

## **CIPHI's Continuing Professional Competencies (CPC) Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What exactly is the CPC Program?**

The CPC Program was developed to ensure that Environmental Public Health Professionals, such as Environmental Health Officers, Public Health Inspectors, and CPHI(C) holders working in the profession or industry, are equipped with the skills, knowledge, and abilities essential in their role of protecting the health of Canadians. The CPC Program includes elements such as a code of ethics, standards of practice, discipline specific competencies, and a professional development model.

### **2. Where can you find out more information about the program?**

CIPHI sent out hard copies of the official CPC Program Reference Guide Release 1.1 to its' members during the 2010 Environmental Public Health Week (January 18<sup>th</sup> to January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010). Electronic copies are available on CIPHI's website ([www.ciphi.ca](http://www.ciphi.ca)) for download. An email address ([cpcprogram@ciphi.ca](mailto:cpcprogram@ciphi.ca)) has also been set up for all CPC related inquiries.

### **3. Are documents and forms available in French?**

Yes, as of February 2010, The French version of the CPC Program Reference Guide became available on CIPHI's website and hard copies were sent to all francophone colleagues as well. As a national organization, CIPHI is cognizant of the need to ensure that documentation is available in French.

### **4. Why did CIPHI decide to develop such a program?**

With the establishment of the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), competency development in professional public health associations was identified as a key strategy, thus, initiating the launch of the CPC initiative with the goal to develop a framework that is relevant to Environmental Public Health within this larger context. The CPC Program is supported by funding from PHAC.

### **5. Who has been involved in developing the program?**

The CPC Program is the result of a concerted effort of a large group of individuals from the Environmental Public Health profession, many of them volunteers. Without their commitment and dedication, the program could not have kicked off on January 1, 2010.

### **6. How will the program benefit participants and employers?**

The program allows professionals to self assess and improve their competency by directing and diversifying their professional development activities. In this way, the program can guide professionals' career development and improve the recognition and credibility of our profession.

Employers will also benefit from the program in several ways. They program will help employers identify staff development and training needs, provide a rationale for securing funds to support workforce development and staffing, and assist with staff engagement.

## **7. Are employers starting to see the benefits of the CPC Program?**

Yes they are. For example, two provinces where CIPHI has been active in connecting with government and agencies are Ontario and Alberta. CIPHI Ontario Branch has met with the Association of Supervisors of Public Health Inspectors in Ontario. The Branch has also held preliminary discussions with the Chair of the Council of Medical Officers of Health to promote the CPC Program and encourage them to incorporate it in their respective agencies. Alberta Health Services is in the process in adopting the CPC Program as the foundation to a "made in Alberta" program for continuing professional development using the professional development model and the discipline specific competency statements as a baseline for Environmental Public Health Professionals.

## **8. Who should participate in the program?**

All Environmental Public Health Professionals should participate in the program starting in 2010.

## **9. What does the CPC Program involve step-by-step?**

CIPHI has developed a set of discipline specific competency statements. Starting in 2010, CPHI(C) holders should use the competencies to conduct a self assessment which can be used to guide professional development activities. You can break the process down into five steps:

1. Using the defined competencies to conduct a self assessment
2. Using the summary of ratings from the self assessment to identify learning objectives
3. Reviewing the professional development model requirements
4. Putting the learning objectives into action and collect professional development hours (PDHs)
5. Submitting PDHs to CIPHI by December 31<sup>st</sup>

## **10. What is a Discipline Specific Competency?**

CIPHI has developed a set of discipline specific competencies for Environmental Public Health. These competencies describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for continued development after receiving the CPHI(C) in the field of Environmental Public Health.

Each discipline specific competency is described by a competency statement. Members will rate themselves against the statements using CIPHI's Self Assessment Tool. Currently, a temporary version of the tool is available on CIPHI's website for download in MS Word format. Towards the end of the 2010 calendar year, the tool will be available through CIPHI's online member services centre. CIPHI will send out a notification once the online tool is up and running.

## **11. What is the professional development model?**

The professional development model quantifies the areas in which Environmental Public Health Professionals should direct their professional development in order to maintain and improve their professional competency. To achieve this, the professional development model specifies the annual professional development hours (PDHs) required of Regular CIPHI members.

## **12. What are the professional development requirements?**

As part of the CPC Program, CPHI(C) holders will collect 80 professional development hours (PDHs) per year, 50 of which will be obtained from professional practice (i.e. “on-the-job” hours). Even if members work part-time, chances are they will be able to obtain the total allotment of practice hours. The remaining 30 PDHs will come from a combination of activities such as mentoring, courses, conference attendance, presentations, research activities, and many more. For example, an MA thesis defence is worth 30 PDHs, a 2-day course (at 6 hours per day) is worth 12 credits, and delivering a 2-hour presentation outside your normal job function is worth 2 credits. Note that regular work meetings fall under the professional practice category even if they involve a learning or professional development element. Special courses, workshops, and presentations put on by your employer that help you gain new skills and knowledge fall into the “other activities” category. You can find more information about the program requirements in the CPC Reference Guide, especially the professional development model section.

The professional development requirements may seem high, but consider that there are exemptions for leaves of absence, retirement, and when resuming active practice. There will also be a depot of available continuing education courses made available through the National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health.

CIPHI has prepared a Detailed Activity Record Form which allows professionals to track and record professional development activities. A temporary version of the form is available for download in MS Word format on CIPHI’s website. Towards the end of the 2010 calendar year, the form will be available as an interactive online module in CIPHI’s member services centre. CIPHI will send out a notification once the online module is up and running.

## **13. Should I submit a form to CIPHI to apply for professional development hours (PDHs)?**

No, CIPHI changed the procedure on this. Only organizations/institutions delivering courses should apply for course credits. Organizations/institutions should use the “Application for Approval of Professional Development Hours” Form from CIPHI’s website. Individual members should not apply but should instead record the appropriate number PDHs in their Detailed Activity Records at year-end. For questions on PDHs, please email CIPHI at [cpcprogram@ciphi.ca](mailto:cpcprogram@ciphi.ca).

## **14. What courses, workshops, and conferences have been approved by CIPHI?**

The National Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health (NCCEH) is working with CIPHI and Klaus Seeger from Seeger and Associates to prepare an online directory of environmental public health upcoming courses, workshops, seminars and conferences. The directory will be open to the public on the NCCEH website soon. We will send CIPHI members a message once the site is ready.

Opportunities in the directory will include one time, ongoing, and online opportunities. You will be able to search the listings by topic and location. If available, the site will even list the number of professional development hours (PDHs) you gain through participation in an opportunity. Institutions and course organizers, who would like to post their information in the directory, will be able to do so by contacting the NCCEH.

Another place you may want to check out is CIPHI's website. It now features a list of professional development opportunities that have been approved for credit in the CPC Program.

**15. How long should I keep supporting documentation?**

CIPHI recommends that you keep any documents supporting the professional development hours (PDHs) that you are claiming for the current calendar year and at least two additional years. Examples of supporting records include conference descriptions and registrations, course descriptions and registrations, proof of presentations delivered, proof of participation on committees and boards, etc.

**16. How will CIPHI monitor participants in the program to ensure they are meeting the requirements?**

CIPHI has established a new entity, the Council of Professional Experience (CoPE), to administer the CPC Program. CoPE will regularly review professional development claims from randomly-selected regular membership holders to assess the nature and status of their professional development claims and progress in meeting both their own professional development goals and the needs of the CPC Program.

CIPHI will notify members who have not completed their online Detailed Activity Record by December 31<sup>st</sup> via email.

**17. What happens if someone does not meet the professional development requirements?**

CoPE will first work with the member to develop a remedial plan to help them to reach the minimum requirements of the CPC Program. Members who fail substantially to meet minimum CPC goals may be subject to membership review by CIPHI.