1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides an overview of the aims and requirements of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Program.

All Fellows in active practice and not participating in another approved program have a requirement to participate in RACS CPD Program. A Fellow is defined as ‘active’ if they are undertaking any form of medicine, surgery, medico legal services or non-clinical work such as research and administration. The RACS CPD Program is an annual program and Fellows are required to submit their CPD for each year they remain in active practice.

2. KEYWORDS

Continuing Professional Development Program, CPD, Practice Type

3. BODY OF POLICY

3.1. Aims

The aims of the CPD program are:

3.1.1. To advance the individual surgeon’s knowledge, skills, competence and behavioural awareness for the benefit of patients, and

3.1.2. To encourage a culture of life-long learning that promotes collaboration, peer review and reflective practice, and

3.1.3. To provide Fellows of the College with evidence of compliance with the CPD program through an annual Statement of Compliance.

3.2. Program Requirements

CPD Program requirements vary according to practice type. It is important that Fellows maintain the same standards regardless of hours worked. Requirements are the same for full-time and part-time surgeons. As part of the College’s commitment to addressing discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment, all participants in the CPD program are required to complete an online Operating with Respect module and are expected to maintain their knowledge and competency in this area. Fellows who are Surgical Supervisors, IMG Clinical Assessors or who are a Training Board and/or Education Committee representatives must also undertake additional training in adult education principles (i.e. Foundation Skills for Surgical educators course or approved comparable training) and advanced training in preventing discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment (DBSH). Trainers must also undertake additional training in adult education principles (i.e. Foundation Skills for Surgical Educators course or approved comparable training).

3.2.1. Practice Type 1 – Operative practice in hospitals or day surgery units

a. Surgical Audit and Peer Review (Category 1)

b. Accrue at least 10 points in Clinical Governance and Quality Improvement (Category 2)

c. Accrue at least 50 points in Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills (Category 3)

d. Participate in at least one Reflective Practice activity (Category 4)
3.2.2. Practice Type 2 - Operative procedures in rooms only
   a. Surgical Audit and Peer Review (Category 1)
   b. Accrue 50 points in Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills (Category 3)
   c. Participate in at least one Reflective Practice activity (Category 4)

3.2.3. Practice Type 3 - Operative practice as a locum only
   a. Surgical Audit and Peer Review (Category 1)
      If a peer reviewed audit is not available, maintain a logbook of surgical procedures in the Morbidity Audit Logbook Tool (MALT) and present this for review by the Locum Evaluation and Peer Review Committee.
      The Locum Evaluation and Peer Review Committee will only review the logbooks of locums who perform an equivalent of 10 weeks full time work, in a calendar year.
   b. Accrue 50 points in Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills (Category 3)
   c. Participate in at least one Reflective Practice activity (Category 4)

3.2.4. Practice Type 4 – Clinical consulting practice only
   a. Surgical Audit and Peer Review (Category 1)
   b. Accrue 50 points in Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills (Category 3)
   c. Participate in at least one Reflective Practice activity (Category 4)

3.2.5. Practice Type 5 – Non-operative practice and surgical assisting
   a. Accrue 30 points in Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills (Category 3)
   b. Participate in at least one Reflective Practice activity (Category 4)

3.3. CPD Program Categories
Fellows must undertake a broad range of education activities to maintain their CPD; the following is a summary of the categories in the CPD Program.

3.3.1. Category One: Surgical Audit and Peer Review
All surgeons who perform operative procedures (hospitals, day surgery units or private rooms) or who engage in clinical consulting practice are required to participate in an audit of practice each year and to submit the audit for peer review. Fellows can participate in a range of audits to meet their CPD requirement including:
   a. Focused Audit
   b. Group audit (incl. Clinical Unit Audit)
   c. Selected audit from surgical practice
   d. Total/Practice Workload Audit
e. Peer Review of Reports (non-operative Fellows only)

All Fellows who have had a patient death under their care are required to participate in an ANZASM (where there is an audit available). Participation in ANZASM is defined as: Completion of all surgical case forms sent to the surgeon by ANZASM within two months of receiving the form.

3.3.2. Category Two: Clinical Governance and Quality Improvement

All surgeons (other than locums) who work within hospitals or day surgery units must be involved in activities that support the safe provision of pre-operative, operative and post-operative management of patients and the maintenance of surgical standards. Activities may include hospital/clinical meetings that focus on improvement in clinical care, meetings reviewing adverse events or activities related to organisation or review of surgical services.

3.3.3. Category Three: Maintenance of Knowledge and Skills

Surgeons are responsible for maintaining their skills, knowledge and competence and for keeping up to date with developments in their area of practice, as well as developments in clinical and medical science. As part of this requirement, all Fellows who are involved in Surgical Supervisors, IMG Clinical Assessors or who are a Training Board and/or Education Committee representative must undertake additional training in adult education principles (i.e. Foundation Skills for Surgical Educators course or approved comparable training) by January 2018 and advanced training in preventing discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment (DBSH) by December 2018. In addition, all Trainers must undertake additional training in adult education principles (i.e. Foundation Skills for Surgical educators course or approved comparable training) by January 2018.

Fellows can also meet requirements in Category Three by attending scientific meetings and workshops/seminars directed at maintaining and enhancing knowledge and skills, teaching, supervision, publications, examining trainees, volunteering and other self-directed learning.

3.3.4. Category Four: Reflective Practice

To support the commitment to create a culture of respect and collaboration in surgical practice and education, all Fellows of the College are required to participate in activities that promote self-reflection and champion respectful behaviours. This includes embracing diversity, fostering gender equity, increasing transparency and being open to independent scrutiny and external accountability. In 2017, to meet this category requirement all participants including Fellows, IMGs and non-FRACS surgeons must complete the RACS Operating with Respect eLearning module. From 2018 onwards other activities that meet the reflective practice requirement include multisource feedback, development of a structured learning plan and patient feedback surveys.

3.4. Exemptions

Fellows who are fully retired from all forms of medicine, surgery, medico legal services and other non-procedural and non-clinical work are not required to participate in the CPD Program.
New Fellows admitted to the College after 30 October are granted an automatic exemption from participating in the CPD Program for that year.

An exemption from participation in all or part of the program may be granted in certain circumstances and will be considered on application in writing to the Chair, Professional Standards Committee. Grounds for exemption may include:

3.4.1. Fellows undertaking a subsequent RACS Fellowship
3.4.2. Ill health, family leave or other personal reasons
3.4.3. Other special circumstances

Fellows who reside overseas must participate in the College program or another approved professional development program and where requested must be able to provide evidence of compliance. Fellows must apply for an exemption in writing or via CPD Online, stating one of the above grounds. Fellows wishing to discuss an exemption should contact the Department of Professional Standards.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Continuing Professional Development Program Guide
CPD Program - Participation and Compliance Policy
CPD Program - Approval of Educational Activities Policy
Surgical Audit and Peer Review Guide
Surgical Competence and Performance Guide
RACS Code of Conduct
Sanctions Policy
Professional Conduct Committee Terms of Reference
Locum Evaluation and Peer Review Committee Terms of Reference

Approver: Professional Development and Standards Board
Authoriser: Council