



## **REVISED POLICY FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROGRAM FOR MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTISTS**

*We see continuing professional development (CPD) as critical to future successful on-the-job performance. Earning CPD credits allows Medical Laboratory Scientists to reach beyond their formal education to the maintenance and continuation of important and necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to deliver high quality services.*

### **I. Introduction**

Accurate and timely medical laboratory testing and diagnosing are essential components of a high quality Medical Laboratory System. Inappropriate Medical Laboratory diagnoses can lead to mismanagement of patients which may lead to serious patient harm. To ensure high quality laboratory services including accurate diagnoses, all Medical Laboratory Scientists must continuously improve their knowledge and update and acquire new skills. A continuing professional development (CPD) program helps to achieve this goal.

A CPD program is one of the key strategies for continuous quality improvement of clinical and public health laboratory services as well as an essential component in Laboratory Quality Management Systems (LQMS). Having access to a variety of accredited CPD activities can significantly improve the ability of Medical Laboratory Scientists to deliver accurate and reliable laboratory test results and curb malpractice and laboratory misdiagnoses.

As part of the Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria's (MLSCN's) commitment to the certification and accreditation of Medical Laboratories in Nigeria, it is re-invigorating its CPD Program for Medical Laboratory Scientists by institutionalizing the consistent use of standard CPD credits as a requisite for licensure of Medical Laboratory Scientists by the Government of Nigeria.

The intended audience of this policy are individual Medical Laboratory Scientists and anyone interested in partnering with MLSCN to provide CPD activities for Medical Laboratory Scientists.

### **II. MLSCN's Role**

MLSCN is the Federal Agency responsible for regulating Medical Laboratory Services and the practice of Medical Laboratory Scientists, Medical Laboratory Technicians, and Medical Laboratory Assistants, in addition to inspecting, regulating, and accrediting Medical Laboratories in Nigeria as well as in-vitro diagnostics. The MLSCN determines the standard of knowledge and skills for Medical Laboratory Practitioners, regulates training and conducts exams for Medical Laboratory Practitioners, and maintains the registry of Medical Laboratory Practitioners.

MLSCN's Education Department is responsible for implementation guidelines for all examinations, organizing CPD programs, coordinating partnership with interested CPD providers and organizing accreditation visits to training institutions. As a result, CPD activities are centrally regulated by the Education Department.

The Medical Laboratory Science Council of Nigeria with effect from 2015 shall take exclusive responsibility of running offline programmes besides establishing standards for all CPD activities. These standards are further described in Section IV. However, individuals or organizations desiring to partner with Council in running offline CPD programmes shall remit fifteen percent (15%) of such workshop fees paid by participants to Council which shall supervise and countersign certificates of participation. The registration fee charge-able should be reasonable to attract good attendance.

MLSCN is also responsible for informing all Medical Laboratory Scientists and creating awareness in the general public about the CPD program.

### III. Requirements for Individual Medical Laboratory Scientists

As a requisite for licensure, the effective date for the CPD commencement is 2013, which means that MLS will need to provide the appropriate documentation to support that they have obtained 10 CPD credits during the 2013 calendar year for licensure renewal by March 2014. However, the CPD credit units acquired in 2013 and 2014 are considered valid for renewal of 2015 licence in line with the ten (10) credit load requirement but those with less than 10 credits may acquire the shortfall within the year 2015 or pay a penalty of Five thousand naira (N5,000.00) only in-lieu.

For 2016 licence renewal and beyond, the ten (10) credit load which must have been acquired in the preceding year shall apply without option of a fine.

The Five thousand (N5,000.00) currently being charged as CPD processing fee shall be shared between MLSCN (N3,000) and AMLSN (N2,000) and paid into their respective accounts by Medical Laboratory Scientists along with their annual retention fees and association dues.

All accredited CPD activities with associated credits are listed in the tables below. Medical Laboratory Scientists can choose to fulfill their CPD requirements by a combination of any of the CPD activities.

ACTIVITY	DEFINITION	DOCUMENTATION	CPD CREDITS
<b>Attending Meetings, Conferences, and Trainings</b>			
Attendance at MLSCN-hosted or accredited seminars, workshops, conferences  • World Biomedical Science Day. • CPD Workshops • World Accreditation Day	An in-person structured program, seminar, workshop, or conference offered through MLSCN will all qualify for CPD.  It is planned as an individual event and designated for credit as a single activity.  <i>(This does not include routine staff meetings or job orientation.)</i>	Letter/certificate/ signed attendance from MLSCN containing information about the event	- Key note lecture – 1 credit unit per lecture - Sub-theme lecture – 0.5 credit per lecture (Max. 4 per year)
Attendance at AMLSN’s annual meeting, conference, seminars, etc.  • AMLSN’s Annual Scientific Conference & General Meeting • AMLSN’s Branch and Chapter Meetings with presentations/lectures	An in-person structured program, conference, seminar, etc. offered through AMLSN, FAAMLS, IFBLS or other scientific/ professional body will all qualify for CPD. It is planned as an individual event and designated for credit as a single activity	Letter/certificate/ signed attendance from AMLSN, FAAMLS, IFBLS or other scientific/ professional body containing Information about the event.	Key note lecture – 1 credit unit per lecture Sub-theme lecture – 0.5 credit per lecture (max. 4 per year)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AMLSN's Quarterly Executive Council Meetings with presentations/lectures</li> <li>• Participation in Public Health Lab Week</li> <li>• International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science's (IFBLS's) World Congress.</li> <li>• FAAMS conference</li> </ul>	<i>(This does not include routine staff meetings or job orientation.)</i>		
Attendance at accredited training workshops in laboratory techniques or equipment (these trainings can be organized by an individual Medical Laboratory Scientist or by an institution)	An accredited training workshop is a live CPD activity where the learner participates in person and is provided with hands-on opportunities to improve their job performance through being introduced and practicing lab techniques with actual equipment. It is planned as an individual event and designated for credit as a single activity.	Letter/certificate/ signed attendance from CPD provider containing information about the event	1 per practical event (max. 4 per year) 0.5 credit/lecture session
Completion of an AMLSN online eLearning course accredited by MLSCN	An online eLearning course that is developed by AMLSN and accredited by MLSCN. These courses are available "on demand," meaning that there is no specific time designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines when to complete the activity.	Copy of certificate of completion (which contains the title of the course, learner's name, and date of completion)	2 per course event (max. 4 per year)
Completion of another online eLearning course on medical laboratory sciences offered by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science (IFBLS), Johns Hopkins Center for Clinical Global Health Education (CCGHE), USAID's Global Health eLearning Center or other reputable source approved by MLSCN	An online eLearning course in the biological/chemical/medical science, computer management, or education that is developed by a reputable organization and listed on MLSCN's website. These courses are available "on demand," meaning that there is no specific time designated for participation. Rather, the participant determines when to complete the activity.	Copy of the course certificate.	2 per course event (max. 4 per year)
<b>Completion of Advanced Certifications and Degrees</b>			
College/university coursework for higher level certifications (e.g., Fellowship, PGD)	Courses in the biological/chemical/medical science, computer management or education. (Course must be lab related.)	Copy of official transcript	3 per certification (no max.)
Masters degree	Courses in the biological/chemical/medical science, computer management or	Copy of Master's thesis	4 per degree (no max.)

	education. (Course must be lab related.)		
Doctoral degree	Courses in the biological/chemical/medical science, computer management or education. (Course must be lab related.)	Copy of Doctoral dissertation	5 per degree (no max.)
<b>Authoring Publication</b>			
Primary Author journal articles for peer-reviewed publications	CPD credits are awarded for writing articles in peer-reviewed journals in the medical laboratory field or in journals for professional associations in the areas of education and management.	Copy of publication	3 per publication (no max.)
Co-Author journal articles for peer-reviewed publications	CPD credits are awarded for writing articles in peer-reviewed journals in the medical laboratory field or in journals for professional associations in the areas of education and management.	Copy of publication	2 per publication (no max.)
Author of a peer-reviewed text book	CPD credits are awarded for writing peer-reviewed text books on medical laboratory and related subjects in peer-reviewed journals	Title page of publication and table of contents containing author name	4 per book (no max.)
Primary Author/co-Author of a chapter in a peer-reviewed text book	CPD credits are awarded for writing a chapter in a peer-reviewed text book in the medical laboratory field.	A copy of the text book	5 per publication (no max.)
Secondary Author of a chapter in a peer-reviewed text book	CPD credits are awarded for writing a chapter in a peer-reviewed text book in the medical laboratory field.	A copy of the text book	4 per publication (no max.)
Editing a book	CPD credits are awarded for editing published books in the medical laboratory or related field.	A copy of the text book	3 per publication (no max.)
Author of an AMLSN online eLearning course	CPD credits are awarded for writing course content for AMLSN-developed online eLearning courses.	Copy of the course	3 per course (no max.)
Primary Author of a research presentation	Prepared and delivered, for the first time only. This has to be beyond the scope of normal work.  Subsequent presentations of the same workshop are not awarded any credits.	Letter from organization that indicates content, length of teaching time and name of the organization	3 per publication (no max.)

Co- Author of a research presentation	For work on a presentation/workshop that is prepared and delivered, for the first time only. Subsequent presentations of the same workshop are not awarded any credits.	Letter from organization that indicates content, length of teaching time and name of the organization	2 per publication (no max.)
Presenting posters/exhibits	Credits are awarded for posters or exhibits presented at national, regional, state, or local laboratory professional association meetings. Subsequent presentations of the same poster are not awarded any credits.	Abstract of the poster session	1 credit per poster/exhibit if accepted but not presented and 2 per poster/exhibit if accepted and presented (no max.)
<b>Participation in Journal Clubs/Discussion Groups</b>			
Journal-based learning	Answering questions that appear in a journal(s) about an article in a previous issue	Copy of journal article abstract and completed responses to questions	1 (max. 4 per year)
Journal club/discussion group attendee	The attendees read an article, engage in a facilitated reflection, discussion, or debate about the article, and complete a pre-determined set of questions or tasks related to the article content. Each article is counted as 1 activity.	Sign-in sheet and copy of journal article abstract	1 (max. 4 per year)
Journal club/discussion group presenter	The journal club/discussion group presenter is the person who facilitates the reflection, discussion, or debate after the attendees have read the article.	Sign-in sheet and copy of journal article abstract	1 (max. 4 per year)
Journal club/discussion group organizer	The organizer is the person who identifies the article and works with the facilitator to come up with the format of the reflection, discussion, or debate and collects/records the answers to the questions that arise.	Sign-in sheet and copy of journal article abstract	1 (max. 4 per year)
<b>Other Activities</b>			
Organizer of a CPD activity	Main contact person for the organization or corporate body who submitted the CPD Application Form to host the CPD-accredited activity	Copy of approved CPD Application Form	1 (max. 4 per year)
Invited lecturer/part-time teacher	For a presentation/lecture prepared and delivered, for the first time only. Beyond the scope of job.  Subsequent presentations/lectures of the same material	Copy of syllabus, program or letter from organization that indicates content, length of teaching time and name of the organization	1 (max. 4 per year)

	are not awarded any credits.		
Internal and External examiner; Assessor, Coordinator or Facilitator of Council examinations	This has to be beyond the scope of normal work.	Letter from organization verifying participation, in what capacity and dates of service	1 (max. 4 per year)
Role of on-site inspector for accredited programs or laboratory inspections for MLSCN	This has to be beyond the scope of normal work.	Letter from MLSCN verifying your role as an inspector and the dates of inspection	1 (max. 4 per year)

\*All publications and presentations must be relevant to Medical Laboratory Scientists.

After completing an approved CPD activity, the Medical Laboratory Scientist must complete a Request for CPD Credits form and submit it to the MLSCN's office in Abuja upon licensure renewal or as otherwise may be directed.

It is the responsibility of the Medical Laboratory Scientist to ensure that s/he has obtained the required number of CPD credits each year. At the end of the calendar year, MLSCN will not renew the license of any Medical Laboratory Scientist who had not obtained the required number of CPD credits.

#### **IV. Information for Individuals/Bodies who may wish to Partner with Council to Provide CPD Activities**

Individual Medical Laboratory Scientists or bodies who are interested in seeking partnership to implement a CPD activity must submit a CPD Application to MLSCN Department of Education. The application should describe the CPD activity and its expected results in terms of how competence or performance of Medical Laboratory Scientists will change upon completion of the CPD activity. **One CPD**

***Application must be filled out for each CPD activity with Resource Person resume/CV. The CPD Application should be submitted to MLSCN at least two months before the intended start of the event.***

MLSCN will review the application(s) and make a decision based on the following criteria:

- i. Purpose – What is the purpose of this CPD activity? What do you want to achieve by implementing this CPD activity?
- ii. Content area – What topics or subject matters areas is this CPD activity covering?
- iii. Format of activity – How is the activity being presented? An in-person training? An online course? If it is another format, please describe.
- iv. Time period – Is this CPD activity a one-time event? Is it a recurring event?
- v. Expected result(s) – How will this CPD activity improve knowledge, competence, or performance of Medical Laboratory Scientists?
- vi. Evaluation – How will the CPD provider evaluate results of the activity, such as the change in learners' competence or performance? It also should include how learners will evaluate the activity and how the CPD provider will respond to evaluation findings (e g Pre and Post CPD activity evaluation).

The allotment of credit units to CPD programmes shall be strictly based on relevance of course contents to medical laboratory practice/other relevant health issues, the quality of the workshop contents and consideration of new areas that will impact positively on MLS as health practitioners.

MLSCN will review the application(s) and will notify the contact person listed on the application of approval or rejection.

Individuals or bodies with approved partnership shall remit 15% of such workshop fees paid by participants to Council which shall supervise and countersign certificates of participation.

*Upon approval from MLSCN, the applicant is authorized ONLY to implement the activity described in the application.* If the provider wishes to implement another CPD activity, s/he must submit another CPD Application for that activity.

After every CPD activity, the Provider shall give a report with the authentic list of the participants within four (4) weeks.

#### **EXEMPTION**

All relevant trainings organized by any PEPFAR organization are considered for exemption from accreditation/partnership fees charged.

#### **V. Record Keeping**

After completing an approved CPD activity, the Medical Laboratory Scientist must complete a Request for CPD Credits form.

When Medical Laboratory Scientists renew their annual license (on or before 31<sup>st</sup> March of every year), they must present all of their earned CPD Credit units/forms to the MLSCN at its headquarters in Abuja to demonstrate that they have completed the required number of CPD credits in the previous calendar year. If a Medical Laboratory Scientist has not completed the required number of CPD credits and/or cannot provide the required paperwork, his/her license will not be renewed.

MLSCN Department of Practitioners Regulation and Discipline will retain all Requests for CPD Credits forms and will maintain accurate and up-to-date records on the number of CPD credits awarded to each Medical Laboratory Scientist.

MLSCN will also retain all CPD Application forms and will maintain an accurate and up-to-date list of all approved CPD programmes.

#### **TRAINING AND STAKEHOLDERS MEETING**

Training and re-training shall be organized for Council staff and CPD providers for quality improvement of assessment and organization respectively.

Stakeholders meeting shall be convened randomly for feedback and quality improvement measures.