



Dalhousie CPDME Certification/Accreditation Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who can accredit/certify programs for physicians in the Maritime Provinces?

CFPC Family Physician Programs	RCPSC Specialist Programs
Dalhousie Continuing Professional Development and Medical Education (CPDME) The provincial chapters of the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC) If intended for all Maritime provinces, the CFPC National Office.	Dalhousie Continuing Professional Development and Medical Education (CPDME) A national specialist society that has accredited provider status with the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC)

Dalhousie CPDME certifies/accredits programs on behalf of the CFPC and the RCPSC. While the requirements and processes for certification/accreditation are essentially the same whether working with Dalhousie or taking the alternate routes above, the remainder of this document refers **only to Dalhousie**.

2. If the target audience for my program includes both CFPC family physicians and RCPSC specialists, will I need to submit two applications?

No. The requirements can be met with a single application and associated fee.

3. What are the first steps?

Contact Dalhousie CPDME **before** planning the program.

- We can confirm whether our office will be able to certify/accredit your program and advise you on the requirements as you proceed. Also, keeping our office informed during the planning process (typically by including CPDME.Accreditation@dal.ca when distributing meeting minutes and other planning documents) will help ensure that your program meets the requirements.
- When contacting our office about your program for the first time, please include the following information:
 - The name of your program/event (this should be included in the subject line in all emails)
 - The name of the organization(s) planning/developing the program, and confirmation that the organization meets the definition of a [physician organization](#)
 - The target audience (CFPC family physicians/RCPSC specialists/both; municipal/provincial/national)
 - A brief description of your program

Establish a scientific planning committee (SPC).

- There are a few requirements around who ought to be included in the SPC and what representation is required (see our [Accreditation/Certification Policy](#) for details). The main considerations include:
 - College representation: Depending on the type of credits being sought (CFPC Mainpro+ and/or RCPSC MOC), the SPC must include at least one active physician member of each applicable College (the CFPC, the RCPSC, or both).
 - NOTE: National programs must have at least two CFPC members in the SPC.
 - Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine representation: The Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine must be significantly involved in the planning of the program. Therefore, at least one practicing physician, who is a current faculty member of the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine, must be included in the SPC.
 - Target Audience representation: The SPC must be representative of the program's target audience. This means medical specialties, professions, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation/identity, etc. should be considered when choosing members.

Complete a needs assessment.

- Programs must be designed to address professional practice gaps in knowledge, competence, or performance. A needs assessment must be performed to identify these gaps (the perceived and unperceived needs of the target audience), guide program development (learning objectives, delivery methods, program content, evaluation strategies), and obtain information on prior knowledge and practice experience.
- The principles of equity, diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility (EDIA) should be considered/addressed in the needs assessment process.
- Documentation showing evidence of the needs assessment will be required for the application.
- See the [CFPC's Quick Tips - Needs Assessment](#) and the [RCPSC's Conducting Needs Assessment](#) for further information.

4. What are the accreditation requirements?

Details around our requirements can be found in our Certification/Accreditation Policy (included in the accreditation package), but in summary:

- The program must be developed or co-developed by a physician organization.
- The SPC must be representative of the target audience (and not be limited to those presenting the material).
- The SPC must include a practicing physician member of the Dalhousie Faculty of Medicine.
- Principles of EDIA should be taken into consideration throughout the planning of the program.
- Attendance records must be maintained, and certificates/letters of attendance must be provided to the participants.
- The program must be based on some form of assessment of needs of the target audience.
- The program must have learning objectives that address the identified needs.
- At least 25% of the total education time must be devoted to interactive learning.
- Attendees must have the opportunity to evaluate the program.
- The program must meet ethical standards for continuing professional education.

- The planning committee must provide examples of their communication with speakers regarding incorporation of evidence, addressing barriers to change, conflict of interest and adherence to copyright.

Please **carefully read our Certification/Accreditation Policy** (included in the accreditation package). It gives necessary information on our process and requirements.

5. Where can I get an accreditation package?

Accreditation packages can be found online on the [Dalhousie CPDME Accreditation website](#) or by contacting the CPDME Office at CPDME.Accreditation@dal.ca.

6. When should I submit my application?

Complete applications must be submitted to the CPDME Office at CPDME.Accreditation@dal.ca at **least 8 weeks prior** to your program/event. We reserve the right to not certify/accredit the program if the timeframe is too tight; if we do certify/accredit a late submission, additional fees may apply.

7. How long does the accreditation last?

For group learning and self-learning programs (Certified Activities and Section 1), the accreditation period is one calendar year. So, most programs will need to re-apply for accreditation on a yearly basis.

For assessment programs (Certified Assessment Activities and Section 3), the accreditation period is three calendar years.

Faculty development programs also have an accreditation period of three years.

Please note, all accreditation periods are maximum durations, based on the assumption that there haven't been significant changes to the program and its content. Dalhousie CPDME must be notified about all changes. If necessary, a new application may be required.

8. What are CanMEDS?

The CanMEDS Framework is a set of competencies for physicians. There are seven roles that identify and describe the abilities physicians need in order to effectively meet the health care needs of the people they serve. A summary of the roles is included in the Accreditation/Certification Policy. Additional details can be found on the [CanMEDS website](#).

The CanMEDS must be considered in the development of the program, and the applicable roles must be identified for each learning objective.

9. Our SPC doesn't have formal meetings or meeting minutes. What should we provide for the needs assessment/planning documentation?

Ultimately, we are looking for documentation that shows how the perceived and unperceived needs for the program were determined and how the content was developed and decisions were made. The application form asks you to explain/summarize the process, so the supporting documents you provide should support and provide further details for the answers you provide.

This documentation should include the results from the tools that were used in the needs assessment process (e.g. survey results, topic/speaker lists, etc.), as well as notes about the process, discussion, and decisions (e.g. meeting minutes, meeting summaries, email chains, etc.).

We highly recommend keeping records of the process as you proceed with the planning, rather than attempting to develop summaries after the fact.

10. Who needs to complete a Conflict of Interest (COI) form?

As per the National Standard, all members of the SPC, speakers, moderators, facilitators, and authors must provide to the program providers a written description (i.e. a COI form) of all relationships with for-profit and not-for-profit organizations over the previous 2 years.

Essentially, anyone who is in a position to impact the planning or delivery of the program must complete a COI form.

11. It's taking a long time to get COI forms back from our planning committee members, speakers, etc. Can we submit our application without them?

Applications should be as complete as possible when they are submitted. That being said, in order to approve the program, we will require at least the planning committee members' COI and Planning Committee Membership (PCM) forms, and preferably most of the speakers' COIs. The remaining outstanding forms can be submitted later; however, they **must** be submitted before the event occurs.

12. Can poster sessions be accredited and do these presenters need to complete COIs?

It depends on if the poster presentations are facilitated or non-facilitated. (I.e. is there a structured process for presenting the posters, allowing time for questions and feedback, etc.?)

Facilitated poster sessions are accreditable, and so the presenters will need to complete COIs.

Non-facilitated poster sessions are not accreditable, so presenters do not need to complete COIs. (For these activities, physicians may claim non-certified self-learning credits for viewing these posters.)

13. Our program has multiple sessions through the year, with different topics and speakers. Do we need to finalize all our sessions before we can submit our application?

No. In order to approve the program, we will require the details for **at least** the first session. The details for the subsequent sessions must be submitted 4 weeks in advance.

We have a Session Information Template available upon request, which can be used to submit information for the subsequent sessions. (It lists all the information we need to know for each session and can be customized for your use.) This template is not required, but it may be a useful tool.

14. Do participants need to complete the evaluation to receive a certificate?

In terms of accreditation, completing the evaluation is not a requirement for participants to receive credits/the certificate. They simply need to have the opportunity to evaluate the program.

However, it's a fairly common practice for program providers to tie attendance records/sign in to the evaluation (i.e. have participants complete the evaluation in order to have their attendance tracked and receive a certificate). As long as you make this requirement clear to the participants, that's acceptable.

If you proceed with this option, we do advise that you have a backup plan in case the odd participant misses the evaluation deadline but still needs their certificate. (E.g. see if there's a way to re-open the evaluation after it's closed or have a manual process for tracking attendance in place.)

15. Who should I contact if I have questions about certification/accreditation?

All accreditation applications and questions can be directed to CPDME.Accreditation@dal.ca.

16. What if I need help with other aspects of planning and delivering a program?

The CPDME Office can provide online registration for your program. For further information, please contact cpd@dal.ca for details and pricing. These services are subject to availability.

17. What if my program has sponsors (i.e. financial or in-kind support)?

Programs that receive financial and/or in-kind support from for-profit or not-for-profit organizations can be certified/accredited, but there are several regulations that must be observed. Please read the [National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities](#) and the [CMA's Guidelines for physicians in interactions with industry and Recommendations for Physician Innovators](#) for details.

The SPC must have a written agreement/contract with each sponsor, and these relationships must be disclosed to the audience (through a sponsorship acknowledgement page in the program's written materials, and through the 3-step disclosure process).

18. We haven't yet finalized all our financial/in-kind sponsors, but the rest of our application is ready. What should we do?

List all your sponsors (confirmed and unconfirmed) on the form. Where applicable, add a note next to the organization's name indicating that it's unconfirmed. When the sponsorship for the program is finalized, send us the final information. We must receive the final information before the program occurs.

19. What will it cost to work with Dalhousie CPDME?

Costs depend on the type of program and the application's date of submission. As of July 1, 2024, our office charges a minimum accreditation fee of \$500 and additional fees may be accrued if the complete application is submitted less than 8 weeks prior to the program's start date. Please see the table below for details.

NOTE: If a program/application requires an unusual amount of our time (more than five hours), we reserve the right to apply additional charges. (Such additional charges are rarely necessary.)

Type of Program	8 (or more) weeks prior	7 (or fewer) weeks prior	4 (or fewer) weeks prior
Single-session events (e.g., conferences, symposia, lectures, etc.)	\$500	\$600	\$800
Multi-session events (e.g., rounds, journal clubs, series, etc.)	\$700	\$850	\$1000
Fees covered by Dalhousie CPDME (e.g., Dal Med class reunions)	\$0	\$200	

20. **How can I pay the accreditation fee?**

An invoice will be issued along with the letter of accreditation, after the program has been approved. The invoice will include details for the payment options. In short, we accept cheques, credit cards, EFTs, direct deposits, wire transfers, and journal entries. We do not accept Interac e-transfers.

For further information, please visit the [Dalhousie CPDME accreditation webpage](#).