

Measuring Learners' Outcomes

Traditionally, the outcome evaluation of Continuing Medical Education (CME) or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs has stalled at evaluating the participants satisfaction of the program itself (Level 1 on Kirkpatrick, Miller or Moore) and not proceeding to measure learners' outcomes (Levels 2 and 3). When participants' satisfaction is the only outcome measured, the assessment has stalled at program evaluation. In a continuing effort to ensure that CPD is outcome oriented and effective, it is important to measure learners' outcomes.

When Program Planners limit their outcome measurement to how well participants perceived or liked the program, there is a missed opportunity for more rigorous assessment of how effective or worthwhile the program is for engaged participants. Rigorous assessment of past programs is a necessary step to help Program Directors continually improve the CPD they design, develop, and deliver.

Learners' outcomes can be evaluated at multiple levels:

- Knowledge
- Competence
- Performance

Outcome measurement can then go on to include assessment of patient care and health care outcomes.

There are multiple and complimentary methods to measure learner's outcomes. Different methods may be chosen to assess learners' knowledge, competence, and performance.

Learner Outcome	Measurement method
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre- and post- knowledge tests• Audience Response System• Case Studies with discussion• Chart review/audit
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstration of skills/OSCE• Standardized patients• Chart stimulated recall• Case studies with small group discussion
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct observation of practice• Video observation• Critical incident review• Laboratory data• Chart audit