

Quality Assurance Program



College of
Medical Radiation
Technologists of
Ontario

Ordre des
technologues en
radiation médicale
de l'Ontario

Introduction

One of the key components of self-regulation of the profession of medical radiation technology in the public interest is the quality assurance (QA) program. The purpose of the QA program is to assure the quality of practice of the profession and to promote continuing evaluation, competence and improvement among the members.¹

As all members know, the practice of the profession is constantly changing. Members professional roles, responsibilities and accountabilities differ today from those of yesterday, and will evolve even more in the future.

In the Standards of Practice and in the QA Program, “medical radiation technologists”, “MRTs” or “members” refers to all members of the CMRTO; that is, members in all of the five specialties: radiography, radiation therapy, nuclear medicine, magnetic resonance and diagnostic medical sonography. In the Standards of Practice and in the QA Program, “profession” refers to the profession of medical radiation technology, which includes all of the five specialties: radiography, radiation therapy, nuclear medicine, magnetic resonance and diagnostic medical sonography.

Why a quality assurance program?

As regulated professionals, members are accountable to maintain competence in their current area of practice and continually improve their competence in order to respond to changes in practice environments, advances in technology and the changing health care environment.

The goal of the CMRTO QA program is to assure the public of the quality of practice of medical radiation technology by maintaining members performance at a level that meets the profession’s standards of practice and by promoting continuing competence and continuing improvement among members.

The CMRTO QA program:

- Complies with the legislative requirement of the *Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)* that the CMRTO establish and maintain a quality assurance program
- Is consistent with the CMRTO’s mandate to regulate the profession in order to protect the public interest
- Encourages members to take seriously their professional responsibility to ensure their continuing competence and quality improvement in a changing environment
- Provides an opportunity for members to control and direct their own continuing education and professional development

¹ The requirements for the CMRTO QA program are set out in the *Health Professions Procedural Code, Schedule 2 of the Regulated Health Professions Act (RHPA)* and the *quality assurance regulation (O. Reg. 375/12)* made under the *Medical Radiation Technology Act (MRT Act)*

The QA program also provides members with a method of demonstrating compliance with the CMRTO Practice Standard 8, Continuing Competence, which states:

“Members must have, maintain and apply the necessary knowledge, skills and judgement to ensure safe, effective and ethical outcomes for the patient. Members must maintain competence in their current area of practice and must refrain from acting if not competent. Members must obtain and maintain the necessary knowledge, skills and judgement to respond to changes in practice environments, advances in technology and other emerging issues. Members must participate in the College’s Quality Assurance Program as part of maintaining and improving their competence.”

QA program overview

The quality assurance regulation made under the MRT Act (QA regulation) states that the QA program must have the following components:

1. Continuing education or professional development designed to,
 - a. promote continuing competence and continuing quality improvement among the members
 - b. address changes in practice environments
 - c. incorporate standards of practice, advances in technology, changes made to entry to practice competencies and other relevant issues at the discretion of the Council
2. Self, peer and practice assessments
3. A mechanism for the CMRTO to monitor members’ participation in and compliance with the program
4. The collection, analysis and dissemination of information.

The CMRTO QA program is based on the assumption that members come into the CMRTO with appropriate skills and knowledge acquired through approved educational programs and that these initial competencies are maintained through lifelong learning and the expectation of adherence to the standards of practice. The QA program is based on the principles of adult education. This approach allows members to choose activities based on their individual learning needs and style, resources available, and acknowledges that learning comes from engaging in a variety of activities.

The CMRTO QA program includes the following elements:

1. **Quality Assurance Declaration:** completed each year by every member at the time of their annual renewal of registration. Members confirm whether they have complied with the requirements of the QA program and that they understand the requirements of the QA program.

2. **Quality Assurance Portfolio:** completed each calendar year by every member. Includes a self-assessment based on the standards of practice, a QA profile which describes the member's practice, and a method to keep a record of continuing education and professional development activities completed each year. Each member is required to complete and record at least 25 hours of continuing education and professional development activities each year. A member may be requested to submit the QA portfolio for assessment by the CMRTO Quality Assurance Committee (QA Committee).
3. **Peer and Practice Assessment by means of a multi-source feedback (MSF) system:** completed by individual members selected by the QA Committee in accordance with the QA regulation. This assessment includes a self, peer and patient assessment of an MRT's practice, based on the standards of practice. A report of this assessment is prepared by the QA Committee, a copy of which is provided to the member.
4. **Peer and Practice Assessment by means of an assessor:** completed by individual members selected by the QA Committee in accordance with the QA regulation. This assessment involves a peer assessor interviewing a member regarding specific components of their practice, based on the standards of practice. A report of this assessment is prepared by the assessor, a copy of which is provided to the QA Committee and the member.

Each member of the CMRTO is required to participate in the QA program each year and to co-operate with the QA Committee and any assessor.

Quality Assurance Portfolio (QA Portfolio)

Each year, each member of the CMRTO is required to complete the QA Portfolio, and complete and record at least 25 hours of continuing education and professional development activities.² The QA year runs from January 1 to December 31. Members are required to retain a copy of the completed QA Portfolio for five years. On the request of the QA Committee, members are required to submit their completed QA Portfolio to the CMRTO for assessment by the QA Committee.

Following is a short description of the QA Portfolio components:

1. **QA profile:** The QA profile provides an overview of an individual's practice providing medical radiation and imaging services. A member is required to complete this each year. A member may use the QA profile to track current or anticipated changes in their practice or areas of responsibility, year to year.
2. **Self-Assessment:** The self-assessment is based on the CMRTO's standards of practice, including the Practice Standards and the Indicators related to each Practice Standard. Each year, a member is required to assess their individual practice against a minimum of

² The QA Committee has approved the QA ePortfolio as the form in which members must record their self-assessments and participation in continuing education or professional development activities.

two of the eight Practice Standards and the Indicators related to that Practice Standard applicable to the member's specialty, using the self-assessment tool. A member may identify opportunities to enhance their knowledge of particular Practice Standards and Indicators.

- 3. Record of Continuing Education and Professional Development:** Each member is required to complete and record at least 25 hours of continuing education and professional development activities each year. These learning activities may include professional readings, seminars, webinars, conferences, courses, learning from other professionals (e.g. attendance at rounds, tutorials and staff meetings), training on new equipment, applications, procedures or software, writing and delivering presentations, courses or clinical teaching, research, writing a professional journal article or paper, and others. Members must record how they apply the learning in their practice. Members may attach evidence of their learning, if available, to their Record of Continuing Education and Professional Development.

The QA ePortfolio is an electronic format available through the secure members' section of the CMRTO website. Members may also download the 'Quick QA' app to their mobile devices to record their learning activities.

Monitoring members' participation and compliance

The legislation requires the CMRTO to have a mechanism to monitor members' participation in and compliance with the QA program.

The Quality Assurance Declaration provides the CMRTO, on an annual basis, with confirmation of members' participation in the QA program. Each year, on a member's annual renewal of registration, a member provides evidence of such by answering the question "I have complied with the requirements of the College's Quality Assurance Program" and by confirming that the member understands that the QA program requires that, in each calendar year, the member participates in self-assessment and at least 25 hours of continuing education or professional development activities, keep a record of their self-assessment and completed activities using the tools provided by the CMRTO, and retain these records for five years.

In addition to the annual declaration, each year the CMRTO requires a percentage of members in each specialty to submit their records of their self-assessment and participation in continuing education or professional development activities (QA records), or to undergo a peer and practice assessment. Individual members are notified in writing by the CMRTO when they are required to submit their QA records for assessment or undergo a peer and practice assessment.

The percentage of members required to submit their QA records or to undergo a peer and practice assessment in any given year is set by the CMRTO Council. Members are selected by means of a random selection generated by a computer program. Individual members may also be required to submit their QA records or to undergo a peer and practice assessment by the QA Committee.

The QA Committee can analyze and monitor members' participation in the QA program through the ePortfolio tool which provides de-identified, statistical data about members' participation in the ePortfolio.

Role of the QA Committee

The role of the QA Committee is to administer the QA program in accordance with the RHPA, the QA regulation and any other applicable law.

The QA Committee is one of the CMRTO's statutory committees, and is comprised of Council members (professional and public) and CMRTO members who have been appointed to the Committee. Members of the QA Committee are required to keep all information about members' QA records confidential, except under certain circumstances set out in the legislation. The QA Committee can require members to submit their QA records to the CMRTO for assessment by the QA Committee. In most cases, the QA Committee is satisfied with members' QA records. However, after assessing a member's QA records, the QA Committee can require a member to complete their QA records, require a member to participate in one or more specified continuing education or professional development activities, or refer a member for a peer and practice assessment.

The QA Committee can also select members to undergo a peer and practice assessment in accordance with the QA regulation. In most cases, the QA Committee is satisfied with the report of the assessment. However, if the QA Committee finds that a member's knowledge, skill and judgement are unsatisfactory, the QA Committee may, among other things, require a member to participate in specified continuing education or remediation programs, such as specified education, refresher or continuing education programs, courses or initiatives.

The QA Committee may also provide the name of the member and allegations against the member to the Inquiries, Complaints and Reports Committee if the QA Committee is of the opinion that the member may have committed an act of professional misconduct, or may be incompetent or incapacitated. For example, failure to co-operate with the QA Committee and failure to comply with a requirement of the QA Committee may be grounds for a finding of professional misconduct.

What does a member need to do and when?

Below is a summary and a timeframe for each member to follow each year in order to be compliant with the CMRTO QA program.

Timeframe	Activity	Comments
January – March	Complete the self-assessment and QA profile in the QA ePortfolio	The self-assessment and QA profile can be completed at any time throughout the year between January and December, however, it makes sense to complete it at the beginning of the year, as it will assist a member in planning their continuing education and professional development activities for the year.
January 1 – December 31	Complete and record at least 25 hours of continuing education and professional development activities in the QA ePortfolio	These learning activities may include professional readings, seminars, webinars, learning about a new or updated piece of equipment or software, attendance at staff meetings and rounds, courses and conferences, and many other types of learning. A member must record how they apply the learning in their practice. A member may attach evidence of their learning, if available, to the Record of Continuing Education and Professional Development.
At the time of completing the member's annual renewal of registration with CMRTO	Complete the Quality Assurance Declaration to provide evidence of having complied with the requirements of the CMRTO QA program	Members are asked to confirm whether they have complied with the requirements of the CMRTO QA program and that they understand the requirements of the QA program.

Members are required to retain a copy of their completed QA portfolio for five years.

A member may also be required to submit their QA records to the CMRTO for assessment by the QA Committee. A member may also be required to undergo a peer and practice assessment. Members will be notified by the CMRTO in writing when they are required to submit their QA records or undergo a peer and practice assessment. Should a member be required to undergo a peer and practice assessment, the member will be provided with the materials and method of the assessment at that time.

Professionals, and keeping it that way

Members in all practice settings demonstrate their commitment to continually improve their practice of the profession by engaging in continuing education and professional development activities, and by participating in the CMRTO QA program. These actions ensure the competence of members to the public, now and in the future.



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