



Guide to the regulation respecting mandatory continuing education for respiratory therapists

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INTRODUCTION

The Regulation came into force on April 1st 2004, after consultation with members of the Order, amendments, approval by the Office des professions du Québec and publication in the *Gazette officielle* on March 3rd 2004.

The guide is presented in question and answer form and is intended to explain the Regulation and its application. We hope it will answer all your questions, if it does not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

We invite you to read the Guide carefully, so as to fully understand the provisions of the Regulation you received mid-March.

1. NUMBER OF HOURS REQUIRED (S.2)

Q : How many hours of continuing education do I have to complete during the two-years reference period?

R : In the first reference period, April 1st 2004 to March 30, 2006, you must complete 20 hours of continuing education i.e 10 hours per year.

In all subsequent reference periods of 2 years, that is as of April 1st 2006, you must complete 30 hours of continuing education per reference period and not less than 10 hours in any single year.

Summary : Reference period 2004-2006 = 20 hours
 Reference period 2006-2008= 30 hours
 Reference period 2008-2010= 30 hours
 Etc.

Q : Who is subject to this requirement?

R : All respiratory therapist listed as active members on the roll of the Order.

Q : Am I exempt if I am on maternity, student, sabbatical, sickness or other leave?

R : You will be exempt only if you have been listed as an inactive member on the roll of the Order for at least **52 consecutive weeks during the reference period in question.**

For example :

- a) If on April 1st 2004, you are on preventive maternity leave, you will be exempt if you do not return to work until April 8th 2005 and are listed as an inactive member on the roll of the Order.
- b) If you take sabbatical leave on May 15 2004, are listed as an inactive member as of that date and you return to work is scheduled for May 24, 2005 you may be exempt. But if you take only 6 months leave i.e 26 weeks, you will not exempt.

You may also claim an exemption if you become a member of the Order 51 weeks or less before the end of the reference period.

For example :

- c) If you are graduating respiratory therapist and become a member of the Order on April 1 2005, you will be exempt for the rest of the reference period.
- d) If you become a member of the Order in June 2005, you will be exempt.
- e) If you become a member of the Order on March 1st 2005 you have to complete 20 hours of education training.

2. QUALIFYING ACTIVITIES (SS.4 TO 6)

Q : Which continuing education activities qualify under the Regulation?

R : You may take part in a wide range of continuing education activities during the reference period. However, the activities must be relevant to your practice of the profession, be appropriate for your needs and meet a series of criteria.

The following are qualifying continuing education activities recognized by the Conseil d'administration :

1. All continuing education activities included in the annual continuing education program offered by OPIQ.
2. All courses offered at colleges, universities and specialized institutions relevant to your practice of the profession.
3. All activities relating to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (certification and re-certification).
4. Conventions or colloquia of the Order or other organizations that are relevant to your practice of the profession. In particular, OPIQ recognizes, as continuing education participation in conventions and colloquia organized by the following institutions :
 - OPIQ
 - Réseau québécois sur l'asthme et la MPOC (RQAM)
 - Réseau canadien pour le traitement de l'asthme (RCTA)
 - Association des hôpitaux du Québec (AHQ)
 - McGill : Anesthesia Update
 - Colloque sur l'interdisciplinarité
 - Heart institute : Interventional cardiology colloquium
 - Canadian Society of Respiratory Therapists (CSRT) Annual convention
 - Symposium international de Québec sur la réadaptation cardio-respiratoire
 - Congrès canadien sur le sommeil et les troubles du sommeil par la Société canadienne du sommeil.

Note that time spent taking coffee breaks, eating meals, participating in social activities or attending the annual general meeting does not count for the purposes of the Regulation.

5. Each hour of a presentation made in the framework of convention, conference or seminar corresponds to 3 hours of continuing education
(ex : If you make a 1 ½ hour presentation at the OPIQ convention, you will be credited 4 ½ hours of continuing education.)

Note that only the hours of the first presentation will be recognized. You will not be credited more hours if you present a conference more than once, unless you have made important modifications to your presentation.

6. Under the formula established by the Conseil d'administration, a scientific article that is longer than 1 500 words and published in a magazine such as *l'inhalo* will equal 3 hours of continuing education. If the article is shorter, one and a half (1 ½) hours of continuing education will be recognized.
7. Various continuing education activities, related to the practice offered at your place of work or elsewhere, in particular, seminar lunches, training by representatives continuous education activities by physicians from your hospital centre or other establishments, presentations by respiratory therapists or other professionals connected to the practice (peer training), appreciation training for specific research projects, continuous education activities by the Quebec Lung Association or the Réseau québécois sur l'asthme et la MPOC.

Note that the list of qualifying activities and the fees will be subject to an annual revision by the Conseil d'administration.

8. Participation in a research project, credited in accordance with the established formula.

"Participation in a research project" means active participation by the respiratory therapist, in a pivotal role or as a research assistant, in a project that has been accepted by an ethics and research committee. It does not mean the application of a research protocol alone.

The following formula has been established for participation in a research project : 1 project equals 10 hours of continuing education. Any appreciation training required to apply protocol and participate in the project qualifies under paragraph 7.

Q : How is continuing education recognized?

R : To be recognized, a continuing education activity must appear in the list mentioned above and meet the criteria established at the request of the Office des professions and set out in section 5 of Regulation. The Conseil d'administration of the Order will recognize continuing education activities on the basis of these criteria.

All continuing education activities must be given by an **instructor skilled** in the subject matter. **Content** must be **relevant and predetermined** and **format**. (seminar lunch, case history, presentation, conference, workshop, etc.) must be specified. Above all, attendance to the activities must be attested to with a **certificate** of participation.

For purposes of the Regulation, the Conseil d'administration will acknowledge all continuing education activities listed above. Validation by the Order is required only for activities that are not included in the list contained in the Regulation; it is not required for all continuing education activities received in a year.

If a continuing education activity is not mentioned in the Regulation, you may contact the Order to apply for continuing activity recognition (s.6). The Conseil d'administration will examine applications on a case-by-case basis. It may refuse to recognize an activity that does not satisfy the criteria mentioned above.

Q : Which activities are not recognized by the Conseil d'administration for purposes of the Regulation?

R : Activities not recognized include information meeting in the department where you work; participation in multidisciplinary committees; medical rounds; and all activities forming part of your functions.

Q : Do I have to provide the Order with documenttation each time I participate in an activity?

R : No. You are not required to send the Order supporting documents each time you participate in an activity. You have only to register your activities in the form of renewal of registration on the roll of the Order, before the April 1st of every year.

However, you must keep relevant documents and certificates of participation for each activity, as the Order may ask to see them (s.7 paragraph 2).

Q : How can I obtain a certificate of participation?

R : Most activities listed in paragraphs 1,2,3 and 4 of the section 4 are evidenced by either a certificate of participation or a course transcript.

In the case of presentations (par.5) and scientific articles (par.6), the publication itself or the conference program showing your participation is sufficient.

For activities listed in paragraph 7, your employer must keep a register of all activities given in its establishment and a list of all participants.

*If you participate in activities at your place of work, it is **your responsibility** to ensure that your name appears on the attendance list. If the activity takes place elsewhere, make sure that you obtain a certificate of participation.*

Q : Can the Conseil d'administration refuse to recognize a continuing education activity?

R : Yes. An activity may be refused by the Conseil d'administration if it does not appear on the list of qualifying activities, or is not relevant to the practice of the profession, or does not meet the criteria set out in section 5 of the Regulation. However, the Conseil d'administration must allow you to contest its decision in writing.

To avoid refusal after fact, you should, if the activity you are planning to register for is not on the list, contact the Order beforehand to obtain an opinion on whether the activity qualifies.

Q : Does an activity attended before April 2004, qualify?

R : No, because the Regulation is not retroactive. Continuing education is intended to update knowledge acquired during initial training.

So, for example, even if you have already completed a certificate, you will not be credited with continuing education hours purposes of the Regulation.

3. VERIFICATION AND PENALTIES (ss.7 to 11)

Q : How will the Order verify continuing education?

R : As mentioned above, each year you must complete, at the same time as your membership renewal form, the **Continuing Education Declaration** which will be added to your membership file. OPIQ will, during the year, carry out spot checks of random files to verify supporting documents.

Q : Can I be struck off the roll of the Order if I do not comply with the Regulation?

R : The Regulation provides for a first notice, after a second notice by the secretary of the Order notifying you that you have not met the required conditions, you will have 60 days in which to remedy the situation or let the Order know in writing how you intend to remedy it.

The Regulation does not provide for striking off the roll, but it does provide for suspension or restriction by the Conseil d'administration of a respiratory therapist's right to practice, if s/he does not fulfil the obligation to receive continuing education.