

NATIONAL CPD FRAMEWORK FOR STATE OF QATAR HEALTH SYSTEM: ONE-YEAR JOURNEY OF IMPLEMENTATION



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BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

To regulate the practice of Healthcare Practitioners (HCPs) and ensure best quality patient care in Qatar, the CPD was linked to the renewal of licensure. All licensed HCPs in Qatar are required to complete annual, category-specific and 2-year CPD cycle requirements to maintain licensure. Qatar council for healthcare practitioners (QCHP) envisioned a single framework that would be applicable to all HCPs regulated by a single regulatory authority. The purpose was also to provide necessary support for smooth implementation of the CPD framework across the healthcare sector in the State of Qatar. An effective media and communications awareness campaign before launch was perceived critical to a successful launch. A robust CME/CPD media and communications campaign in addition to a robust IT system that would ease the implementation of the CPD framework were considered apparent.

METHODOLOGY:

With creativity in the footing, the CME/CPD framework was implemented on March 7, 2016 at the national level for all HCPs in the State of Qatar. A structured CME/CPD media and communications campaign that continuously engaged the healthcare practitioners (HCPs) and prepared them for the new Mandatory CPD participation policy was designed. Media campaign was mostly aimed at creating awareness amongst the healthcare practitioners and local community for implementation of National CME/CPD framework. Dynamic healthcare communication strategies and various modes of communication such as the print, electronic, outdoor and social media were utilized towards building a well-informed and well-oriented community of HCPs about the National CME/CPD program. The campaign was initiated eight months prior to the implementation of the CPD Program. The communications campaign had to disseminate well-defined focused messages to the target audiences repeatedly, over time, in a technical and simple manner at a low cost; therefore, digital social media played an important role in utilizing resources to maximum capacity with stakeholder engagement which was key to the CPD program implementation. The campaign was delivered in two phases, the first phase focused on orienting the HCPs with theme "continuous development, enhanced performance" and the second phase focused on engaging the HCPs with key message "more knowledge, better patient care."

In order to be more resourceful and efficient, regular orientation programs were held at governmental and private healthcare organizations during the campaign. Weekly open-days, hotline number and departmental email were initiated following the implementation of the CPD program to provide the required support to the HCPs that leveraged the communications campaign to a completely new level of support system that worked in the realms of QCHP.

A professional ePortfolio on QCHP website for CPD implementation was designed, developed and tested for recording CPD by HCPs. The IT system conceptualized had to meet the functional and technical requirements, besides, provide cost-effective solutions providing timely program modifications and upgrades in response to changing industrial needs, regulatory requirements, advancing technology in addition to providing a superior customer service and technical support to clients. The IT system designed comprised of the following portals:

1. HCPs portal for recording CPD activities,
2. CPD Providers portal for submitting CPD activities for accreditation by QCHP
3. Reviewers/Surveyors portal for reviewing of CPD programs by Reviewers/surveyors
4. Portal for Mutual agreement with international accreditation bodies and recognitions achieved by QCHP
5. Public Portal for sharing information with a public.

The ePortfolio was tested and implemented for use. The ePortfolio has eased the CPD framework implementation and in the long run will contribute in research and analyzing the impact of CPD on clinical practice.



TAKE HOME MESSAGE:

Early and ongoing engagement with healthcare practitioners for implementation of a new system via an appropriate communication plan is the key factor in successful implementation.

RESULTS:

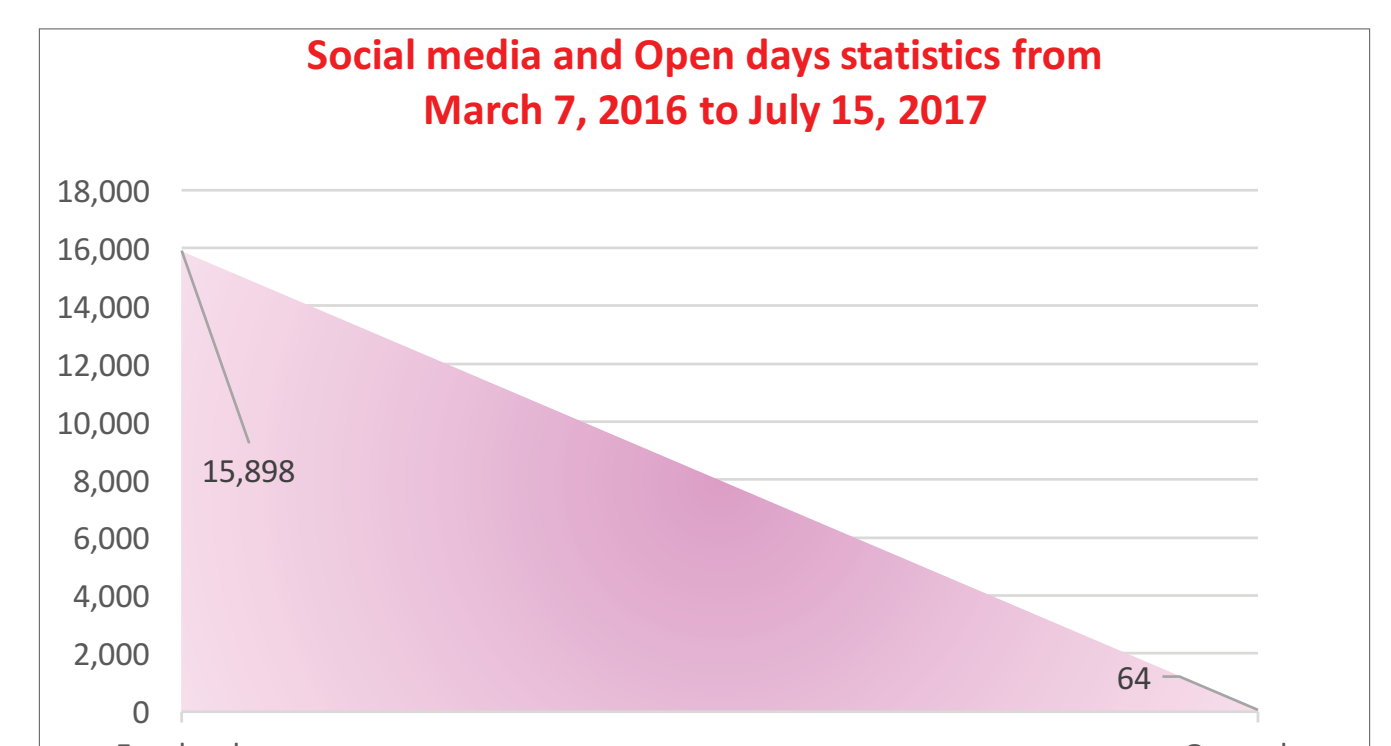
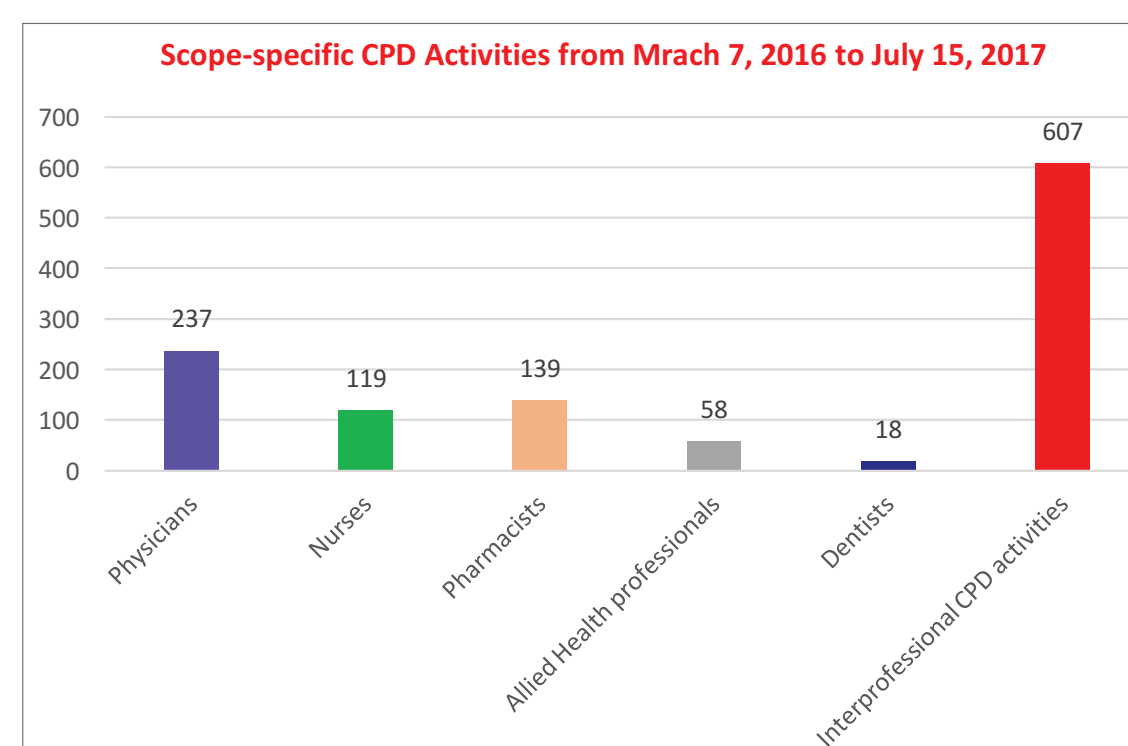
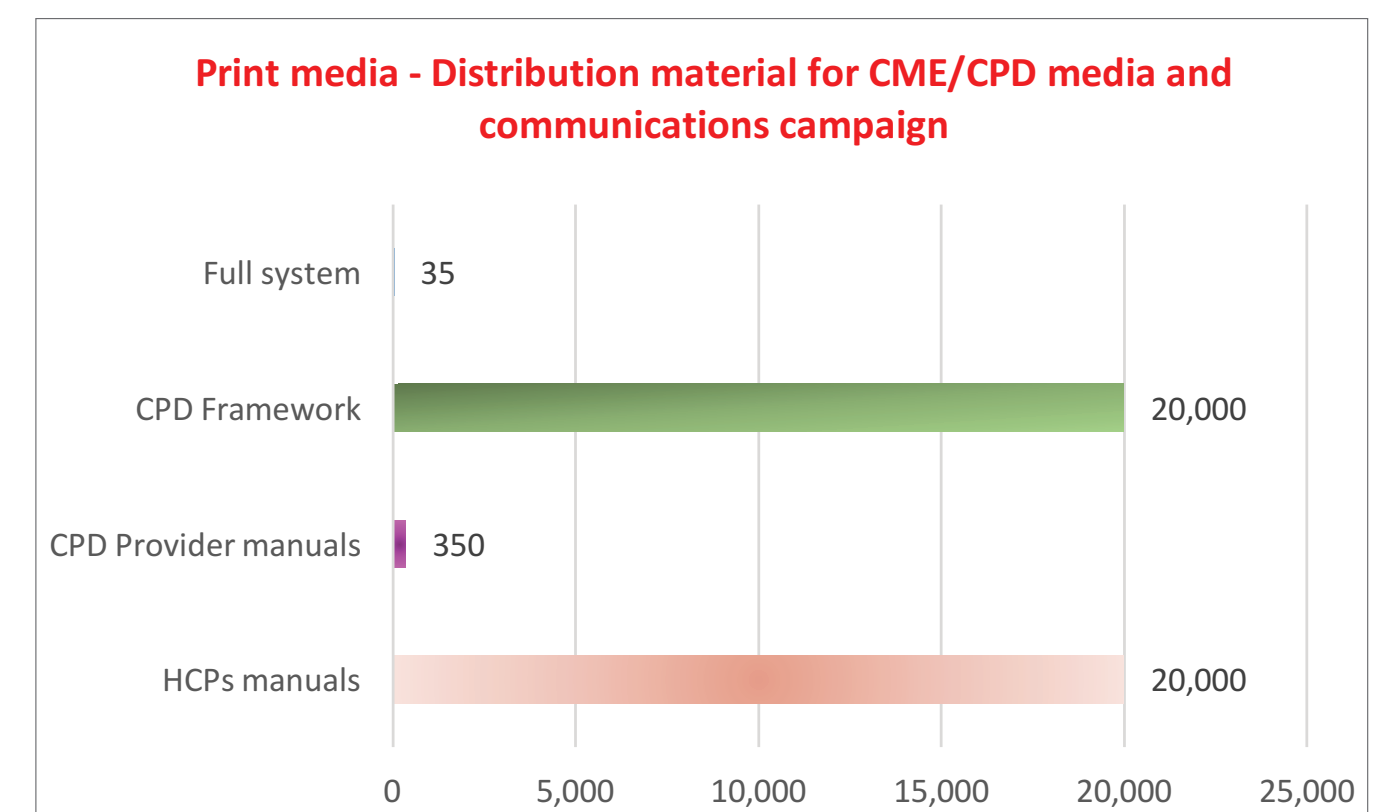
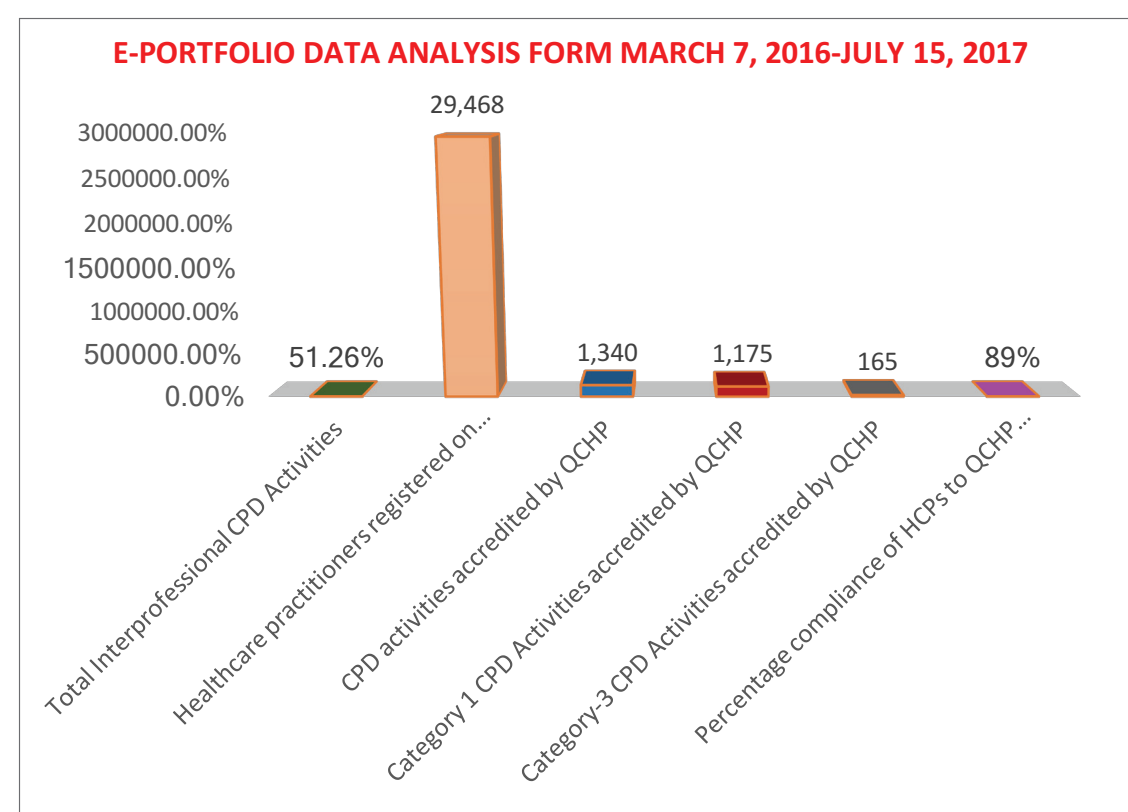
Key findings from the ePortfolio analysis from March 7, 2016 to July 15, 2017:

1. Single CME/CPD framework for all HCPs promotes interprofessional education. 51.26% of CPD activities accredited by QCHP were interprofessional.
2. 29,468 HCPs have registered on the ePortfolio for CPD recording.
3. 1,340 CPD activities were accredited QCHP that included 1,175 Category-1& 165 Category-3 CPD activities.
4. Percentage compliance of HCPs to QCHP credit requirements averaged 89%.
5. The Hybrid accreditation system was recognized by AMA, ACCME, AAFP and RCPSC providing opportunities for diverse CPD activities.

The above-statistics have been yielded from the ePortfolio. The ePortfolio has been active and proved a perfect tool for implementation of National CME/CPD Program and has linked the registration and licensing to CPD requirements.

The key findings from the CME/CPD media and communications campaign is as follows:

1. A total of 20,000 HCPs CPD manuals were distributed as part of CME/CPD Program implementation.
2. 350 CPD Providers manuals were distributed to healthcare organization and academic institutions in State of Qatar.
3. A total of 15,898 followers are engaged on the Facebook page for QCHP-AD. Facebook been the most active social media that continues to be in use as the communication tool.
4. Distributed Full-system packages to major healthcare institutions in State of Qatar.
5. 20,000 Calendars with CME/CPD Framework printed on it are still being distributed to HCPs across healthcare sector in Qatar.
6. A total of 64 weekly open-days have been scheduled support the CPD framework implementation with an average of four (4) HCPs attending per session since March 2016.



DISCUSSIONS:

The CME/CPD media and communications campaign as well as the supporting IT system has resulted in better understanding of the values, principles and benefits of CPD activities that is core of the shared vision. HCPs are keen to participate in the life-long learning program as is evident from the percentage compliance of HCPs to CPD requirements. The implementation of the CPD program would not have been possible without a strong stakeholder engagement that can guarantee the sustainability of the system. The supporting tools of the implementation, the CME/CPD media and communications campaign & the ePortfolio have immensely contributed positively and provided the much-needed information about the CPD program in the most accessible way to the HCPs and the CPD Providers in the State of Qatar. The ePortfolio has replaced the paperwork that would otherwise be overwhelming and require abundant human and financial resources. The IT system has reduced the humane intervention and proved resourceful.

A robust hybrid accreditation system supporting the National CME/CPD framework with global standards has been recognized by well-known international CPD accreditation bodies like Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME), Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), and the CPD credit system by American Medical Association (AMA), Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) within one year of its implementation..

CONCLUSIONS:

Qatar Council for Healthcare Practitioners has implemented a "single CME/CPD framework for all HCPs" successfully engaging the HCPs in a life-long learning process via an appropriate communication plan. Reinforcing specific and focused messages through a well-planned and well-implemented communication campaign gives the widest and deepest communication impact. With an appropriate IT system in place to support the implementation of CPD framework makes it all the more easy, right and clear. CPD Framework supported by a hybrid CPD accreditation system provides opportunities to HCPs with quality CPD activities that are realistic and achievable.

