

# Continuing Competence/Education Program Requirements

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## Introduction

This document refers to dentists registered in Alberta.

*A commitment to continuing competence and lifelong learning is fundamental to each practitioner's obligation to fulfil this responsibility.*

The College of Dental Surgeons Alberta (CDSA) is mandated to regulate dentists. Through the CDSA, the dental profession is accountable for the quality of dental care that is provided within Alberta.

The CDSA endorses and promotes the philosophy that dentists must keep their knowledge up to date and maintain competency in their practices throughout their careers. All members of the dental team must strive to deliver the highest standards of professional care in the provision of dental services. It is the responsibility of every dentist to abide by the expectations set by the *Health Professions Act, Dentists Profession Regulation, Code of Ethics* and *Standards of Practice*.

The need for dentists to be current in learning and practice has intensified in recent years. Rapid technological change, innovation in health care delivery, new clinical procedures and increasing social awareness are just a few examples of why every dentist must meet their professional responsibility and the need to maintain competence. A commitment to continuing competence and lifelong learning is fundamental to each practitioner's obligation to fulfil this responsibility.

The CDSA has established continuing education requirements for annual practice permit renewal for dentists as part of a Continuing Competence Program. The details of the program and guidelines for fulfilling the requirements are presented in this document.

## Program Principles

CDSA's Continuing Education Program is based on the following principles, which should be considered by dentists in planning for continuing education activities.

- It is the responsibility of every dentist to maintain their own competence to practice.
- The incorporation of self-reflection and self-assessment into day-to-day practice are important components of this responsibility.
- Practice improvement and professional growth are the ultimate goals of continuing education within CDSA's Continuing Education Program.
- The *Standards of Practice* are core documents that should be used for self-assessment by dentists. Examples of other documents include the *Code of Ethics*.
- Dentists are encouraged to link learning activities and professional development to their individual practices as a means of enhancing competence.

## Program Objective and Eligibility

The objective of the Continuing Competence/ Education Program is to promote competence and professionalism at all stages of a dentist's career.

While you may find value in a CE session, be advised that some sessions may not fulfil the CE program objectives and, therefore, will not be eligible for CE credits.

To be eligible for credit, CE activities must:

- have significant intellectual and/or practical content related to the practice of dentistry
- have significant intellectual and/or practical content related the management of the dental practice
- activities related to your professional responsibilities and ethical obligations as a dental professional

## Approved Educational Sources

The following list includes, but is not limited to, sources where dentists, may obtain courses, lectures or equivalents that are recognized for continuing education credit, subject to limitations contained in the guidelines.

NOTE: The Continuing Education Review Panel reserves the right to deny eligibility of credits for programs that do not meet the objective of the Continuing Education Program, even if those programs come from approved sources. If there are questions as to whether a course will be eligible for credits, please contact the CDSA for further information.

- A recognized educational institution, i.e.
  - » study clubs registered with the College of Dental Surgeons Alberta
  - » study clubs recognized by provincial dental regulators
  - » teaching hospital
  - » government health agencies
  - » military-sponsored health related courses
  - » resuscitation programs (BLS, ACLS, PALS and airway management, etc.)
  - » dental component societies
  - » professional association courses
  - » dental or medical regulatory authorities
- An educational institute that is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or American Dental Association (ADA)
- A body that has been approved by the American Dental Association Continuing Education Recognition Program (ADA CERP), Academy of General Dentistry Approval for Continuing Education (AGD PACE), or the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) Recognition Program
- An international, national, provincial or state dental or medical association
  - » Examples: Canadian Dental Association (CDA), American Dental Association (ADA), and FDI World Federation (FDI)



## Continuing Education Requirements

The requirements for Continuing Education are outlined in provincial legislation governing dentists. Dentists are required to obtain 60 credits in two-year cycles.

Your CE requirement runs on a two-year cycle, with each new cycle commencing January 1 of the even calendar year and ending December 31 of the odd calendar year.

### *Reporting Credits and Records of Continuing Education*

Credits should be reported as they are earned. Credit hours are credited in the year they are obtained. Credits in excess of those required in a two-year cycle cannot be carried forward to a subsequent two-year cycle. Transcripts for each dentist are maintained based on information reported to the CDSA.

Dentists are responsible for ensuring that credits toward continuing competence/education are reported to the CDSA via the Continuing Education portal quick link on the member's portal. Acceptable reporting methods are letter and/or certificate of successful completion.

Dentists are responsible to ensure where Electronic Data Verification is utilized that they scan in and out of each session to ensure accurate reporting for Continuing Education credit hours.

If there is a discrepancy on your transcript, such as a duplicate submission, ineligible session, etc., your credits will be adjusted.

It is each dentist's responsibility to maintain documentary evidence of program completion (for example, course descriptions, certificates and course syllabi).

A Continuing Education reminder email will be sent to dentists approximately six months before the end of the two-year cycle.

### *Audit Process*

The CDSA has implemented an audit process for continuing education submissions. This audit process occurs daily and involves clinical dental regulatory directed continuing education course submissions submitted via the Continuing Education portal.

Dentists are reminded that it is your ethical responsibility to ensure that all reporting of CE credits is accurate. Failure to do so may constitute unprofessional conduct.

### *Continuing Education Exemption*

Application for continuing education exemption for the current practice permit renewal year can be made in writing to the CDSA Registrar and must be accompanied by supporting documentation i.e., doctor's letter. Deadline for application for exemption is two months after receiving your CE reminder and must be submitted in writing to the Registrar.

- Medical Health reasons:
  - » Illness or disability 6 months and over with letter from doctor
  - » Loss of job due to illness for 6 months and over with letter from doctor
  - » Death of a spouse, child or dependent with letter from doctor
  - » Severely ill spouse, child, or dependent with letter from doctor
  - » Any extenuating circumstances not listed above can be submitted

*Credit Hours*  
*1 hour = 1*  
*credit*

*Only hours of lecture, instruction or participation are eligible.*

*Maximum of 8 hours per day.*

*Credits Required*  
*Dentists must obtain a minimum of 60 credits during a two-year cycle.*

# Categories of Continuing Education

Following are descriptions of directed education and categories under which dentists may earn Continuing Education credits and credits allowed in each category over a two-year cycle.

<i>Directed Education</i>	<i>Categories and Description</i>	<i>Credits (per two-year cycle)</i>
<p><b>REGULATORY DIRECTED</b></p> <p>Regulatory-Directed Learning is a process in which dentists take mandatory education courses implemented through motions by Council, Standards of Practice or compliance with <i>the Health Professions Act</i>.</p>	<p><b>Resuscitation (BLS):</b> All regulated members must have yearly HCP/CPR (Basic Life Support – BLS) including AED or equivalent.</p> <p><b>Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct:</b> Patient relations program which includes training for registrants on protecting patients from sexual abuse and sexual misconduct.</p> <p>This training is a requirement of the HPA. A three-module education resource on <b>Protecting Patients from Sexual Abuse and Misconduct</b> is available on the member’s portal.</p>	<p>maximum 4 credit hours per year maximum 8 credit hours per two-year cycle</p> <p>3 hours</p>
<p><b>SELF-DIRECTED</b></p> <p>Self-Directed Learning is a process in which dentists take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in accessing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, and identifying resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies.</p>	<p><b>Clinical Dental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-Person Course / Lectures</li> <li>• Virtual Course / Lectures</li> <li>• Self-Study / Self-Instructional Courses</li> </ul> <p><b>Personal Wellness</b> Relates to mental and physical wellness of oneself, staff and patient care.</p> <p>Examples include, Didactic courses related to mental illness, sexual health and conduct, and substance abuse.</p> <p><b>Practice Management and Financial</b> Relates directly to the operation and management of a dental practice.</p> <p>Includes courses related to marketing products or services to patients and courses related to personal financial or retirement planning.</p>	<p>see pages 7 – 9 for specific categories, learning modalities, descriptions and credit hour limits; maximum of 40 self-study hours</p> <p>maximum of 10 hours</p> <p>maximum of 10 hours</p>

# Regulatory Directed Education – Resuscitation (BLS) Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct

Regulatory Directed Learning is a process in which dentists take mandatory education courses implemented through motions by Council, Standards of Practice or compliance with the *Health Professions Act*.

Under Regulatory Directed Education Alberta dentists have 2 Regulatory Directed categories to fulfill. These are outlined below.

## Resuscitation (BLS)

Resuscitation: HCP/CPR (BLS)

All regulated members must have yearly HCP/CPR (Basic Life Support – BLS) including AED or equivalent.

### CREDIT LIMITS

Maximum of 4 credits yearly,  
Maximum of 8 credits in the two-year cycle.

## Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct

Bill 21: An Act to Protect Patients; April 2019 amended the HPA.

The Act directs that all health profession regulators establish a patient relations program which includes training for registrants on protecting patients from sexual abuse and sexual misconduct.

The CDSA *Standard of Practice: Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct* defines who is considered to be a patient for the purposes of the sexual abuse and sexual misconduct provisions in the *Health Professions Act*, and to clarify the consequences of engaging in sexual abuse or sexual misconduct with a patient.

The mandatory Protecting Patients from Sexual Abuse and Misconduct course covers expectations for the profession and its relationships with patients. The knowledge and application of these expectations by registrants will help to protect patients from sexual abuse and misconduct.

### CREDIT LIMITS

3 hours in the two-year cycle.

# Self-Directed Education – Clinical Dental, Personal Wellness, Practice Management and Financial

Self-Directed Learning is a process in which dentists take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in accessing their learning needs, formatting learning goals, identifying resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies.

Under Self-Directed Education Alberta dentists have 3 Self-Directed categories to consider. These are outlined below.

## Clinical Dental

Topics related directly to the provision of patient care and treatment.

### CREDIT LIMITS

See Self-Directed Clinical Dental Categories, Learning Modalities, Descriptions and credit limits on pages 7 – 9.

## Personal Wellness

Topics that are geared towards mental and physical wellness of oneself, staff and patient care.

Didactic courses including, but not limited to, courses related to mental illness, sexual health and conduct, and substance abuse.

### CREDIT LIMITS

Maximum of 10 hours in the two-year cycle. See page 9.

## Practice Management and Financial

Topics that relate directly to the operation and management of a dental practice.

Includes courses related to marketing products or services to patients. Includes courses related to personal financial or retirement planning.

### CREDIT LIMITS

Maximum of 10 hours in the two-year cycle. See page 9.

## Self-Directed Education – Categories and Learning Modalities

Self-Directed Clinical Dental Categories	Description	Credit Limits
<b>IN-PERSON Course/Lecture</b>	Single or multi-day course or scientific lecture where the course or lecture was in-person/hands on.	Eligible for credit on an hour for hour basis with a maximum of 8 hours per day.  Unlimited hours in the two-year cycle.
<b>VIRTUAL Course/Lecture</b>	Single or multi-day course or scientific lecture where the location of seminar or educational method used is a Live interactive webcast/webinar where the course/seminar was delivered in real time. Fully interactive – no portion was pre-recorded; no portion was self-study or self-instructional.  Various platforms including Zoom, Google Meet, Skype, Cisco WebEx, etc.	Eligible for credit on an hour for hour basis with a maximum of 8 hours per day.  Unlimited hours in the two-year cycle.
<b>SELF-STUDY/Self-Instructional Lecture</b>	Self-Study/Self-Instructional are lectures which are pre-recorded and have an examination.  May include the following mediums: educational/clinical video tapes, CD-ROM, other video formats, Internet/Webinar and print-based material.  See member’s website for partial listing of approved providers.	Maximum of 40 credits per two-year cycle, without duplication.  The Continuing Competence Review Panel or Registrar will determine the number of credits eligible and will extend credit only to those courses that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a clearly defined learning objective</li> <li>• supporting literature references</li> <li>• post-course knowledge assessment or other mechanism</li> <li>• direct feedback of post post-test results</li> </ul> <i>(Total hours will not be based on the time an individual takes to complete a program.)</i>
<b>Self-Directed Clinical Dental Learning Modalities</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Credit Limits</b>
<b>Advanced Study</b>	Graduate or Postgraduate programs related to the practice of dentistry at an accredited university or college.	Credits for Master Programs are granted on a program basis to a maximum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 hours/year for full time per two-year cycle;</li> <li>• 60 hours divided over the life of the program/year if part time per two-year cycle; or</li> <li>• 60 hours over the two-year cycle to be determined at the discretion of the Registrar.</li> </ul>

Self-Directed Clinical Dental Learning Modalities	Description	Credit Limits
<p><b>Dental / Medical Emergencies</b></p>	<p>Resuscitation courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)</li> <li>• Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)</li> <li>• Emergency Airway Management</li> <li>• Pediatric Emergency Airway Management</li> </ul>	<p>ACLS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 credits for full course</li> <li>• 8 credits for renewal course</li> </ul> <p>With a maximum of 16 credits in the two-year cycle.</p> <p>PALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16 credits for full course</li> <li>• 8 credits for renewal course</li> </ul> <p>With a maximum of 16 credits in the two-year cycle.</p> <p>Emergency Airway Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 credits</li> </ul> <p>With a maximum of 4 in the two-year cycle.</p> <p>Pediatric Emergency Airway Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 credits</li> </ul> <p>With a maximum of 4 in the two-year cycle.</p>
<p><b>Dental Teaching / Examination</b></p>	<p>Clinical Supervisors may claim credit hours of clinical instruction or examination.</p>	<p>Teaching:</p> <p>In accredited university or college.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full time – maximum of 10 hours per year; 20 hours over the two-year cycle.</li> <li>• Part time – maximum of 5 hours per year; 10 hours over the two-year cycle.</li> </ul> <p>Examiner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Dental Examining Board of Canada (NDEB) or Royal College of Dentists of Canada (RCDC) – maximum of 10 hours over the two-year cycle.</li> <li>• University of Alberta – MMI training and admission interviews for first year dental students – maximum of 10 hours over the two-year cycle.</li> </ul> <p>Presentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation on a professional development activity by the regulated dentist – maximum of 20 hours over the two-year cycle, to be determined at the discretion of the Registrar.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Exhibits / Meeting Attendance</b></p>	<p>Attendance at non-specific educational activities: e.g., general meeting attendance, exhibits at trade show, etc.</p>	<p>Maximum of 2 credits per meeting with a maximum of 4 credits per two-year cycle.</p>

Self-Directed Clinical Dental Learning Modalities	Description	Credit Limits
<b>Legislation HIA / PIA</b>	Accepted Privacy Impact Assessment by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Alberta.  See member's website for more details.	Maximum one-time 15 credits.
<b>Philanthropic Clinics</b>	Dentists are able to obtain credit hours for attendance at approved volunteer Dental Programs.	Maximum of 12 hours in the two-year cycle.
<b>Publication / Authorship</b>	Authorship of Articles  Dental articles written and published in a peer-reviewed journal of dental or medical literature may qualify, subject to approval by the Registrar.	Up to 10 credits in the two-year cycle may be granted, at the discretion of the Registrar.  <i>(An example of 10 credits would be the lead author of an article published in a professional publication.)</i>
<b>Study Clubs / Small Group Learning</b>	Study clubs and other forms of peer-to-peer learning are encouraged (e.g., Lunch and Learn, Hospital Rounds).  CDSA registered study club sessions are not automatically eligible for CE credits. A session must meet the requirements outlined in this document to be eligible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Study Clubs – maximum of 30 hours in the two-year cycle.</li> <li>• Lunch and Learn – maximum of 4 hours in the two-year cycle.</li> <li>• Hospital Rounds – 1 hour per round, with a maximum of 8 hours in the two-year cycle.</li> </ul>
Self-Directed Personal Wellness Category	Description	Credit Limits
<b>Personal Wellness</b>	Topics that are geared towards mental and physical wellness of oneself, staff and patient care.  Didactic courses including, but not limited to, courses related to mental illness, sexual health and conduct, and substance abuse.	Maximum of 10 hours in the two-year cycle.
Self-Directed Practice Management and Financial Category	Description	Credit Limits
<b>Practice Management and Financial</b>	Topics that relate directly to the operation and management of a dental practice.  Includes courses related to marketing products or services to patients. Includes courses related to personal financial or retirement planning.	Maximum of 10 hours in the two-year cycle.

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The Alberta Dental Association and College is now operating under the name College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta. This name will become official when Alberta's *Health Professions Act* is amended.

If you have questions, contact CDSA Continuing Education at 780-432-1012 or toll free within Alberta 1-800-843-3848. You can also reach us by email at [ce@cdsab.ca](mailto:ce@cdsab.ca) or visit our website at [www.cdsab.ca](http://www.cdsab.ca)



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