

Are South East Asian Countries Ready for Revalidation Process of Physicians Through Mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Activities?

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The terms Continuing Medical Education (CME) and CPD have been used interchangeably in most of the countries. CPD is open to many interpretations and the term CME differs from CPD. However, there seems to be a lot of overlapping in the way CME and CPD are defined by the accreditation bodies. The regional guidelines on CME/CPD paper published by the WHO, define CPD as follows. "CPD is beyond clinical update, includes wide-range of competencies like research and scientific writing, multidisciplinary context of patient care, professionalism and ethical practice, communication, leadership, management and behavioural skills, team building, information technology, audit, and appropriate attitudinal change to ensure improved patient service and research outcomes and attainment of the highest degree of satisfaction by stakeholders. The ultimate goals of the programme are to reassure patients and the public that doctors remain competent, confident and compassionate throughout their career and to augment patient care outcome and satisfaction by setting standards for good medical practice" (WHO, 2010, p.1). CME is updating clinical knowledge only. Thus, CME is a component of CPD and CPD involves a wide range of skills required for medical practice.

Currently, many countries have developed as well as amended rules and regulations to practice medicine. Revalidation is the process by which licensed doctors are required to demonstrate that they are up to date and fit to practice and it should be done on a regular basis. It demonstrates to patients and public that their doctors are regularly checked by the governing body (GMC, 2014). It is reported that, CPD is mandatory in most of the countries due to social and political pressure (Davis et al., 1995; Davis, 1998a; George, 2011). Davis et al., 1992 stated that health care outcomes could also be improved by implementing a mandatory CPD system. Hence, it is seen that mandatory CPD activities are essential to improve health care outcomes.

The CPD credit system is one of the main method of documenting CPD activities. However, there is no internationally standardized system for using CPD credits as the evidence of participation in CPD. Awarding CPD credits for different CPD activities seem to vary among countries. Furthermore, it is observed that the number of CPD credits required for relicence and consequences of noncompliance also varies among countries.

Current situation of CPD and revalidation in South East Asian countries

In Sri Lanka, practice of medicine is only permitted to doctors who have obtained a registration from the Sri Lanka Medical Council (SLMC). The registration is done after successful completion of one year of internship training and renewal of registration takes place four yearly as an administrative process. Currently, CPD is voluntary and the Sri Lanka Medical Association, which is the largest national professional medical association in the country, has commenced a National CPD Certificate programme for all the

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