

# The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education's Continuing Professional Development Program Accreditation Pathway A New Approach for U.S. Pharmacist Continuing Education and Development

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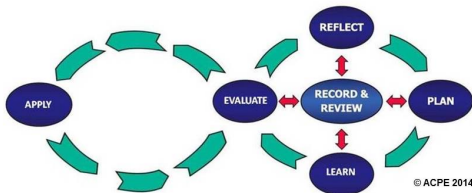
## Introduction

- The Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE) defines continuing professional development (CPD) as "a self-directed, ongoing, systematic and outcomes-focused approach to lifelong learning that is applied into practice."<sup>1</sup>
- CPD has been shown to increase the impact of continuing pharmacy education (CPE) on student and pharmacist development, with positive benefits observed in students during experiential education, preceptor development, and practicing pharmacists completing continuing education.<sup>2,3,4</sup>

## CPD Program Description

- In January 2023, the ACPE Board of Directors approved principles for organizations to develop Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs for accreditation consideration.
- Providers of CPD programs must develop policies and procedures in addition to designing their programs around CPD program principles, developed by the ACPE CPD Advisory Committee and approved by the CPE Commission and Board of Directors.
- In the accreditation pathway starting January 2024, Providers of CPD programs will be able to award CPD units (CPDUs) for the completion of the following cycle components: *Reflect, Plan, Learn, Apply, and Evaluate*.<sup>5</sup> A depiction of the cycle can be found in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The ACPE CPD Cycle



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For more information about ACPE CPD:



## CPD Units encourage pharmacists to develop their own CE plan, identify learning needs and opportunities, and apply learning to practice.

### Principles and Applications of CPD

Table 1. ACPE CPD Principles and Descriptions

CPD Principle	Description
Principle 1. Systematic planning of the CPD program	Providers of CPD programs should establish and employ a systematic planning process for the development and implementation of a CPD process for learners.
Principle 2. CPD Program design	The CPD Program should employ a design or process based around the components of a CPD cycle: Reflect, Plan, Learn, Evaluate, Apply, Record/Review
Principle 3. Assessment of Learner CPD	The CPD Provider employs processes validating and documenting learner engagement and performance, with focus on learning outcomes and impact on professional practice, patient/population health, and/or organizational/system outcomes. Assessment feedback is to be provided to the learner in a constructive and timely manner through each step of the CPD cycle (formative) and upon completion of the program (summative).
Principle 4. CPD Program Evaluation	The CPD Provider conducts or facilitates a structured evaluation of the CPD program for determining its effectiveness in supporting and promoting self-directed lifelong learning. Information gathered should be used in a systematic fashion for the purpose of ongoing improvement of the provider's CPD program.

Table 2. Examples of CPD

Learner or Setting	Description of CPD Implementation
Practitioners	Used to increase the amount of continuing education (CE) taken and increase the impact of CE, including application of learning to practice and identification of new learning needs. <sup>2</sup>
Faculty and Preceptors	Used to facilitate the annual review, promotion and tenure, and preceptor development to improve clinical teaching, communication/educational skills, student/teacher connection, and educational resource development. <sup>3</sup>
Students or Residents	Used to facilitate achievement of learning outcomes and foundational lifelong learning habits. <sup>4</sup>
CE Providers	Used to address specific commendation criteria related to individual learning plans and CPD for the CE team, such as ACPE C2, C8, C13.

## Awarding CPD Units

- As learners complete specific activities which satisfy cycle components, providers of accredited CPD programs are able to award CPD units (CPDUs).
- Regardless of the number of activities completed for each cycle component, 2 CPDUs may be awarded for each cycle component (e.g., *Reflect* = 2 CPDUs). Awarding 2 CPDUs for completing a cycle component is intended to place focus on the process of learning, rather than the time or number of activities completed.
- Within a single CPD cycle, individuals are eligible to receive a maximum of 10 CPDU. While encouraged, learners are not required to complete a cycle to receive CPDUs.
- For providers with accredited CPE programs, CPDUs may be awarded for completion of CPE activities which satisfy cycle components, integrating the CPE and CPD system for pharmacist development.

## Discussion and Conclusions

- Providing an accredited CPD program has the potential to facilitate the intentional and cyclical process of learning required for learners to apply knowledge and skills into practice.
- CPD may be particularly useful for organizations with accredited CE programs, as CPD can be used to address commendation criteria related to individual learning plans, innovative educational programming, and CPD for the CE team.

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## References

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