

Pharmacist Licence Linked to Continuous Education

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DUBAI — The UAE Ministry of Health has made it mandatory for pharmacists to complete a specified number of credit hours under the ministry's Continuous Medical Education (CME) programme as a prerequisite to obtaining or renewing their licence.

Nearly 3,900 pharmacists and assistant pharmacists in the private sector will have to attend educational events under the ministry's Pharmacy Cadre Improvement and Development programme to achieve the required credit hours. The announcement was made by the recently appointed UAE Minister of Health, Dr Hanif bin Hassan Ali, who made his first official appearance after assuming charge, at the first Pharmacy Educational Forum for pharmacists, assistant pharmacists and students at the University of Sharjah on Wednesday.

"We need you to do your best, take maximum benefit of these CME programmes since they are now mandatory for obtaining or renewing your licence," said the minister while calling upon those attending the forum to upgrade their educational skills through such programmes.

The requirement is part of an upcoming federal law on pharmacy that will streamline all pharmaceutical activities in the country.

"Pharmacists will be required to complete specific yearly credit hours in order to obtain or renew their licence under the draft law which is expected to be implemented by next year," said Dr Fatima Ali Al Braiki, Director of Drug Registration and Control Department at the MoH.

Though the exact number of credit hours is yet to be finalised, ministry officials say that 25 hours for pharmacists and 20 hours for assistant pharmacists are being considered.

On the occasion, the ministry also launched the pilot project of the online registration website for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for all health professionals. However, pharmacists seeking to update their education, can log on to the website mohuae-cpd-pharmacists.com to register for CME programmes.

Dr Amin Al Amiri, CEO of Medical Practice and Licensing, MoH said the ministry was focusing on developing clinical pharmacy in the public and private sector. "CME is important for improving the quality of work in the medical sector," he added.

Dr Hanif said that the ministry had undertaken other programmes such as registration and pricing of drugs to prevent entry of fake medicine in the country. "We are adopting new projects to develop medical science and improve health services at the primary level," he added. The present number of pharmacies in the country is 1,329 and 69 licenced pharma agents are allowed to import/export medicines while 12 factories are operating in all emirates. asmaalizain@khaleejtimes.com

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