

## **Continuing Professional development (CPD) Event Accreditation; Policy and Process**

### **Background**

The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act requires the Board to have evidence of competence before issuing an Annual Practising Certificate (APC). The Act requires competence to be demonstrated in:

- Clinical skills
- Cultural aspects
- Ethics.

After considering possible methods of assuring competence, the Board has accepted evidence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as an appropriate measure to endorse clinical competence for Annual Practising Certificate (APC) renewal. This decision is consistent with international trends in health professions.

### **Requirements**

The current annual requirement for a general optometrist's scope of practice will be 15 CPD credits, based on educational activities which have been accredited by the Board. The annual requirement for an educator optometrist's scope of practice is the same as that for general optometry. The annual requirement to maintain a therapeutics scope of practice is a further 5 credits per year that must contain specific instruction in therapeutic care. Activities related to therapeutic scope of practice will be identified and while specific to the therapeutics scope may count towards the requirements of any scope. Therapeutic credits need to be gained for every period, any excess is rolled over as general scope credits.

A minimum of a 1 hour presentation is required before a single event will be assessed for accreditation.

These requirements may be reviewed from time to time.

The Board will make a binding decision on the assignment of CPD credits on the basis of the information provided.

The CPD period is currently the one year period from 1 November to 31 October of the year following.

### **Policy**

All presentations should be at a graduate level. CPD credits accredited will depend on the qualifications of the presenter, the form of the presentation as well as the educational quality and time of the activity.

The top level covers formal, structured activities offered by an accredited provider, with the participant's knowledge examined by Board accredited examiners. An obvious example is a pass in a course in some aspect of optometry offered by an accredited New Zealand or Australian university, and formally assessed or examined by an accredited examiner. This would normally gain 1.5 credits per hour of study on passing the examination / assessment.

Most conference presentations will receive 1 credit per hour of attendance, provided that the presentation supports enhancement of clinical skills, scientific or research based professional development, cultural awareness or ethical considerations related to optometric care and is independent of commercial influence. Speakers are required to hold recognised professional qualifications appropriate for the topic being presented.

Some activities which are less formal, but constitute a significant learning potential in clinical, cultural or ethical skills without significant commercial influence. Such activities may include, but is not limited to, the following range of activities:

- Conference presentations which include a major clinical, cultural or ethical component but are not solely focused on these areas. 0.5 credit per hour

- Small-group workshop sessions, structured peer group case presentations and discussions, 'local' presentations by optometrists or ophthalmologists 0.5 credit per hour
- Assessed remote learning 0.5 credit per activity  
(Verification is required from the CPD provider that the assessment attached to the learning activity is completed to the set standard. A pass mark of 70% is required, with at least 10 questions for each hour of activity.)
- Preparation and first publication or presentation of original work. 5 credits per presentation  
Applications in this category will only be accepted for peer reviewed journals or for presentations at major conferences.
- Preparing new material for presentation in a university teaching situation. Applications need to be supported by an annual portfolio containing appropriate documentation including references and learning outcomes, and countersigned by the head of department or other academic referee.  
Maximum 15 credits per annual portfolio

### **The process**

Application forms for accreditation of professional development courses, conferences, workshops etc may be obtained from:

Accreditation Committee of the Optometrists Registration Authority  
C/- NZAO CPD Credit Recording Program  
New Zealand Association of Optometrists  
PO Box 1978  
WELLINGTON

On receipt of the completed application, the activity will be assessed and credits assigned.

Organisers will be required to monitor attendance at the event, and provide a list of the names of those who attended to the Accreditation Committee at the above address. Organisers will also need to provide attendees with an individual form which they can use to apply for the appropriate credits to be added to their individual CPD record. When several presentations are combined in an event, provision will need to be made for an individual to certify the individual activities for which they were in attendance.

When assessment is undertaken, examiners will provide collective results to the recording office and individual results to the optometrist.

### **Audit**

All continuing education programs are subject to random audit, both for content and time. Accreditation committee members, or appointed representatives, may monitor continuing education presentations and the Board reserves the right to modify the assigned credits.

### **Attendance**

Documentation to assure the Board that an individual has attended a presentation is required. Two separate processes are involved:

- Organisers will be required to monitor attendance at the event, and provide a list of names of those who attended
- Individuals will be required to submit completed and signed attendance forms from each accredited event they attend to claim the CPD credits available to them. The form will include the registration number of the individual to minimise errors in recording.

Evidence of attendance at any CPD event must be retained by the optometrist.

### **Accreditation of CPD providers**

Regular providers of CPD in New Zealand who have shown a consistent high standard of integrity in both the quality of education provided and the administration of the Board's requirements may have events accredited using an abbreviated application. Speaker's credentials, titles of component events and event durations will be required.

**The aim of CPD is to enable optometrists, as health practitioners, to achieve useful professional development, to the benefit of their patients.**