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QUICK TIPS

Virtual Continuing Professional Development Activity Conversion and Development

For presenters and planning committee members
of Mainpro+® certified programs and events

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2630 Skymark Avenue, Mississauga ON L4W 5A4 | 2630, avenue Skymark, Mississauga ON L4W 5A4
905 629-0900 Fax 1 888 843-2372 www.cfpc.ca | 905 629-0900 Téléc 1 888 843-2372 www.cfpc.ca



Whether you are converting an in-person continuing professional development (CPD) activity to a virtual format or developing a new virtual CPD activity, there are several things to consider when planning and creating virtual education.

Consider the Format

What works in an auditorium or classroom may not work when learners are accessing the content from a variety of locations and devices. Think about the fact they may be joining a webinar from home with the distractions of home and family life. Others may be joining you from a vehicle and only able to follow the audio content of the webinar. The visuals and content used in the design should be optimized for different devices and settings.

Less is More

An eight-hour in-person conference should not be converted to eight hours of virtual learning. Consider the learning objectives and goals for the activity and select content best suited to meet those goals in shorter blocks of time. You may wish to consider breaking up the content into multiple bite-size modules for easier access and consumption by the learners.

Personal Touch

Learner engagement can be difficult when the instructor is a disembodied voice coming out of a computer or mobile phone. When possible use video in virtual learning formats and encourage the learners to activate their cameras when they can. When developing asynchronous learning opportunities, include video vignettes to increase personal connections with the learning. Create opportunities to allow the instructor and learners to connect on a personal level.

Keep it Simple

Information shared in a workbook or binder may become overwhelming in an online format. Try not to overwhelm learners with email attachments or multiple files on a single screen. Instead, layer course materials in an easily consumable format. Avoid creating too many clicks or breadcrumb trails to follow.

Think About the Platform

Think about the platform you are using to deliver the education and ensure your methods and content suit the platform. Some questions for you to consider are:

- Will you need to share your screen?
- Will you need to use “breakout rooms”?

If you have invited speakers make sure they are aware of the platform and its capabilities and limitations. You should also consider the technical capabilities of your participants. Keep in mind that not everyone has the same comfort level or skill with technology. If your platform is very complicated or too technologically advanced for your learners, it will negatively impact their learning experience.

The Mainpro+® Certification Standards and Virtual CPD

It is important to remember that you must meet the Mainpro+ Certification Standards when developing virtual CPD activities. The next few points address some key aspects of the Certification Standards to keep in mind for virtual CPD:

Conflict of Interest disclosure

The activity must include disclosure of relevant financial relationships to the learners, even if your virtual activity does not include live presenters. This includes any identified conflicts of interest (or lack thereof) by the scientific planning committee members and program development faculty, as well as disclosure of any financial support (or lack thereof) provided for the program development. If conflicts are identified the conflict mitigation strategy used by the scientific planning committee must also be made clear to the learners. These disclosures and mitigation should be made to the learners before they access any of the educational content. This can be done in an on-screen format or via a video clip.



Registration process for virtual CPD

The Mainpro+ Certification Standards require that participants must be able to register and receive a receipt or record of registration for all online/virtual CPD activities. This is required regardless of whether the CPD activity has a registration fee.

Interactivity requirements

If you are converting an in-person CPD activity to a virtual format you must ensure that the delivery of the learning continues to meet the interactivity requirements for Mainpro+ certification. For a live or asynchronous Group Learning activity there must be a means for the participants to interact with the material, with each other, and with faculty or a facilitator. For Self-Learning activities there must be a means for learners to interact with the material and with a faculty member or facilitator (primarily to address questions regarding the content).

There are several ways you can address interaction with the material. Polling software, pre- and post-tests, multiple choice questions built into the learning, and interactive cases are some examples. Interaction with other participants can be handled in live virtual learning via breakout rooms, chat rooms, and discussion boards. Asynchronous learning can use chat rooms and discussion boards for interaction between participants and with faculty. Faculty interaction can also be managed using an email address to submit questions about the content.

Acknowledging sponsors

The Mainpro+ Certification Standards and the National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities allow for financial and in-kind support of virtual CPD activities by external organizations. This financial support may be recognized in virtual formats with an acknowledgement that complies with the Mainpro+ Certification Standards and the National Standard. When acknowledging sponsors there are a few key points to remember:

- Frame recognition of financial and in-kind support using the standard acknowledgement statement outlined in the National Standard: “This program has received an educational grant or in-kind support from [name of organization(s)]”
- Avoid branding strategies that include using colours, fonts, and themes reminiscent of sponsors’ corporate or product branding
- Separate the introduction of virtual exhibit halls, sponsored sessions, etc., from Mainpro+ certified material; in addition, they cannot be promoted within the same invitations or agendas as certified material



SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Review the following documents to learn more about the standards and creating CPD activities:

- **Mainpro+ Certification Standards**
- **National Standard for Support of Accredited CPD Activities**
- **QUICK TIPS: Identification and Management of Conflicts of Interest and Transparency to Learners**



CONTACT US

If you have questions or need more information, contact us via email at certplus@cfpc.ca, or call the Mainpro+ Certification line at **1-866-242-5885**.