

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS) ABOUT THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO (PDP)**

### **Question: How will the essential practice competencies change the PDP process?**

Answer: The PDP process is changing in three important ways:

**First**, the process comprises three steps instead of five. Step 1 is the creating a Learning Plan, Step 2 is maintaining an Activity Log, and Step 3 is conducting a Professional Development Evaluation.

**Second**, to complete the Step 1: Learning Plan, the Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) has developed an online Goal Wizard to assist credentialed practitioners with identification of the essential practice competency goals and performance indicators relevant to the RDN/RD and NDTR/DTR practice. Therefore, practitioners will not need to draft Learning Plan goals. The new essential practice competencies will replace handwritten goals.

**Third**, the learning need codes (LNC) that practitioners identified in their Learning Plans will be replaced with the performance indicators that practitioners select.

### **Question: How does the Goal Wizard identify which essential practice competencies are relevant for a particular practitioner?**

Answer: The Goal Wizard uses a decision algorithm. Based on whether the practitioner is an RDN or RD or an NDTR or DTR and how he or she answers a series of questions in the Goal Wizard, the algorithm identifies the recommended essential practice competencies for the practitioner.

### **Question: What options do practitioners have if they believe the essential practice competencies identified by the Goal Wizard are not relevant?**

Answer: Practitioners have an opportunity to remove the essential practice competencies that they believe are not relevant and/or select additional practice competencies and performance indicators.

### **Question: Are there any required essential practice competencies?**

Answer: Based on a recommendation from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Board of Directors, in 2011 CDR voted to require that RDNs, RDs, NDTRs, and DTRs complete a minimum of 1 continuing professional education unit (CPEU) in Ethics during each 5-year recertification cycle. This requirement started with the 5-year recertification cycle that ends on May 31, 2017, and is being phased in over a 5-year period. Learning activities related to Sphere 1: Ethics and Professionalism and LNC 1050 meet this requirement.

To ensure that practitioners who are using the essential practice competencies do not inadvertently miss this requirement, the Goal Wizard will alert practitioners that the Learning Plan needs to include at least one practice competency and at least one performance indicator from Sphere 1: Ethics and Professionalism in order to be submitted to CDR.

**Question: How many performance indicators should be in a Learning Plan?**

Answer: With the LNC system, practitioners selected several LNCs to meet their learning need goals. The same approach will likely be used for performance indicators. Practitioners will select the performance indicators that they need to address a practice competency. The Goal Wizard does require that at least one performance indicator be selected for each essential practice competency.

**Question: Do RDNs/RDs and NDTRs/DTRs have to include all of the essential practice competencies in their Learning Plan?**

Answer: No. Not all essential practice competencies have to be included in a PDP Learning Plan nor do practitioners need to select all practice competencies within one sphere.

**Question: How long will it take CDR to approve a Learning Plan?**

Answer: As soon as the practitioner finishes the Goal Wizard process, which includes identification of essential practice competencies and performance indicators, there is an opportunity to submit the plan to CDR. Once submitted to CDR, the Learning Plan is automatically approved and active.

**Question: Will CDR evaluate the essential practice competencies and performance indicators that practitioners select?**

Answer: No. CDR only requires that practitioners develop a learning plan that meets their needs. It is possible that a career-changer may seek more advanced essential practice competencies in Communications, for example, because he or she brings experience from years working in business before becoming an RDN or NDTR. Likewise, an RDN/RD and NDTR/DTR may seek new, fundamental or less complex essential practice competencies in an area that is new to him or her, such as Informatics.

**Question: Will CDR accept the same types of learning activities for continuing professional education (CPE) as before?**

Yes. The CPE activity types accepted by CDR remain unchanged. These activities include case presentations, self-studies, interactive workshops, and certificate programs, among others. CDR's *Professional Development Portfolio Guide* includes a complete list of acceptable activity types.

**Question: Will CDR still require certificates of completion as documentation for CPE?**

Yes. CDR still requires that practitioners maintain certificates of completion for each CPE activity in case of an audit.

**Question: How will RDNs/RDs and NDTRs/DTRs know which LNCs and essential practice competencies are linked to a particular CPE program?**

Answer: The Goal Wizard will provide links to examples of CPE activities that relate to the performance indicators that the practitioner has chosen.

**Question: Will educators have access to the Goal Wizard?**

Answer: A new tool, the Dream Wizard, is a demonstration version of the Goal Wizard. It is available for students, educators, and accredited providers. A Learning Plan can be developed but not saved when using the Dream Wizard. Printing is available once a draft of the Learning Plan is developed.

**Question: Is there a test or evaluation after each CPE?**

Answer: Since the inception of the PDP process, CDR has asked accredited providers to assess the learning outcomes of CPE activities, and this is still true with the essential practice competency system. CDR has created resources for accredited providers to help them incorporate the essential practice competencies and performance indicators into existing content and to assist them in designing, developing, and delivering assessments. Multiple-choice question assessments will still be accepted as an assessment approach.

**Question: How long will it take the profession to transition from the current PDP with LNC to the PDP with essential practice competencies and performance indicators?**

Answer: There will be a phased implementation of the essential practice competencies. All practitioners are on a 5-year recertification cycle. The only exception to this rule is for newly credentialed RDNs and NDTRs who have slightly more than 5 years until their first recertification cycle after passing their registration exam. The first group to use the essential practice competencies in the PDP will be new RDNs and NDTRs credentialed June 2, 2015-May 31, 2016, and practitioners recertifying June 1, 2016-May 31, 2021. The last group to transition to essential practice competencies will be new RDNs or NDTRs credentialed June 2, 2019-May 31, 2020, and practitioners recertifying June 1, 2020-May 31, 2025. Annually thereafter, all newly credentialed practitioners and those recertifying will begin including essential practice competencies in the PDP.