



Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education*

Statement on Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

In order to safely and effectively help patients make the best use of their medications - the basis of “pharmaceutical care” - pharmacists need to maintain their professional competence throughout their careers. Colleges and schools of pharmacy prepare their graduates to have the necessary competencies to enter practice, but no professional program can provide or develop all the knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities that a pharmacist will ever need in practice. These can only be gained through the combination of an appropriate educational foundation (pre-service), in-service training, hands-on work experience, and “lifelong learning”.

In line with its mission *to assure excellence in education for the profession of pharmacy* and in accordance with one of the objectives of its Strategic Plan – *to initiate a collaborative reevaluation of the existing CE model in pharmacy* - the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) has studied the concepts of Continuing Professional Development, as outlined in the Statement on Continuing Professional Development of the International Pharmaceutical Federation¹.

ACPE has noted the findings and conclusions relating to the effectiveness of continuing education published in the professional literature, as well as the recommendations of several notable reports, primarily some of the recent reports of the Institute of Medicine. ACPE has also noted the experiences and findings of other countries and professions regarding CPD.

Based on the above, ACPE considers that the concept of CPD is built on sound educational principles, and that CPD can further engage pharmacists as adult learners, and enhance the overall effectiveness and outcomes of continuing education. ACPE believes that the CPD model provides the opportunity for *quality improvement* of the current system of continuing education, building on the existing strong foundation of quality-assured, accredited continuing education for pharmacists.

ACPE acknowledges that, while CPD appears to be a relatively simple concept, implementation of CPD is likely to pose a number of challenges – for pharmacist practitioners, pre-service educators, providers of continuing education and regulatory bodies. Further discussion on the implications of national adoption of the CPD model is required.

ACPE is, however, firmly committed to participating in these discussions to further explore CPD and its implications for pharmacy in the United States. Furthermore, ACPE is committed to responding to the needs of the profession, and the public as a whole, with regard to any changes or improvements that may be required in its policies, procedures or standards to ensure that, as an organization, it continues to assure excellence in education for the profession of pharmacy.

Adopted by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, Chicago, Illinois; September 2003.

Reference:

1. The International Pharmaceutical Federation. FIP Statement of Professional Standards: Continuing Professional Development. Adopted September 2002. www.fip.org

* ACPE was founded in 1932 as the American Council on Pharmaceutical Education.