



**Medical Board  
Ahpra**

**Medical Board of Australia**

# **Registration standard: Continuing professional development**

**Effective from:** 1 January 2023

## Summary

This registration standard sets out the Medical Board of Australia's (the Board) minimum requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for medical practitioners.

Registered medical practitioners who are engaged in any form of practice are required to participate regularly in CPD that is relevant to their scope of practice to maintain professional currency, and support them to maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives.

## Does this standard apply to me?

This standard applies to all registered medical practitioners except:

- medical students
- interns in accredited intern training programs and doctors in postgraduate year 2 positions who are participating in a structured program that leads to a certificate of completion
- medical practitioners who have limited registration in the public interest or limited registration for teaching or research (to demonstrate a procedure or participate in a workshop) and who have been granted registration for no more than four weeks
- medical practitioners who are granted an exemption or variation from this standard by their CPD home in relation to continuous absence from practice of at least six months and up to and including 12 months for parental or carer leave, serious illness or other approved circumstances
- medical practitioners with non-practising registration.

## What CPD am I required to do?

To meet this registration standard, in each calendar year you must:

- meet the requirements of a CPD program of an accredited CPD home
- develop a written annual professional development plan
- complete a minimum of 50 hours per year of CPD activities that are relevant to your scope of practice and individual professional development needs
- allocate your minimum 50 hours per year between the following types of CPD activities:
  - at least 12.5 hours (25 per cent of the minimum) in educational activities
  - at least 25 hours (50 per cent of the minimum) in activities focused on *reviewing performance* and *measuring outcomes*, with a minimum of five hours for each category, and
  - the remaining 12.5 hours (25 per cent of the minimum), and any CPD activities over the 50-hour minimum across any of these types of CPD activity.
- self-evaluate your CPD activity at the end of the year as you prepare your professional development plan for the next year
- retain records of your annual CPD activity for audit by your CPD home and the Board for three years after the end of each one-year cycle.

# Which organisation will be my CPD home?

This will depend upon your position and/or registration type.

## Specialists

Your CPD home will be an accredited CPD home of your choice that is relevant to your specialty or scope of practice.

## Specialist trainees

Your CPD home will be the accredited specialist medical college for your training position. You will meet the CPD requirements by participating in an accredited specialist training program.

## Specialist international medical graduates under assessment

Your CPD home will be the accredited specialist medical college undertaking your assessment.

## All other medical practitioners

Your CPD home will be an accredited CPD home of your choice that is relevant to your scope of practice.

## Practitioners with more than one specialty or scope of practice

Practitioners are required to meet the CPD registration standard in each of their specialties and/or scopes of practice.

Where possible, practitioners will be able to complete their CPD within a single CPD home that covers all their specialties/scopes of practice.

However, where this is not possible, practitioners with more than one specialty/scope of practice may need to complete more than one program, noting that individual CPD activities may count towards the CPD requirements for more than one specialty or scope of practice.

**Note:** The number of hours and type of activities that practitioners with more than one specialty and/or scope of practice are required to complete will depend on their individual circumstances. Some might be able to meet the CPD registration standard in each specialty by completing a total of 50 hours of CPD if all their CPD homes agree that the completed CPD meets their CPD home's requirements.

However, others may be required to complete additional hours of CPD to meet the requirements of each of their CPD homes. Where specialties and/or scopes of practice are very different, practitioners may need to complete the entire CPD prescribed for each specialty and/or scope of practice.

# How does CPD affect my medical registration?

## When you apply for registration

When you apply for medical registration in Australia for the first time you are required to provide details of your proposed CPD home/s.

## At renewal of registration

When you apply to renew your registration, you are required to:

- provide details of your CPD home/s, and
- declare whether you have complied with this standard and the requirements of the CPD home.

## During the registration period

During your registration period, your compliance with this standard will be reported to the Board by your CPD home and may be audited by the Board from time to time.

# What happens if I don't meet this standard?

The National Law establishes possible consequences if you don't meet this standard, including that:

- the Board can impose a condition or conditions on your registration or can refuse your application for registration or renewal of registration, if you don't meet a requirement in an approved registration standard for the profession (sections 82, 83 and 112 of the National Law)
- a failure to undertake the CPD required by this standard is not an offence but may be behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken by the Board (section 128 of the National Law), and
- registration standards, codes or guidelines may be used in disciplinary proceedings against you as evidence of what constitutes appropriate practice or conduct for health professionals (section 41 of the National Law).

## More information

More information about accredited CPD homes, guidance on acceptable CPD activities and requirements for CPD records may be issued by the Board from time to time.

## Authority

This registration standard was approved by the Ministerial Council for the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme (the National Scheme) on 18 July 2021 and will come into effect on 1 January 2023.

Registration standards are developed under section 38 of the National Law and are subject to wide-ranging consultation.

## Definitions

**Continuing professional development (CPD)** is the means by which members of the profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives.

**CPD activities** comprise educational activities, reviewing performance activities and measuring outcomes activities. These three types of activities are required by the Board.

A **CPD home** is an organisation that is accredited by the Board's accreditation authority, the Australian Medical Council, to provide a CPD program for medical practitioners. This organisation may be an education provider, another organisation with primary educational purpose or an organisation with a primary purpose other than education.

A **CPD program** includes details of the CPD activities needed to meet the program and Board requirements; resources and/or activities to support completion of the program requirements; a system for participants to document their professional development plan, self-evaluation and CPD activities, and to store evidence of their participation; processes for assessing and crediting activities; and processes for monitoring compliance, auditing activity and taking appropriate action for failure to meet the program requirements.

CPD programs can be a points-based program if the activities can be translated to hours for the purpose of the practitioner meeting this standard and for auditing activities.

CPD programs can be longer than one year (such as trienniums) provided they include annual requirements that meet the Board's standard.

**Doctors in postgraduate year 2 positions** are registered medical practitioners in the second year of practice following graduation as a doctor, also known as PGY2.

An **education provider** is an organisation that is accredited to provide approved programs of study that lead to registration as a medical practitioner.

**National Law** means the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

**Practice** means any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a health practitioner in their profession. For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes using professional knowledge in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients, working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles, and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession.

A **professional development plan** is a written plan that outlines a practitioner's learning goals relevant to their current and intended scope of practice and how they will achieve the goals. It includes self-evaluation of the learning goals and achievements from the previous CPD cycle and the planned CPD activities to achieve learning goals in the current year.

**Scope of practice** means the professional role and services provided that an individual health practitioner is trained, qualified and competent to perform.

**Specialist medical college** means an organisation whose program of study has been accredited by the Board's accreditation authority, the Australian Medical Council, and whose resultant qualification has been approved by the Board as providing a qualification for the purposes of specialist registration.

**Specialist trainees** are registered medical practitioners undertaking an education and training program in an AMC accredited specialist college that will lead to being eligible for fellowship and specialist registration.

**Specialist international medical graduates** are overseas-trained specialists who are applying for assessment of comparability to the standard of a specialist trained in that specialty in Australia (specialist recognition) or for an area of need specialist level position in Australia (area of need).

**Specialty** means any of the recognised medical specialties, fields of specialty practice and related specialist titles that have been approved by the COAG Health Council pursuant to the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law, as in force in each state and territory.

## Review

This registration standard will be reviewed from time to time as required. This will generally be at least every five years.

This standard replaces the previous registration standard dated 1 October 2016.