

## Continuing dental education (CDE) points: serious concerns

This letter raises some serious issues about continuing dental education (CDE) points instituted by the Dental Council of India (DCI) – the apex body that regulates dental education. The DCI has recommended 150 CDE points over a period of 5 years with a minimum of 20 points a year and a maximum of 50 points annually (1).

In India, CDE points are awarded to dental professionals only for attending lectures or conferences or workshops (1), whereas CDE points should also be awarded for publishing and reviewing articles in indexed national and international journals (2). Since August 1, 2011, the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons is offering CDE credits for reviewing manuscripts for the *Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery* (3). Reviewers may earn 1.0 CDE credit per review and up to a maximum of 12 reviews per volume, ie 12 credits per year (3). The Academy of General Dentistry is also offering CDE credits for reviewing manuscripts for the *Journal of General Dentistry* (4). These journals are also offering CDE points for readers (3,4).

In India, dental professionals in the government health sector (ie in dental colleges and hospitals) are working with feasible salary and fresh younger dental undergraduates work with meagre salaries in the private health sector, and many opt for other better-paying jobs (5). On the other hand, some dental colleges, after they get recognition of BDS/MDS degrees, remove their teaching staff abruptly leading to vacant staff positions for a considerable time. They deprive the students of jobs and lower teaching standards (6).

Postgraduates in dentistry have to spend an exorbitant sum for attending national and international specialty conferences to

get the essential CDE points (7). It was observed that specialty national conferences were accredited with 18 CDE points for a 3-day conference (8).

The DCI should conduct a study on the living standards of dental surgeons working in the private health sector in India. Based on the results, the DCI should revise the CDE points for dental professionals.

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