

MAINTAINING COMPETENCE FOR LABORATORY GENETICISTS

The CCMG has clearly defined competencies in the various subspecialties that trainees must meet in order to become certified CCMG fellows. These competencies can be found under the training guidelines section on the CCMG website (<http://www.ccmg-ccgm.org/training.php>). The maintenance of these competencies, however, is a personal responsibility. Continuing medical education (CME) for the CCMG is monitored by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), which requires its members to participate in CME for a minimum of 40 hours per year and 400 hours per 5 years. The CCMG has several laboratory scientists who are co-certified in two separate subspecialties, but, for a variety of reasons, do not actively practice in both. This has raised the question as to the competence of co-certified individuals who do not become active in their second subspecialty until a later date. As part of our CME, the knowledge and abilities of all CCMG fellows will necessarily have to be updated. This is part of the professional code of ethics for the CCMG fellow, who needs to maintain competence with rapidly changing genetic knowledge and technology. The CCMG fellow in a laboratory specialty is a professional who assumes the responsibility to stay at the leading edge of genetic knowledge and to transfer this knowledge to his or her laboratory subspecialty. CCMG fellows who are co-certified in two separate subspecialties have a personal responsibility to ensure they are competent to design and interpret genetic tests in their second subspecialty and to undertake retraining or personal tutorials if necessary to maintain this competence. The type of retraining activity undertaken (indirect supervision, re-training in another laboratory, review of clinical cases, literature review, workshops, etc) would be at the discretion of the CCMG laboratory fellow and would be based on self-determined objectives required to upgrade and maintain competency.