

## Self-Reflection and Physician Practice Improvement Exercise

### Purpose of this Exercise

Complete this exercise and return it with your other review materials. You will discuss it with a physician peer reviewer later in the process. The exercise is intended to help you:

- Reflect on how well you are managing your own health, stress and work-life balance.
- Consider some of your strengths and challenges in practice.
- Review your current approach to professional development or quality improvement.
- Identify sources of information and feedback about your practice that you could use to focus and increase the impact of your professional development.
- Commit to examining at least one aspect of your practice using a quality improvement approach, as illustrated by the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada - Physician Practice Improvement (FMRAC-PPI) framework.

### Background

The practice of Medicine is constantly changing, as are the knowledge and skills required to practise in a safe and effective manner. A commitment to practice improvement through continuing professional development (CPD) is a necessary element of professional self-regulation.

Physicians in Nova Scotia are required to register and be compliant with the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) frameworks of either the College of Family Physicians of Canada (CFPC Mainpro+) or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC MOC). Both require some learning activities that are linked to a practice assessment. One focus of the PPR-NS program is to strengthen the connection between practice assessment, professional development and practice improvement.

Each physician's practice is unique, as are the challenges faced. Some challenges are readily evident to physicians, while others exist in blind spots, invisible to us unless deliberately sought or pointed out through review including but not limited to, chart audit, peer feedback, or other types of assessment tools. Although self-assessment has value, we are all inherently limited in our ability to recognize the things we do poorly and require some external appraisal for effective practice review.

While any educational activity has the potential to benefit practice, those that are deliberately undertaken in response to an identified deficiency or challenge are more likely to result in a positive practice change. When learning is purposefully applied and assessed for effect, the benefit is greater still.

Practice improvement should be viewed through a wide lens. CPD programs and activities most often focus on the acquisition of knowledge. However, there may be other areas that are just as worthy of your attention. Beyond knowledge or even technical skills, your ability to communicate effectively, document a patient encounter, organize your office, manage a team or maintain work-life balance are likely of key importance to the ongoing health of your practice.

### The Practice Improvement Cycle

Recently, the Federation of Medical Regulatory Authorities of Canada (FMRAC) led a collaboration of medical regulators and educators that resulted in a new framework designed to promote Physician Practice Improvement (PPI). The result of this work is illustrated by a five-step learning cycle.



\*FMRAC PPI System – February 2016

Physicians who have participated in Quality Improvement (QI) activities may recognize a familiar pattern in this diagram. In brief, this is what the five steps mean:

Understand your Practice – Consider your practice scope including the important clinical, non-clinical and academic competencies necessary to do your job well.

Assess your Practice – Seek out sources of information or feedback on your performance in a relevant aspect of your practice. Are you performing well, or is there a gap that should be addressed?

Create your Plan – If you identify a gap between your current performance and where you need or want to be, create a professional development plan with the goal of closing this gap.

Implement your Plan – Take your new knowledge or skills and put them into practice. Consider what resources or strategy may be required to make the change. What may stand in the way of success? How might you reduce these barriers?

Evaluate the Outcomes – Check back to see whether your practice change has produced the desired change in performance or outcome. This may involve a second assessment phase or further learning.

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### Exercise

#### 1. Conduct a self-check.

Most physicians find the practice of Medicine to be very rewarding, but it can also be challenging and stressful. PPR-NS wants to help physicians make positive changes to their practice. Managing stress, personal health and work-life balance is a legitimate and important focus for practice improvement.

Rate yourself on the following statements:

I manage my health effectively.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

I manage my personal stress effectively.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

I am happy with my work-life balance.

Strongly Disagree    Disagree    Neutral    Agree    Strongly Agree

If you want to make one of these a focus for your peer review experience, be sure to discuss this with your peer reviewer.

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2. Consider the scope of your medical practice.

Scope can be broadly defined by your specialty, the types of patients and conditions you see, the procedures you perform and the community in which you practice. Non-clinical activities such as teaching, research, practice management or administration may also be part of your practice scope.

Refer back to your *Practice Profile Questionnaire*. This should describe many aspects of your scope of practice.

Your clinic log, MSI billing report or EMR may provide additional information about your clinical scope (patient demographics, commonly seen conditions, procedures performed, etc.). Use these if you wish.

(A written response not required for this question.)

3. Print the last 24-months of your CPD history from your Mainpro+ account. To do this, you must print two separate reports:

- a) Historical Cycle Report. This report contains the complete history of your CPD. Please print just the pages that represent your CPD activities for the past 24 months.
- b) My Transcript of CPD Activities. This report allows you to select a date range for the report. Please download and print your last 24 months of CPD activity.

*Note: You have to print both reports to capture credits recorded in previous versions of Mainpro.*

If you require assistance downloading and printing your reports, please visit the CFPC website or contact the CFPC Mainpro+ coordinators at:

Phone: 1-800-387-6197 x560

Email: [mainprocredits@cfpc.ca](mailto:mainprocredits@cfpc.ca)

Website: [http://www.cfpc.ca/Mainpro+\\_FAQs/](http://www.cfpc.ca/Mainpro+_FAQs/)

4. Review your CPD reports and ask yourself the following questions:

- Have you met at least the minimum annual standards (credits) for your program?
- How relevant is your recent CPD to your scope of practice? Are there obvious gaps? Do you tend to focus on things you are already good at?
- What kind of learning do you tend to access and enjoy? Individual or group activities? Readings or conferences? Lectures or interactive sessions?
- How much of your recent CPD did you undertake in response to some kind of data, feedback or assessment related to your practice?
- Are there barriers to you accessing good CPD? What gets in the way? Cost? Time? Geography?

(A written response not required for these questions.)

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5. List three strengths of your practice. How do you know each is a Strength? (for example, intuition, self-assessment, peer or patient feedback, outcomes, data, etc.)?

Complete the following table, considering not just your knowledge or medical expertise, but all aspects of your practice (for example, collaboration with colleagues, communication with patients, resource management, work-life balance). Think broadly, but be as specific as possible.

You may wish to start by considering aspects of practice in which you have the greatest experience or confidence. What gives you the greatest satisfaction, reward or enjoyment? Are there aspects of your practice for which you already receive positive feedback?

Aspect of your practice that you consider to be strengths	How do you know it is a strength?
<i>Example: Office Management and efficiency</i>	<i>I see majority of urgent appointments same or next day. Internal audit showed wait times for non-urgent matters less than 7 days for &gt; 90% of patients. Office runs on time most days.</i>
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②	
③	

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6. Map a recent practice change to the FMRAC-PPI cycle.

Using the tables below, consider a positive change you have made to your practice within the past year. It might be a major change or something relatively focused.

Name the positive change to your practice:

Complete the following table, relating it to the practice change you identified above:

<b>Understand your Practice</b> Why is this aspect of your practice important?	
<b>Assess your Practice</b> What sources of information or feedback did you use to check your performance? What gaps did you identify?	
<b>Create your Learning Plan</b> What learning resources did you use? Were resources or opportunities hard to find?	
<b>Implement your Plan</b> How did you put your learning into practice? What did you change? Did you encounter any barriers?	
<b>Evaluate the Outcome</b> Was there evidence of a positive effect? Were further adjustments required? How will you monitor these changes on an ongoing basis?	

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7. List THREE aspects of your practice that you would like to change or improve, along with the reasons you feel a change is necessary (for example, intuition, self-assessment, peer or patient feedback, outcomes data, etc.).

Complete the following table, considering not just your knowledge or medical expertise, but all aspects of your practice (for example, collaboration with colleagues, communication with patients, resource management, work-life balance). Think broadly, but be as specific as possible.

You may wish to consider aspects of practice that create uncertainty, conflict or stress. What creates anxiety or keeps you awake at night? What do you least enjoy or often postpone doing? Where have you had a problem, poor outcome or complaint? Do you have data that suggests a problem?

<b>Aspect of your practice that you would like to change or improve</b>	<b>Why do you feel a change is necessary?</b>
<i>Example: Improve my understanding of adjunctive therapies for chronic pain.</i>	<i>I have over fifty patients on high doses of opioids. Need alternatives. Maybe medical marijuana, acupuncture?</i>
①	
②	
③	