



**Ethiopian Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration
and Control Authority**

**Directive on Continuing Professional Development for Health
Professionals**

March, 2013

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Preamble

Whereas changing medical knowledge, evolving technology, rapid organizational changes, increasing public expectations and greater accountability necessitate the need for updating professional competence;

Whereas continuing professional development will contribute to the competency of health professionals and eventual improvement of quality health services;

Whereas it is found necessary to systematically organize the fragmented continuing professional development activities in Ethiopia;

Whereas, with a view to link with re-licensing, continuing professional development is one of the main regulatory requirement provided under the Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Regulation for re-licensure;

Now therefore, the Ethiopian Food, Medicine and Health Care Administration and Control Authority have adopted this directive in accordance with article 55 (3) of the Food, Medicine, Health Care Administration and Control Proclamation and articleof the Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Regulation.

Part One

General

1. Title

This directive may be cited as “Directive on Continuing Professional Development for Health Professionals No.12./2013.”

2. Definition

Notwithstanding to the definition provided under Proclamation No. 661/2009 and unless the context require otherwise in this directive:

1. “Continuing Professional Development” shall mean a range of learning activities through which health professionals maintain and develop throughout their career to ensure that they retain their capacity to practice safely, effectively and legally within their scope of practice;
2. “Authority” shall mean the Ethiopian Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Authority;
3. “Proclamation” shall mean the Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Proclamation No. 661/2009;
4. “Ministry” shall mean the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health;
5. “Health professional” shall mean a health worker involved in the promotive, preventive, curative, or rehabilitative health services licensed by the Authority or regional health regulatory bodies;
6. “Accreditation” shall mean a type of quality assurance process under which potential continuing professional development providers and courses are evaluated by an Accreditor to determine if applicable standards are met;
7. “Continuing education unit” shall mean a unit which indicates the value attached to a learning activity for continuing professional development;

8. “Accreditor” shall refer to a professional association or other mandated body by the Authority to pre-accredit continuing professional development providers and courses;
9. “Provider” shall refer to public or private institutions including universities, health science colleges, professional associations and other training institutions that meet the specified criteria and have been accredited by the Authority or its designated Accreditor to present learning activities for continuing professional development;
10. “Employer” shall mean any organization hiring health professional to practice in his/her profession;

3. Scope of applications

This directive shall be applicable on all health professionals practicing in Ethiopia.

4. Principles

1. No health professional may be re-licensed without fulfilling the required credit points in accordance with this directive.
2. No continuing professional development course or activity may be counted unless standardized and recognized as such by the Authority.
3. Standardization of continuing professional development shall be made following applicable guidelines adopted by the Authority.

Part Two

Roles and Responsibilities

5. Authority

1. The Authority shall establish a Continuing Professional Development Accreditation Committee (herein after referred to as the “Committee”) consisting of at least 7 representative members from professional associations, the Ministry training institutes and other relevant bodies.
2. The Committee established in accordance with sub-article (1) of this article shall be chaired by a representative from the Authority and shall meet regularly. The Committee may adopt its own rules or procedures.
3. The Committee shall have the power and responsibilities including:
 - a. develop implementation guidelines and manuals for a uniform system of continuing professional development that will accommodate the diversity of health professions;
 - b. assign Accreditors in accordance with selection criteria provided under the relevant guideline;
 - c. approve pre-accredited courses and providers;
 - d. accredit Accreditors where the Accreditor seeks to be a provider;
 - e. investigate complaints and take appropriate administrative measures against Accreditors;
 - f. review the continuing professional development accreditation guideline when necessary; and
 - g. undertake other necessary activities to achieve the purpose of accreditation of courses and providers.
4. The Authority shall establish a Continuing Professional Development Accreditation Unit (hereinafter referred to as the “the Unit”).
5. The Unit established in accordance with sub-article (4) of this article shall be responsible to:

- a. develop and made available forms necessary for continuing professional development accreditation;
- b. maintain an up-to-date website with electronic copies of downloadable guides, forms, related documents and list of accredited providers and courses;
- c. develop and maintain continuing professional development data base;
- d. overall administration and monitoring of continuing professional development system in the country; and
- e. undertake other necessary activities to achieve the purpose of continuing professional development.

6. Ministry

The Ministry:

1. creates means to encourage and recognize participation of health professionals in continuing professional development activities in collaboration with other stakeholders;
2. facilitates the conduct of professional development activities need assessment;
3. encourages professional associations and providers to identify and develop professional development activities;
4. ensures, in collaboration with the Authority, in-service trainings considered as continuing professional development courses with credit points; and
5. organizes continuing professional development activities and identify means to fund and sustain the same.

7. Accreditors

Accreditors shall have the power and responsibility to:

1. review applications for providers and courses for pre-accreditation;
2. review the appropriateness of continuing education units allocated for courses by providers;

3. monitor compliance of providers with this directive and applicable guidelines and recommend appropriate administrative measures to be taken by the Authority; and
4. investigate complaints and recommend appropriate administrative measures to be taken by the Authority.

8. Providers

Providers shall:

1. develop and provide need based continuing professional development courses;
2. assign a course coordinator for each course and, if relevant, assign facilitators;
3. meet agreed educational quality requirements in course design and delivery;
4. publicize courses accurately with sufficient information as per the relevant guideline;
5. issue an attendance certificate containing necessary information in accordance with the applicable guideline;
6. keep a record reflecting completion of activity and shall retain these for a period of five years;
7. report continuing professional development activities periodically as per the applicable guideline to the Authority;
8. amend, where necessary, accredited courses in accordance with changing circumstances; and
9. apply for license renewal to an Accreditor every five year.

9. Professional Associations

Professional associations:

- a. may serve as an Accreditor and/or a provider;
- b. recommend credit point requirements for the respective profession; and
- c. participate in need assessment and propose continuing professional development activities in their respective profession.

10. Health Professionals

1. Every health professional shall:
 - a. judge the educational value of the activity or course and its appropriateness for the learning needs;
 - b. complete the specified continuing education units of activities in each year;
 - c. ensure possession of a certificate of attendance for every activities attended and keep these for at least five years; and
2. Health professional who is registered in more than one profession shall be required to obtain continuing education units for each profession. If a continuing professional development activity which is relevant for both professions, continuing education units may be considered for both professions.

11. Employer

Employers shall:

1. undertake continuing professional development need assessment for their health workers and, where appropriate, report the result of their need assessment to the relevant organ;
2. avail adequate time for their employees continuing professional development activities; and
3. may solicit fund for their employee's continuing professional development activities.

Part Three

Accreditation and, Credit Allocation and Requirements

12. Application to be an Accreditor

1. Potential Accreditor fulfilling the criteria set in accordance with this directive and applicable guidelines may apply to the Authority to function as an Accreditor.
2. The Accreditor shall fulfill appropriate infrastructure requirements in accordance with the relevant guideline.
3. The Committee shall review the application, weigh against set criteria and may approve, recommend correction or deny application made in accordance with sub-article (1) of this article. Approval of application shall be valid for five years.

13. Provider accreditation

1. The Accreditor shall establish a designated Panel consisting of relevant professionals to perform its pre-accreditation responsibilities.
2. A record of all applications received, as well as their outcomes and a record of the minutes of all Panel's meetings shall be kept for at least five years.
3. Provider accreditation application shall be made to the Accreditor 3 months prior to the start of the course.
4. The Accreditor shall review the application, weigh against set criteria and may approve, recommend correction or deny pre-accreditation.
5. In case where contentious applications arise the case shall be referred to the Committee.
6. The Authority shall review the pre-accreditation document and may approve, recommend modification or deny accreditation. If approved, Authority shall register and certify the provider and the accreditation shall be valid for five years.
7. Accreditation shall be renewed against evidence that provider is continuing to meet the requirements of Accreditation and shall provide an updated version of the documentation submitted for Accreditation 2 months prior to license date of expiry.

14. Course accreditation

1. Any provider requiring course accreditation shall fill accreditation form prepared by the Authority in accordance with Annex A and submit with all relevant documentation to the course Accreditor. This application shall be submitted at least three months before the anticipated date of implementation of the course.
2. The Accreditor shall check the completeness of the application; assign application number and a professional category to the application after reviewing criteria in accordance with the applicable guideline.
3. The course Accreditor may pre-accredit, recommend correction or deny accreditation. If the Accreditor pre-accredit the course it shall forward the same with all required documentation to the Authority for approval.
4. The Authority, upon receipt of the application in accordance with sub-article (3) of this article, may approve the course and its credit value designated by the provider, recommend correction or deny accreditation.
5. Where it is necessary to request expert review, the Accreditor may request such review from an expert who shall not be an author or presenter of the program, employee of the course provider or in any way would be in conflict of interest.

15. Credit allocation and requirement

1. Credit points may only be counted if the course received is accredited by course Accreditor, approved by the Authority and found relevant to the applicants practice.
2. All health professionals shall be required to earn at least 30 credit units per year and 150 credit units per five years to get a re-licensure..
3. Notwithstanding to sub-article (2) of this article professional associations may recommend a higher credit points requirement for their specific professional category.
4. Continuing education unit allocation and related issues shall be done in accordance with applicable guideline.

Part Four Miscellaneous

16. Conflict of interest

If an Accreditor is likely to benefit financially or otherwise by recommending an application for provider or course accreditation every effort shall be made to make sure such application to be referred to an independent Accreditor for pre-accreditation review.

17. Courses or Activities taken abroad

Credit point recognition for courses or activities taken abroad shall be done in accordance with relevant guideline.

18. Service fee

1. The Authority may request service fee in accordance with applicable directive or practice.
2. The Accreditor may charge reasonable fee for the services it provide.

19. Uncovered matters

Any issue related to continuing professional development and which is not addressed by this directive shall be done in accordance with relevant guidelines adopted by the Authority or the Ministry.

20. Inapplicable laws

No directive or practice shall be applicable in so far as it is contradictory with provisions provided under this directive.

21. Effective date

This directive shall enter into force one year from the date of signature by the Director General of the authority.

Done at addis Ababa, this 15th day, March, 2013.

Yehulu Denekew

Director General

Ethiopian Food, Medicine and Healthcare Administration and Control Authority