

Background

The Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec (FMOQ) [Quebec Federation of General Practitioners] has been certifying the participation of general practitioners in educational activities since 1967. The purpose of this arrangement was and continues to monitor the progression of continuing medical education in all regions of Quebec and promote its development. In 1981, the Quebec College of Physicians accredited the FMOQ as an educational organization; therefore, the statement of participation came to represent credits for physicians who received them and accreditation for the organizations developing educational activities. Since then, this accreditation has been successively renewed. The last renewal is valid for five years, until October 14, 2010. Furthermore, as of 2002, subjects of a professional nature affecting the organization and providing care and services to patients are eligible.

Meanwhile, the FMOQ education committee decided to distinguish category 1 credits from category 2 credits as well as members who act as FMOQ representatives from third parties interested in continuing medical education. As of 2007, the term continuing professional development has included continuing medical education and continuing professional education.

Upon a recommendation from the FMOQ education committee, in August 2003, the FMOQ Board of Directors adopted a policy to **“refuse any credit request made by a general practitioner who is not a local or regional representative of continuing medical education in the FMOQ network and who is not interested in becoming one.”**

Objectives

- Make continuing medical education an essential activity in which each general practitioner participates.
- Measure the general practitioners' level of participation in educational activities intended for them.
- Encourage the organizers of such activities to meet the criteria guaranteeing high-quality continuing medical education activities.
- Prompt a systematic use of an evaluation method during continuing medical education activities.

Official accreditation sentence (to be used in programs **after** FMOQ approval):

The Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec, a continuing education organization fully accredited by the Quebec College of Physicians, recognizes _____ hour(s) of category _____ (1 or 2) credits for those participating in this activity, provided that the Code of Ethics of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM¹) is respected.

Accredited organizations

The following organizations are accredited by the Quebec College of Physicians:

- Association des médecins de langue française du Canada (AMLFC) [Association of French-speaking Physicians of Canada]
- Collège québécois des médecins de famille (CQMF) [Quebec College of Family Physicians]
- Faculties of Medicine at Quebec universities (Laval, McGill, Montréal, Sherbrooke)
- Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec (FMOQ) and its affiliated associations
- Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec (FMSQ) [Quebec Federation of Specialty Physicians]

Reciprocal agreement

The Collège québécois des médecins de famille (CQMF) and the FMOQ both agree that the MAINPRO-M1 (and MAINPRO-C) credits and category 1 credits are equivalent for activities **developed** and **organized by the CQMF**, eligible for MAINPRO-M1 (or MAINPRO-C) credits and taking place within the geographic limits of Quebec, as long as there is compliance with the provisions of the current policy.

Relationships with Universities

The following guidelines are recommended:

- When organizing a continuing medical education program intended for general practitioners, a specialized university department must contact the Continuing Medical Education Office of the university involved.
- When a family medicine university unit or department develops activities for its own members, the university is, unless stated otherwise, the organization responsible.
- When general practitioners, even those with an academic status, develop and organize on their own or participate in the development of continuing medical education activities intended for

¹ www.cemcq.qc.ca

general practitioners in a given setting or region, they must present this matter to the continuing education representative of their association within the FMOQ.

Registration of credits in the annual statement

According to an agreement with the AMLFC that was reached in 2003, credits granted by the AMLFC will be included in the annual statement produced by the FMOQ for its members. The following comment appears on the statement: "category ____ (1 or 2) credits from the AMLFC". Another agreement was reached in 2003 with McGill University; only the "Thursday's Evening" activities will henceforth also be included on the general practitioners' statements.

Exclusions

The following are not recognized:

- **Continuing education programs offered directly or indirectly by organizations (pharmaceutical industry, governmental and paragonovernmental agencies) or by associations, institutions, even medical in nature, which are not accredited for the purposes of continuing medical education.** However, even while subject to this exception, associating with the FMOQ early in the program's development can make a previously excluded program to be converted into a valid, recognized program.
- **Continuing education programs** intended for general practitioners from more than one affiliated associations and **under evaluation by the FMOQ Professional Education directorate after the educational activity has been held.**

Educational activities statement

Every fall, the FMOQ sends all general practitioners it represents a statement of the educational activities in which the general practitioner has participated, **but this includes only educational activities organized or approved by the FMOQ and its affiliated associations.** This statement distinguishes category 1 credits from category 2 credits.

The reference year is from July 1st of until June 30th of the following year. The educational activities taking place during this period, for which the FMOQ received a copy of preferably before June 30th and by July 31st at the latest, will be included on the statement of that reference year. Any attestations received by the FMOQ after July 31st will appear on the statement for the following year.

The FMOQ will henceforth issue only **one** annual statement unless the FMOQ's receives and approves a motive provided by the physician to obtain another. In this regard, on February 21st 1997, the FMOQ Board of Directors adopted the following policy:

*Postage of an **additional** statement of educational activities containing data that is available online to SPCPD subscribers (Self-Managed Plan for continuing professional development) will henceforth entail fees of 25.00 \$ plus taxes from the general practitioner who requests it. Moreover, when the data is prior to September 1983, the research to produce such a statement must be done manually, consequently the minimum fee will be of 50.00 \$, plus applicable taxes. After the first hour, the rate will be 50.00 \$ per hour or part thereof.*

Special considerations

When a general practitioner has participated in a continuing medical education activity organized or approved by the FMOQ or an affiliated association, and when this activity does not appear on the annual statement or when the category of credits allocated is incorrect, a request supported by any relevant material must be sent to the Professional Education director who will submit it, if necessary, to the education committee for examination and appropriate provisions.

Category 1 credits

1. Preliminary note

In order for a physician who has participated in an educational activity to obtain category 1 credits, several essential steps must be taken. Most importantly, the person in charge must fill out and submit a summary of the evaluations completed by the learners. As a result, **credits can only be allocated after the activity has been held.**

Despite the preliminary note, when continuing education programs are intended for general practitioners from more than one affiliated association or when the educational sessions are held outside of Quebec, the individuals or organizations in charge who have ensured their association with the FMOQ, may wish to obtain prior recognition from the FMOQ for advertising purposes. This recognition pertains to compliance with the current policy and the scientific merit of the proposed program; such merit implies in fact, the credibility of the individuals, organizations or both, as well as the relevance of a particular program for general

practitioners. The Professional Education director is responsible for this evaluation; if necessary, he or she will consult the members of the education committee or the individuals in charge of continuing education at the affiliated associations or both.

Programs that the FMOQ has approved in this manner may use the following comment in the brochure: “The Fédération des médecins omnipraticiens du Québec², a continuing education organization fully accredited by the Collège des médecins du Québec³, recognizes ____ hour(s) of category ____ (1 or 2) credits for those participating in this activity, provided that the Code of Ethics of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM)⁴ is respected.”

Furthermore, a continuing education program intended for members of an association and approved by a regional officer may use the following comment in the brochure: “The Association of general practitioners of _____ (association), under the FMOQ accreditation process, recognizes ____ hour(s) of category ____ (1 or 2) credits for those participating in this activity, provided that the Code of Ethics of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM) is respected.”

On the other hand, a comment such as “A request for ____ category ____ (1 or 2) credits has been made with the FMOQ” or the equivalent **should not be considered as an indication** of any accreditation whatsoever.

² www.fmoq.org/P/English/Home/Index.aspx

³ www.cmq.org/en/default.aspx

⁴ www.cemcq.qc.ca

2. General procedure

A request for category 1 credits must be made using on appropriate form (*available on the FMOQ website⁵ or on the extranet site used for credit requests*) by a general practitioner identified as a continuing education officer in a setting provided by the regional officer. This request will be sent in accordance with the terms determined by the regional or provincial association involved. The officer from the identified association will ensure compliance with the criteria justifying a category 1 credit allocation and will issue a recommendation to that effect to the Professional Education director. Even if a single criterion is missing, the activity in question may not be eligible for category 1 credits. Using the analysis grid available on the FMOQ website should help the verification process.

All credit requests for an activity must be made by the general practitioner organizing the activity in question in accordance with the area of responsibility of the applicant. The general practitioner applying for credits must be an education officer from an association affiliated with the FMOQ or be a regional education officer for his/her own association.

As a result, any credit request for an activity targeting a provincial or multi-regional population group must come from a regional education officer at the very least and, ideally, from all involved regional officers. When a regional officer makes multi-regional request, he/she must inform all the involved regional officers if they are not included as applicants.

A local or sub-regional education officer must respect the territorial framework stipulated by his/her association when requesting credits, or if not, with the approval of his/her regional officer if the activity targets all general practitioners in this region or of this association.

Any local education officer interested in organizing an educational activity targeting the province of Quebec or a number of regions will have to proceed by involving, right from the first stage of development, all affected regional education officers or the FMOQ Professional Education director, except if the activity targets a limited group of physicians spread out across the province such as, for example, coroners or clinical researchers. When in doubt, it would be wise to consult the FMOQ Professional Education director at the very beginning of developing the educational activity project.

⁵ www.fmoq.org

3. General criteria

An educational program intended for general practitioners of an association, which was developed by a general practitioner clearly identified by the continuing education officer of an FMOQ-affiliated association, may be eligible for category 1 credits when all the following steps of a similar program have been completed and provided that all elements of the general procedure have also been respected:

3.1 The minimum duration of an activity is one (1) hour.

3.2 A summary of educational needs of the target group, using one of the following methods:

- Meeting with colleagues [the systematic use of this method is not recommended (see *general procedure* of category 2 credits)]
- Needs questionnaire
- Evaluation of files
- Nominal group technique
- Literature review
- Other (must be specified)

3.3 Establish educational objectives (when writing objectives, the use of some verbs such as “to know”, “to understand”, “to learn” are inadequate).

3.4 Selection of an activity type that will promote the achievement of these objectives:

- Conference
- Seminar
- Interactive workshop
- Round table
- Case discussion
- Other (to be specified in all cases)

3.5 The regional or provincial officer, who has the mandatory evaluation of the activity filled out by the participants, will send the summary of these evaluations along with the participants list and the credit request form duly completed and signed to the FMOQ. The evaluation may take different forms, in particular, the form of a post-test when it

applies to the continuing education section of the *Médecin du Québec* or a self-directed learning module.

3.6 Validating to the effect that the proposed educational activity respects the ethical standards of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM)⁶ (most recent version: January 2003).

4. Particular situations for category 1 credit allocation

4.1 Educational activities which are not exclusively university-based:

4.1.1 Publication

A general practitioner may obtain category 1 credits for the preparatory work and writing of a manuscript on a subject relevant to general medicine, when it is accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed volume or journal (1 to 15 hours per manuscript; 30 hours per self-directed learning module).

The credit request must be made using the appropriate form, available on the FMOQ website⁷ (Forms in the Continuing Education section) and be accompanied by all required information.

4.1.2 Presentation and plenary lecture

A general practitioner may obtain category 1 credits for the time spent preparing and presenting a lecture as part of a continuing medical education activity, which itself is accredited for category 1 credits (1 to 15 hours per conference up to a maximum of 15 hours per year).

The credit request must be made using the appropriate form, available on the FMOQ website (Forms in the Continuing Education section) and be accompanied by all required information.

4.1.3 Examination role

A general practitioner who has participated in the development, validation and review during the OSCE [Objective Structured Clinical Examination] leading to licensure from the Collège des médecins du Québec may obtain

⁶ www.cemcq.qc.ca

⁷ www.fmoq.org

category 1 credits. This physician must provide relevant documents to the Professional Education director who will evaluate their merit and consult the education committee if necessary.

4.2 Interactive workshops

In order for an interactive workshop to be accredited for category 1 credits, the FMOQ needs to be involved early in the development process, either directly or through a representative that it chose. This representative will report periodically, in writing, regarding its compliance with the structured approach in the development of this type of educational activity.

General practitioners will obtain education credits based on the amount of time spent at the session, in which this learning method and corresponding educational material is used. A continuing medical education officer of an affiliated association does not have to re-validate the content of a workshop developed in close consultation with the FMOQ. However, a credit request for each continuing education activity using this program material is required.

For more information on the development and validation of interactive workshops, please contact the Direction of Continuing Education.

On the FMOQ website, a list of all validated workshops is available at:

www.fmoq.org/FormationProfessionnelle/ActivitesFormation/AteliersInteractifs/Index.aspx.

Category 2 credits

General criteria

Category 2 credits are allocated when a given educational activity, usually conducted in a group, meets the criteria required for a category 1 credit allocation, with the exception of not requiring an evaluation by participants. Therefore, all criteria listed under section 3 must be met, except 3.5.

In fact, a needs assessment is essential in the development of any continuing education activity, because it acts as a foundation in setting the learning objectives of this activity, and the most appropriate educational method under the circumstances must be chosen.

Please note that compliance with the Code of Ethics of the Conseil québécois de développement professionnel continu des médecins (CQDPCM)⁸ is also required for an educational activity that is accredited for category 2 credits.

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⁸ www.cemcq.qc.ca