitioners submit data on credit point status, applications that report CME/CPD credit points gained based on Category 2 activities need to be supported by a document authenticating the validity of the information provided. This could be a signed statement from the Head of the Unit, Division or Department to which the applicant is attached, or from the CME/CPD Officer of the concerned specialty.

Transfer of CME/CPD Credit Points from Category 2 to Category 1

When practitioners do not have sufficient CME/CPD credit points to satisfy the administrative requirements announced by the Ministry of Health, the CME Center will consider including CME/CPD credit points from selected self-learning sections of Category 2 under Category 1 for the issue of CME Status Certificates. Such situations will be dealt with on a case-to-case basis and the details of the procedures that will be adopted will be announced by the CME Center.

Worth of Category 2 CME/CPD Credit Points

Some practitioners may hold the view that CME/CPD credit points under Category 2 have no value. Moreover, some CME/CPD organizers may feel that classifying their activities under Category 2 CME/CPD downgrades their efforts. These perceptions are far from the true situation.

Two factors that determine whether an activity gets classified under Category 2 are that:

- Target audience is a local group, or
- Activity is primarily of a self-learning nature.

A perusal of the Category 2 CME/CPD menu will show the reader that it comprises a wide variety of activities that require different levels of inputs and produce different degrees of outputs.

A point worth noting is that when the *Certificate of Completion of CME/CPD* is to be issued at the end of the five-year CME/CPD cycle of the MPC Program, 40% of the required total could be based

on Category 2 activities. Furthermore, the option is available for some Category 2 CME/CPD credit points to be transferred to be included under Category 1 when practitioners need *CME Status Certificates* for satisfying the administrative requirements of the Ministry of Health (See Transfer of CME/CPD credit points from Category 2 to Category 1 above).

7. Registration of Practitioners in the MPC Program

The MPC Program at present covers practitioners in medicine, dentistry and pharmacy. This includes practitioners in the armed forces, Kuwait University and the private sector. All practitioners in these fields have been requested to register in the MPC Program.

For satisfying some of the administrative needs of the Ministry of Health, KIMS and other institutions, CME registration is essential.

Registration in the MPC Program is done online. First-time registration, as well as updating of registration data already submitted, may be undertaken through this channel.

First Time Registration

Registration is available through the Internet, and the steps in the procedure are listed below:

Access the Internet.

1. Enter the CME Center web site:

<http://www.kims.org.kw/cme>.

2. Click Registration in MPC Program.
3. Click First time Registration.
4. Enter the relevant data.
5. Press Submit button.

Your data entry is now complete.

When the registration data have been successfully sent to the CME Center, a message will be displayed showing the information that will be entered in the database.

6. Print the message with the data (for future reference).

Updating Registration Data

If a practitioner registered in the MPC Program wishes to modify the information that had previously been sent to the CME Center, the revised data should be submitted for updating the CME Center database. The steps involved are similar to those when registering for the first time:

Proceed as in First Time Registration above.

At Step 3, click Updating Registration Data, and continue.

Registration Card

Once practitioners are registered in the MPC Program, an entry (database record) is made in the database for each applicant. Each registered practitioner is issued a Registration Card, which indicates the Registration Number.

The Registration Card serves as proof of registration in the MPC Program. Additionally, it can be used as ID for participating in CME/CPD activities presented by accredited CME/CPD Providers and to claim benefits made available by professional associations and other organizations to members who are registered in the MPC Program.

Re-appointment for Service in Kuwait

Practitioners re-appointed for service in Kuwait after being employed in Kuwait previously are required to submit an Application for Registration giving the current data. They start on a new CME/CPD cycle with effect from the new date of appointment.

8. Credit Point Criteria

All CME/CPD activities conducted by the accredited CME/CPD Providers need to be registered under the MPC Program if participants are to claim CME/CPD credit points under the MPC Program for participation.

Category 1

When CME/CPD activities have been registered as Category 1 activities, formal presentations, in general, entitle the participants to claim 1 CME/CPD credit point per contact hour of educational activity. Participants at lectures, symposia, seminars etc. may claim credit points at this rate. Credit points for group learning sessions, and practical/clinical

training sessions are calculated at the rate of 0.5 credit point per contact hour.

Although credit point allocation is based on the duration of sessions, excessively long presentations will not have a corresponding amount of credit allocated to them. Organizers, therefore, should not plan to have long presentations. This is because when sessions continue for long periods of time, the participants are unlikely to maintain interest in the topic and the amount learned and retained will not match the length of the session. Therefore, the amount of credit that will be assigned for a single lecture presentation will be limited to a maximum of one credit point, irrespective of the duration of the presentation.

Table 1. Menu of CME/CPD Activities - Category 1

Type of activity	CME/CPD credit points/hour
Workshops	1 credit point
Lecture series	1 credit point
Symposia	1 credit point
Seminars	1 credit point
Group learning sessions/Group activities	0.5 credit point
Practical training sessions	0.5 credit point
Clinical training sessions	0.5 credit point

The maximum amount of credit assigned to a single lecture presentation is 1 credit point, irrespective of the duration of the presentation.

Table 2. Menu of CME/CPD Activities - Category 2

Type of activity	CME/CPD credit points/hour
Patient care review meetings	0.5 credit
Teaching of medical and other health professionals	0.5 credit
Writing questions for examinations	0.5 credit
Journal clubs	0.5 credit
Self-assessment examinations	0.5 credit
Approved self-instruction	0.5 credit
Computer assisted instruction	0.5 credit
Audio-visual instruction	0.5 credit
Distance learning/web-based learning	0.5 credit
Reading scientific papers in journals	0.5 credit
Self-directed study for examinations	0.5 credit

The amount of CME/CPD credit that may be claimed on CME/CPD activities undertaken through web site-based/online learning is 5 credit points within a 24-hour period.

The resource person responsible for a presentation may claim an additional amount of credit points equivalent to the credit point value of the session presented by him or her.

A menu of Category 1 CME/CPD activities and their credit point values appear in Table 1. CME/CPD credit points are assigned as indicated for educational activities registered under the MPC Program. Participants may claim CME/CPD credit points for Category 1 activities on this basis.

Category 2

The basis of allocation of CME/CPD credit points for educational activities that come within Sub-section i or Sub-section ii of Category 2 of the MPC Program appears in Table 2.

Calculation of CME/CPD credit points for research and related activities is not based on the duration but on the publications (and other applicable outcomes) resulting from the activity. The scheme is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Research and Related Activities - Category 2

Type of activity and author category	CME/CPD credit points/hour
Scientific papers published in refereed journals	
1 st (or single) author	5 credit points
2 nd author	3 credit points
3 rd author (and beyond)	2 credit points
Review articles in area of specialization	
1 st (or single) author	5 credit points
2 nd author	3 credit points
3 rd author (and beyond)	2 credit points
Chapters in a book in area of specialization	
1 st (or single) author	5 credit points
2 nd author	3 credit points
3 rd author (and beyond)	2 credit points
Writing a book/monograph in area of specialization	10 credit points
Preparation of exhibits related to specialty	5 credit points

9. Recognition of CME/CPD Credits between Kuwait and CME Authorities Abroad

The MPC Program has been designed and is being implemented to take into account CME/CPD activities conducted within Kuwait by accredited CME/CPD Providers and other approved institutions, and undertaken by individual practitioners. However, the CME Center will consider accepting credit points gained by practitioners in Kuwait by participating in CME/CPD activities conducted outside Kuwait. In addition, there is provision for submitting the credit points acquired within the MPC Program to selected CME/CPD authorities abroad under the procedures announced by the respective institutions.

Acceptance of Credit Points Granted by External Agencies

Participating in activities organized by accredited institutions abroad could be considered for recognition by KIMS. Such educational activities should have been accepted by the CME/CPD authority of the country concerned as CME/CPD. It is essential that the certificate of participation clearly shows the credit point value (and category, where relevant). A document with no mention of the CME/CPD credit points but merely states that the practitioner attended the activity is not sufficient for consideration under the MPC Program.

Practitioners who intend to attend activities abroad are advised to contact the organizers and consult the concerned CME/CPD Officer appointed by KIMS well in advance to verify the CME/CPD status of activities that they wish to attend abroad.

When certificates of participation do not clearly indicate the number of CME/CPD credit points, the CME Center will consult the CME/CPD Officer of the specialty

concerned to assess whether the activity could be considered under the MPC Program and, if so, the number of CME/CPD credit points that could be assigned. The individual practitioner is responsible for obtaining and submitting the necessary details regarding the activity to facilitate this assessment by the CME Center.

CME/CPD credit points obtained by participating in accredited CME/CPD activities organized or accepted by institutions such as the Royal Colleges in the UK, Canada and Australia, the American College of Physicians, the American Medical Association, the British Medical Association, the American Dental Association, the British Dental Association, the Saudi Council for Health Specialties, the British Pharmaceutical Association, the American Pharmaceutical Association, American Council on Pharmaceutical Education and other similar organizations could be considered for acceptance by KIMS as evidence of CME/CPD participation.

It is the responsibility of the individual practitioner to obtain from the organizer of the activity the necessary details regarding the number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed. To claim recognition, copies of the relevant certificates need to be submitted to the CME Center at least six weeks prior to any applicable deadlines.

Internet-based Activities

Practitioners are encouraged to use web-based learning for continuing education and continuing professional development, as appropriate. The maximum number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed on accredited CME/CPD activities undertaken through the Internet is limited to 5 points within a 24-hour period.

Certificates of Participation issued by Organizations Outside Kuwait

Educational activities conducted abroad could be considered under the MPC Program only if a recognized CME/CPD authority of the country (or region) concerned has approved the activity as CME/CPD and has issued a certificate of participation clearly stating the number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed.

The approach above has been chosen so that the scheme of recognizing participation in educational activities abroad matches, as far as feasible, the procedure adopted with respect to educational activities conducted within Kuwait.

Recognition of KIMS CME/CPD Activities by The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)

The MPC Program is substantively recognized by The Royal College of Physicians

and Surgeons of Canada. Practitioners who hold a Fellowship of the Royal College and are practicing in Kuwait have the option of participating in the MPC Program in lieu of the RCPSC's MOC Program under the terms stipulated by RCPSC.

The procedure that has to be adopted for submitting CME/CPD credit points gained under the MPC Program of the CME Center, KIMS to RCPSC is as announced by RCPSC.

Accreditation of KIMS CME/CPD Activities by The Royal College of Pathologists

The Royal College of Pathologists, UK has endorsed the MPC Program as suitable for its members within Kuwait. Members and Fellows of the Royal College practicing in Kuwait may participate in the MPC Program and submit credit points gained for satisfying the requirements of the Continuing Professional Development Program of the Royal College.

10. Monitoring of MPC Program and Review of Participation

All practitioners who attend accredited CME/CPD programs are expected to maintain records of their participation. This includes information on the CME/CPD credit points acquired (Name of activity, Registration Number, credit points that may be claimed etc.).

The total number of CME/CPD credit points gained during the year has to be forwarded by the individual practitioners to the CME Center annually starting in January the following year.

Verification of Documentation

During the review of participation and monitoring of the MPC Program the CME Center will request the practitioners registered in the MPC Program and the CME/CPD organizers to submit copies of documentation that is maintained by them.

Portfolio of CME/CPD Participation

The CME Center has designed a format of a portfolio for use as evidence of involvement of CME/CPD activities by the practitioners registered in the MPC Program. The portfolio helps them to conveniently keep all documentation related to achievements and future plans in continuing medical education and continuing professional development. Organizing the documents as recommended is useful as the CME Center will request the participants to make the documentation of their CME/CPD participation available for review. Verification of the CME/CPD participation of the practitioners is one component of the scheme of monitoring the implementation of the MPC Program.

The features of the portfolio are outlined below:

I. Documentation

Documents describing the overall plans that have been drawn up and the specific professional development activities:

- i. Plans for involvement in scheduled CME/CPD activities announced by accredited CME/CPD Providers;
- ii. Listing of dates, titles of courses, credit point values, and names of course organizers of CME/CPD activities that have been undertaken;
- iii. CME/CPD activities that were included in the initial plans but which could not be undertaken, reasons for not being able to implement the plans, and actions taken or proposed for dealing with the situation.

II. Constituent Elements

The portfolio consists of the following sections:

- i. Forms used in MPC Program implementation;
- ii. CME/CPD Logbook comprising:
 - Record of CME/CPD activities;
 - Copies of Credit Return Forms, CME/CPD plans, including Calendar of activities;
 - Certificates pertaining to CME/CPD participation.
- iii. Notes and critical self-review.

The results of any research in CME/CPD and publications produced in the field of CME/CPD, too, could be included in the portfolio.

III. Uses of the Portfolio

The portfolio will prove useful to the health professional in the following situations:

- i. Annual appraisal of performance;
- ii. Planning CME/CPD participation;

-
- iii. Review of achievements made in CME/CPD;
 - iv. Planning own professional development.

The portfolio is available for purchase at the accredited supplier (See CME Center website www.kims.org.kw/cme).

Submitting CME/CPD Credit Points

CME/CPD credit point data are to be submitted by the practitioners annually to the CME Center. An online form is available at www.kims.org.kw/cme for this purpose. The form, *Data Form for Submitting Credit Points*, will be activated in January every year for submitting the previous year's CME/CPD credit points.

All credit point data submitted to the CME Center should be based on the documentation maintained by the practitioner. The Certificates of Participation received from CME/CPD organizers should clearly state the number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed.

Annual Returns

When the CME Center receives the data for the year concerned, the records pertaining to the practitioner are updated. The validity of the data will be authenticated when copies of Certificates of Participation are received by the CME Center subsequently.

CME/CPD Certificates

The CME Center issues two types of certificates related to CME/CPD credit points gained by the practitioners:

- i. Certificate of Completion of CME/CPD;
- ii. CME/CPD Status Certificate.

For either of the above certificates to be issued, it is essential that practitioners submit copies of the certificates of participation to the CME Center.

Certificate of Completion of CME/CPD

Practitioners who acquire the specified total of CME/CPD credit points during the five-year cycle (i.e. 250 points for physicians and dentists, and 125 points for pharmacists and other health professions practitioners) will receive a *Certificate of Completion of CME/CPD* from KIMS. This certificate will remain valid for five years from the date of issue.

CME/CPD Status Certificate

The CME Center issues a *CME/CPD Status Certificate* to certify the current CME/CPD status of the practitioner. These certificates are issued in the following situations:

- i. When required by the administrative authorities in Kuwait for decisions on promotions, renewal of contracts etc.
- ii. When practitioners terminate their services in Kuwait.

When practitioners terminate their services in Kuwait they may request for a CME/CPD Status Certificate to certify the current CME/CPD status. Copies of all relevant documents of participation in CME/CPD need to be submitted to the CME Center in accordance with the procedures announced.

Any practitioner who is required by the administrative authorities to obtain a certificate of the current CME/CPD status before a five-year cycle is completed is required to furnish the latest information for the database to be updated. The CME Center will then issue a certificate indicating the credit point total gained.

For a CME/CPD Status Certificate to be issued, it is essential that practitioners submit copies of the certificates of participation to the CME Center well in advance of applicable deadlines. The CME Center requires a minimum of five days for verifying the records, checking participation and for getting the certificate ready.

11. Accrediting CME/CPD Activities

Policy and Procedures of CME Center

For accrediting CME/CPD activities that are to be conducted locally under the MPC Program, it is necessary that the:

- Target audience of the activity is clearly identified;
- Activity is planned on the basis of identified needs (perceived and/or objective);
- Objectives of the activity are clearly stated;
- Educational methods selected allow the objectives listed by the organizer to be achieved;
- Audience is able to actively participate in the sessions, where relevant;
- Participants receive an opportunity to evaluate the activity at its conclusion;
- Activity, if funded by an external body, is organized adhering to an approved code of ethics and responsibilities with regard to sponsorship of CME/CPD activities.

The organizer of the CME/CPD activity has to submit an application with all the information requested and any other relevant documents to the CME Center well in advance of the scheduled date of the event. On receipt of the information, the activity is registered and assigned a Registration Number. Using the duration of contact hours of education as a guide, a credit point value, too, is calculated. These details plus the procedures expected of the organizer are then conveyed to the organizer. The organizer is expected to indicate the relevant information including the number of CME/CPD credit points assigned to the activity in all the announcements and in the certificates that will be issued to participants. It is essential that formal and structured

CME/CPD events such as conferences, symposia, seminars and workshops organized by the CME/CPD Providers are registered with the CME Center, if participants are to claim CME/CPD credit points under the MPC Program.

Accredited CME/CPD Providers

The following institutions and organizations function as CME/CPD Providers. They take overall responsibility for organizing conferences, courses, symposia, seminars and other educational activities for CME/CPD accreditation:

1. Faculties and Scientific Committees of KIMS;
2. Health Sciences Faculties of Kuwait University;
3. Specialty or administrative divisions of the Ministry of Health or another ministry in the State of Kuwait;
4. Kuwait Medical Association and its Specialty societies, Kuwait Dental Association, Kuwait Pharmaceutical Association, Kuwait Nursing Association and other health professions organizations.

For an institution to be accredited by KIMS as a CME/CPD Provider, it is essential that it functions at the national level, i.e. there is no other parallel institution at the same level in the country.

CME/CPD Organizers and Organizing CME/CPD Activities

To deal with the routine tasks connected with the CME/CPD activity, a suitable content expert functions as a CME/CPD organizer under the authority of a CME/CPD Provider. The organizer is required to submit an application for registration of each of the proposed CME/CPD activities under the MPC Program.

All CME/CPD activities conducted in Kuwait need to be registered under the MPC Program if participants are to claim accredited CME/CPD credit points. It is the responsibility of the organizers of the proposed activities to apply to the CME Center giving all the relevant information. Moreover, the application and all required details need to be received by the CME Center well in advance of the scheduled dates.

Once the CME Center receives the application, it assigns a credit point value to the activity and registers it. The CME/CPD Provider or organizer is informed of the action taken, with copy to the CME/CPD Officer of the concerned specialty.

The organizer announces the activity, and makes the necessary arrangements to conduct it. When a given activity has been completed, the organizer maintains a list of the participants who completed the activity satisfactorily. Additionally, an Evaluation Report on the activity is prepared. These documents are to be submitted to the CME Center when requested during program review. The organizer of the CME/CPD activity also arranges for a certificate (or an official letter) to be issued to the participant as evidence of attendance.

Application for Registration

The Application Form deals with administration and academic details pertaining to the proposed activity. It is essential that all relevant sections of the Application Form are completed and sent with any additional information that the organizer considers applicable. The information required includes the following:

- Title of activity;
- CME/CPD Provider, as accredited by the CME Center;
- Frequency of conducting activity (if to be repeated);

- Name, contact details and email address of organizer of activity;
- Type of activity: (symposium, seminar, conference, workshop, lecture series or any other)
- Aims and objectives (stated as abilities that the participants are expected to gain);
- Content outline;
- Scheduling of sessions (with times for starting and completing each presentation, title of presentation and name of presenter);
- Target audience: number and background;
- Plans for program evaluation.

The CME Center uses the information given regarding objectives, content covered, and the duration of individual sessions to allocate a credit point value to the activity. The registration process cannot start until the information indicated as essential is received by the CME Center. This includes information on type and duration of learning sessions. A Registration Number is assigned, and the organizer is then informed of the decision.

The web page of the CME Center at <www.kims.org.kw/cme> provides menus and lists of activities that have been scheduled so that the prospective participants may choose those that are of interest to them.

CME/CPD Forms

Forms that CME/CPD organizers need for applying for accreditation and for planning CME/CPD activities are listed below:

- Application for accreditation;
- Evaluation of instructor and activity;
- Evaluation by instructor;
- Attendance sheet;
- Certificate of attendance.

The form for applying for registration is available at the CME Center website <www.kims.org.kw/cme>. Online registration is the preferred option, and all CME/CPD organizers are requested to use this format for submitting applications. It is essential that a contact email address is included in the application as many communications from the CME Center pertaining to the registration as well as procedures later on will rely on this medium. The application form is also available at the web site in PDF format, to be printed, if needed.

Announcements

Organizers of CME/CPD activities are requested to ensure that prospective participants are informed of the activity well in advance. This would give the opportunity for interested practitioners to make appropriate arrangements to deal with professional and other commitments so that they are available to attend activities of their choice.

Preparing the announcements and brochures, and taking steps to circulate them among the potential participants remain the responsibility of the organizer. KIMS could assist in these tasks, provided the organizer submits the text of the material well in advance to KIMS. Additionally, the Office of the Secretary General of KIMS could make some of the resources at its disposal available for distributing the announcements among the various healthcare facilities and other institutions.

It is essential that the Registration Number and CME/CPD credit point value are clearly stated in all announcements. An activity should not be announced indicating CME/CPD credit points until the organizer has received a Letter of Registration from the CME Center.

Documentation

When a CME/CPD activity registered under the MPC Program has been completed, the organizer is expected to prepare the following documentation.

Certificate of Participation

The organizer of the CME/CPD activity should issue a Letter of Attendance to every participant who completed the CME/CPD activity satisfactorily. The document should indicate the CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed by the participant.

Participant List

The CME/CPD organizer is expected to maintain a list of the participants who completed the activity satisfactorily.

Evaluation Report

The CME Center also requires an evaluation of the activity to be carried out and a brief report prepared. The degree of sophistication of the evaluation will depend on the overall objectives, the practical feasibility and the expected benefit of the results. The evaluation helps the organizer and the instructors to receive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the activity, for possible modification of future events.

CME/CPD organizers need to forward a copy of the evaluation report to the CME Center within 4 weeks of completing the activity. This is also necessary to ensure that they remain eligible to conduct CME/CPD activities under the MPC Program.

Program Review

The CME/CPD organizers are expected to maintain the list of participants and the evaluation reports with them. When requested for verification and monitoring of MPC Program implementation, copies of the relevant documents should be forwarded to the CME Center.

Sponsorship of CME/CPD Activities by Non-Ministry Establishments

The CME Center of KIMS receives many inquiries from CME/CPD organizers about how sponsorship from private healthcare establishments and commercial firms could be used in CME/CPD activities organized under the MPC Program. CME/CPD Providers and organizers are requested to ensure that any CME/CPD activities that are organized with financial or other forms of sponsorship from such institutions meet the following guidelines.

Academic and Scientific Content

The CME/CPD Provider is responsible for the scientific and academic merit of the CME/CPD activities approved under the MPC Program. Therefore, the subject content and the choice of speakers for conferences, symposia, workshops and other similar events should receive approval from the course director, course organizer or the planning committee of the activity that functions on behalf of the CME/CPD Provider.

Activities that are primarily of a promotional nature such as displays of medical or dental equipment and materials are not considered as CME/CPD. However, private establishments may assist in the MPC Program by providing resources such as personnel and equipment.

Choice of Topics

The activities should focus on topics that would assist in the development of expertise in one or more areas of professional competence. Even if a formal needs analysis may not be possible prior to planning, the organizers should take into account at least the perceived needs of the participants when defining the objectives and identifying the content for the proposed activity. This will help to ensure relevance to professional practice, promo-

ting interest and involvement of the participants in the sessions.

Generic Names of Drugs

As a general principle, the use of generic names of drugs is preferred in presentations and discussions.

Appropriate Ethical and Professional Standards

During planning and conducting the activity, issues dealing with ethics and professional standards should receive appropriate consideration. Patients' rights and informed consent need to be given their due place by the organizers and the presenters of the sessions.

Evaluation of Activity

An essential component of the activity is its evaluation by the participants. This may be undertaken at the conclusion of the sessions, or within a few days/weeks of completion if some post-activity action was expected. Many workshop evaluation forms are available for this purpose. The CME Center has supplied its own formats considering the activities that will be conducted under the MPC Program. The CME/CPD organizer may modify these forms as required for the specific activity.

Acknowledgement of Support

In announcements and other publicity materials, a non-accredited institution should not be presented as being responsible for a CME/CPD activity registered under the MPC Program. The CME/CPD organizer should ensure that announcements satisfy this requirement.

Support provided by the sponsor may be acknowledged in the brochures or other documents as appropriate. Identification or endorsement of the products marketed by the sponsor should not appear in the materials circulated by the organizer. Additionally, promotional displays should not be held in the same room where the educational activity is conducted.

Social Events

The main emphasis in the program should be on its academic or scientific aspects, although social events may be arranged as part of the overall program, if considered desirable.

Travel and Accommodation

Arrangements for travel and accommodation of speakers or participants of the CME/CPD activities should be comparable to those that would normally be made if assistance from the sponsor was not available.

12. Organizing and Participating in CME/CPD

The steps and the procedures in organizing CME/CPD activities (Fig. 1) and

participating in CME/CPD activities (Fig. 2) are outlined in the charts below.

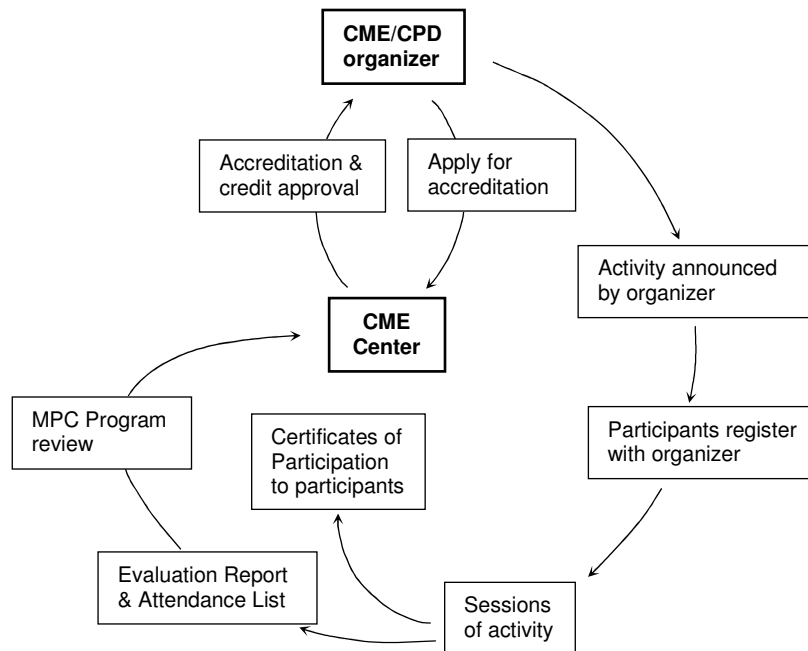


Fig. 1. Organizing CME/CPD Activities

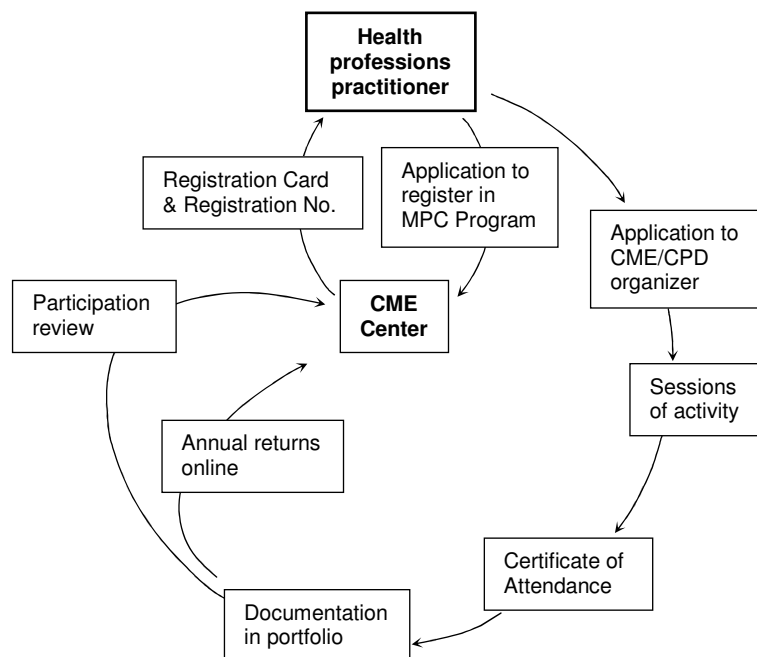


Fig. 2. Participating in CME/CPD Activities

13. Frequently Asked Questions

MPC Program

What is MPC Program?

The program that has been established with the aim of promoting continuing medical education and continuing professional development, and the maintenance of professional competence and professional standards of healthcare practitioners in Kuwait is called the MPC Program. MPC stands for maintenance of professional competence, and reflects the overall goal of continuing education.

What is CME?

Continuing medical education (CME) consists of educational activities which serve to maintain, develop, or increase the knowledge, skills, professional performance and relationships that physicians and other health professionals use to provide services to patients, the public, or the profession.

Is CPD different from CME or MPC?

The term continuing professional development (CPD) is increasingly being used today as complementary or as an alternative to CME to emphasize professional development. It allows activities undertaken by a variety of health professional groups and a wide range of competencies and attributes to be covered.

Why CME/CPD?

The basic purpose of CME/CPD is to improve the performance of the health professional in his or her practice, and thus enhance the care that patients and the community receive.

How do I get detailed information about the MPC Program?

Updates on the MPC Program appear at <www.kims.org.kw/cme>, the web site maintained by the CME Center. This web site also gives access to the forms needed

for practitioners to register themselves in the MPC Program and for CME/CPD organizers to register the CME/CPD activities they plan to conduct.

MPC Program with Learning Sites for Health Professionals is the latest edition of the previously published *MPC Program*. It now incorporates updated versions of *Online Learning – A CPD Guide to Health Professionals* and some aspects of *Guidelines to CME Organizers*.

MPC Program with Learning Sites for Health Professionals and other publications by the CME Center are available at <www.kims.org.kw/cme> in PDF format so that interested practitioners could download and print them.

Participating in CME/CPD

How do I benefit from the MPC Program?

The MPC program will facilitate health professionals to keep abreast of the developments in their specialties, and enable them to provide care of a high standard to the community.

The Ministry of Health in Kuwait gives recognition to participating in CME/CPD activities when making administrative decisions in selected situations. Furthermore, other institutions and organizations insist that practitioners are registered in the MPC Program before they use of some of the facilities offered.

What is the procedure for participating in CME/CPD activities?

Organizers of accredited CME/CPD activities inform the selected target group about the CME/CPD events. The CME Center, too, furnishes basic information about the activities via the CME Center web site (www.kims.org.kw/cme), and the *Bulletin of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization*.

The prospective participant should select the activity depending on whether the subject matter to be dealt with would help in improving own practice, and apply direct to the CME/CPD organizer.

How do I calculate participation in CME/CPD activities?

All accredited CME/CPD activities will have a credit point value assigned to them. Health professionals who participate in accredited CME/CPD activities satisfactorily will receive a certificate issued by the organizer of the activity. The organizer is expected to indicate the CME/CPD credit points that the participant is entitled to claim in the certificate issued, and the participants should ensure that this information is clearly stated in the documents they receive.

Practitioners who complete CME/CPD activities are expected to maintain relevant documentation throughout the five-year cycle. To help in proper documentation, a portfolio developed through a commercial supplier is available.

Do I get certificates of participation from KIMS?

Certificates of participation have to be obtained from the respective organizers and not from the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization (KIMS), unless KIMS or a division at KIMS served as the CME/CPD organizer of a specific activity. KIMS is the designated authority for overseeing formal CME/CPD activities in Kuwait, with its CME Center managing the routine implementation of the scheme.

I have already gained more than the minimum credit point requirement of the 5-year cycle, within the first year. Do I need to collect additional CME/CPD credit points during the current cycle?

It is possible that you reach the minimum specified total within a relatively short period of 1 or 2 years. Yet you need to engage in appropriate CME/CPD activities on a continuing basis during the

balance period in the 5-year cycle, and show evidence of it when requested. The goal of the MPC Program is maintenance of professional competence through continuing education—collecting CME/CPD credit points is only an indicator and not its aim.

I attended a CME activity abroad. How can I include its CME points under the MPC Program?

It is essential that the credit point value (and category, where relevant) is clearly mentioned in the attendance certificates issued by the respective organizers. Practitioners who intend to attend any activities abroad are advised to contact the organizers well in advance to verify the CME/CPD status of the activity.

Can I use a printed Application Form to register in the MPC Program or submit credit points?

The policy of KIMS and its CME Center is to encourage practitioners to use online facilities wherever applicable. Therefore, applying online to register in the MPC Program and submitting credit points online are the preferred options.

Organizing CME/CPD

Who is authorized to conduct CME/CPD activities?

An institution that has been accredited as a CME/CPD Provider has to take overall responsibility for any activities that are to be registered under the MPC Program.

The CME/CPD Providers approved are:

- Faculties and Scientific Committees of KIMS;
- Health Sciences Faculties of Kuwait University;
- Departments, Divisions and Units of Ministry of Health that function at the national level;
- Health professions associations and specialty societies affiliated to them.

For each individual activity, a CME/CPD organizer will function on behalf of and under the authority of the CME/CPD Provider.

What is the basis for categorizing CME/CPD activities?

Accredited CME/CPD Providers are eligible to conduct Category 1 CME/CPD activities. Ongoing (weekly, monthly etc.) activities conducted at healthcare or scientific institutions, and CME/CPD activities conducted with a local participant group as the target audience as well as self-learning that practitioners undertake are classified under Category 2.

What is the accepted maximum duration of a presentation?

Excessively long presentations, esp. when the presentation is a lecture, are not likely to be very useful to the participants. A 10 to 15 minute period for questions at the end of a 40 to 45 minute lecture will allow for some degree of interaction by the participants and will break the monotony of long presentation sessions.

I need to present a large amount of content. How do I prepare a program schedule in this situation?

A series of long presentations should not be scheduled one after another. Breaks of reasonable length need to be included at appropriate stages in the schedule.

How do I register the CME/CPD activity?

For the CME Center to start on the registration process, the CME/CPD organizer has to first submit a completed application. A letter asking for registration is not sufficient, and is also not needed.

The Application Form is available at <www.kims.org.kw/cme>, the website of the CME Center. Once the relevant sections are filled in, the application can be sent online.

Can I use a printed Application Form to register the activity?

The policy of KIMS and its CME Center is to encourage practitioners to use online facilities wherever applicable. Therefore, applying online to register CME/CPD activities is the preferred option.

The lecturers in my activity are consultants coming from abroad and I cannot get the schedule prepared in advance. How can I register the activity in this situation?

If there is a real and genuine factor that prevents the CME/CPD organizer from getting the relevant information, he or she may submit an application based on preliminary or available information. Additional or updated information could be sent when it becomes available, but before the event is scheduled to start.

How do I calculate CME/CPD credit points when applying for registration of an activity?

The organizer does not have to state the CME/CPD credit points for the activity in the application for registration. The CME Center will calculate the CME/CPD credit points based on the guidelines that have been announced.

Will KIMS prepare and distribute announcements?

The organizer should arrange with the institution concerned or any sponsoring agency to prepare and distribute the announcements regarding the registered CME/CPD activities. The Office of the Secretary General of KIMS could make some of the resources at its disposal available for distributing the announcements among the various healthcare facilities and other institutions.

How do I deal with large numbers of participants who wish to attend?

A useful approach is to announce the activity well in time so that those interested could apply for participation using a prescribed application form. The organizer then will have the opportunity to

select the appropriate number to participate from those who stand to gain most from the sessions. If considered necessary, the activity may be repeated with different groups.

Are live operative procedures relayed to an audience or clinical sessions accepted as CME/CPD?

Operative procedures relayed live to a group of practitioners do not qualify to be registered as CME/CPD. However, segments that are planned and presented as practical components of a learning activity could be considered for registration. In such situations, the organizer needs to provide information on the learning objectives, content area and how the observers are to be guided during the demonstration so that the event becomes a learning experience.

Clinical services provided by a visiting expert, too, are not considered as CME/CPD. Selected components that are specifically planned and conducted for learning purposes may be registered provided the relevant details of educational significance are supplied.

What is the CME/CPD Officer's role in organizing CME activities?

The CME/CPD Officers appointed by KIMS serve as a link between the CME Center on the one hand and the CME/CPD organizers and CME/CPD participants on the other. The CME/CPD Officer would be in a position to respond to any queries on the CME/CPD aspect of the activities that CME/CPD organizers wish to organize.

How can a private hospital or clinic organize accredited CME/CPD activities?

At the present stage of development of the MPC Program in Kuwait, only institutions that function at the national level and come directly under a Ministry or professional associations are eligible to conduct accredited CME/CPD activities.

Private hospitals and clinics may provide resources for CME/CPD activities that any approved CME/CPD Provider wishes to conduct.

How can pharmaceutical firms organize a CME/CPD activity under the MPC Program?

Only the approved CME/CPD Providers are eligible to register CME/CPD activities within the MPC Program. Each of these institutions comes directly under a Ministry and functions at the national level, or is a professional association or a specialty society.

A pharmaceutical firm may provide the necessary resources for an approved CME/CPD Provider to plan and conduct a CME/CPD activity. However, the CME/CPD Provider and its CME/CPD organizer will be directly responsible for the academic and scientific merit of the event in such situations. Furthermore, the CME/CPD Provider and the CME/CPD organizer must take responsibility for preparing an Evaluation Report and maintaining attendance records.

Who gives CME/CPD credit points to participants?

The CME/CPD organizer is required to issue an official document to every participant to certify attendance and to indicate the CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed. The number of CME/CPD credit points should be based on the actual hours of education undertaken within the activity.

What documents do I prepare when the activity is completed?

When the CME/CPD activity is concluded, the organizer has to:

- Issue Certificates of Attendance;
- Prepare a List of Participants;
- Prepare an Evaluation Report and send it to the CME Center.

What should be the format of the Certificate of Attendance?

As far as the MPC Program is concerned, it is sufficient if the Certificate of Attendance is an official letter that clearly indicates the number of CME/CPD credit points that may be claimed by the individual practitioner. The CME/CPD organizer should provide a Certificate of Attendance without undue delay to every participant who had completed the activity satisfactorily.

What is the purpose of evaluating a CME/CPD activity?

Evaluating the CME/CPD activity is an essential component of the accreditation process, and the CME/CPD organizer is required to carry out an evaluation at the conclusion of the CME/CPD activity. It is the CME/CPD organizer who benefits most from the data gathered on evaluation: he or she will get information on aspects of the activity that need to be modified in case the activity, or a similar one, is to be held in the future.

What is the format of the Evaluation Report?

The Evaluation Report needs to be a critique of the event, based primarily on the feedback received from the participants and the resource persons. A mere

description of the event prepared by the organizer is not acceptable.

Any standard evaluation forms or the samples provided at the CME Center website at <www.kims.org.kw/cme> for evaluating educational events may be used in gathering the data.

Should I send the List of Participants to the CME Center?

The CME/CPD organizer should retain the list of participants with him or her until the CME Center requests for a copy of this list.

Additional information

The web site <www.kims.org.kw/cme> of the CME Center and the *Bulletin of the Kuwait Institute for Medical Specialization* give information about the MPC Program and list the activities that have been scheduled.

For information that is not available in the website, please contact:

CME Center,
Kuwait Institute for Medical
Specialization,
10th Floor, Behbehani Complex, Al-Sharq,
P.O. Box 1793, Safat 13018, Kuwait.
email: cmecenter@kims.org.kw
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14. Effective CME/CPD: Some Educational Issues

It is important that learning and any assessment in CME/CPD activities are planned on the basis of sound educational principles. In this discussion, the following topics are dealt with:

- i. Role of educational objectives in planning CME/CPD activities;
- ii. Importance of the background and the expectations of the participants;
- iii. Approaches to assessing the effectiveness of learning.

The concept of effective CME/CPD in this discussion refers to whether the learning activities enable the participants to reach the learning goals for which the sessions have been planned. The issue of whether the widely-used formats such as conferences, seminars, workshops, symposia etc. lead to improvement in health care services is outside the scope of this discussion. The interested reader is advised to refer to reviews of this topic^{3,9} and to more recent literature on approaches of incorporating the theories of organizational change into planning and implementing CME.¹⁰

Educational Objectives

If learning objectives are to be useful to the participants as well as to the instructor, they need to describe the abilities that the learners are expected to gain from the sessions. The emphasis in the statements that describe the expectations should shift from what the instructor intends to do to what the participant could hope to gain. In other words, what would the participants be able to 'do' as a result of the proposed intervention? Such learner-centered objectives also enable the prospective participant to know beforehand whether a given CME/CPD activity is likely to benefit him or her. Additionally, they help the instructor to set limits on the subject content and

select the most appropriate teaching method that could be employed.

When we look at the variety of learning outcomes, it is useful to classify learning objectives into three domains. Though the categories often overlap to varying degrees (and may appear somewhat artificial), categorization helps to emphasize the different aspects of learning.

Knowledge

Learning objectives that deal with knowledge are grouped in the *cognitive domain*. They can be further divided into a hierarchy within this domain, with the outcomes ranging from *recall/recognition* (e.g. stating the signs and symptoms of a disease, or naming an appropriate antibiotic for a given condition), through *data interpretation* (e.g. explaining a laboratory report or identifying a lesion in a radiograph) to *problem-solving* (e.g. arriving at a diagnosis, or reviewing the progress of a patient).

Problem-solving involves making judgments, and being able to recall or interpret data is a pre-requisite for it to be carried out satisfactorily. Therefore, those who can perform at the level of problem-solving can safely be assumed to possess the ability to recall data or interpret the relevant data.

To achieve objectives in the cognitive domain, which requires the participant to acquire information, some learning methods that may be used are lecture, discussion and reading assignments. Each of these has its advantages and disadvantages, and the instructors would choose one or more in a given situation.

A point worth keeping in mind is that the attention span of the average adult seated at a lecture presentation is 15 to 20 minutes. It is essential, therefore, that organizers do not plan to have excessively

long lectures, especially soon after the conclusion of day's duty sessions. Options available to deal with this factor are ensuring that the subject matter is relevant and interesting, and the instructor is skilled in doing presentations. Another approach that will help is to plan to have relatively small groups of participants and to give them an opportunity for interaction during the session. Additionally, the presentation itself could discuss highlights of the topic or one or two important aspects, leaving the rest of the content to be dealt with in a well-written handout.

Procedural Skills

The performance of skills is grouped in the *psychomotor domain*, which is concerned with the doing of manual procedures. Examples of familiar procedures are measuring the blood pressure of a patient, setting up an intravenous drip, or doing a lumbar puncture.

The practitioner will not be able to do any of the tasks above satisfactorily unless he or she has the required knowledge base. But the presence of knowledge is no guarantee that the skill has been mastered. The implication of this argument is that it is not sufficient if the learner describes or states the steps of how to do a task: it is essential that he or she performs it.

When learning objectives specifically state that the CME/CPD activity is to enable the participants to perform specified procedures, lecturing is not the appropriate instructional method. The procedures have to be demonstrated, and the participants need to be given an opportunity to practice, initially under supervision. With today's technology, a demonstration may be given to a relatively large group, but for practice under supervision small groups are essential. The degree of supervision needed and the

opportunity that has to be given for performing independently will, no doubt, be related to the experience and expertise of the practitioner-learner.

Values and Attitudes

Practitioners are expected to possess many desirable attitudes, which educationalists group within the *affective domain*. Knowledge in the related topics is only one factor that influences attitudes. However, knowledge by itself does not lead to the attitudes desired. A student or a practitioner may give all the appropriate responses when questioned orally or at a written test, but the behavior on a long term basis is the only indicator that the attitude is present. Therefore, lecturing or giving reading material aimed at increasing the participant's knowledge is not likely to be productive. Role modeling, role playing, discussion of issues in small groups or undertaking specific assignments are preferred instead.

Target Audience

The background of the participants who attend the CME/CPD activity has an overriding influence on the learning objectives and the subject content that will be selected for a session. Factors that need to be considered are the educational level in the subject area, past experience in the specialty, and the relevance of the content included in the activity to the participant's own needs of practice.

As the participants are likely to come from a variety of background levels, it is unlikely that large groups of participants, running into hundreds, will benefit from the same presentation. Furthermore, such excessive numbers will make it difficult, if not impossible, for the participants to interact to any useful extent: many of those who attend may feel displeased with the sessions, or later complain that they did not gain anything worthwhile.

To ensure that those who attend the activity get the maximum benefit from participation, the CME/CPD organizer should clearly indicate the type of target audience selected for the activity. When necessary, more than one session may have to be conducted targeting different groups of practitioners, especially if they possess varying ability levels.

Assessing Effectiveness of CME/CPD Activities

Assessing Short-term Effectiveness

Whether the CME/CPD activity helped to achieve the objectives may be assessed at the end of a session or activity, or within a few days of concluding the activity. Questionnaires, specially designed or modified from those already available,

may be used as instruments of assessment. They often help the organizer to solicit opinions about the process of the activity.

Assessing Effectiveness on a Medium-term and a Long-term Basis

Assessment of the long-term impact could be carried out after a few months have passed since completing the activity. It needs to be undertaken in the practice setting of the health professional and in direct relationship to the needs of the professional role. The aim of the assessment is to review whether the newly-gained competencies are retained, and whether they are being put into practice continually.

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