



Pharmacists' Continuing Education (CPE) Participation Improvement Project

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Introduction

Continuing Professional Education (CPE) refers to the planned and structured learning programmes provided by an internal or external agent that are designed to promote the continual development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of practitioner beyond the entry-level professional qualifications or formal degree¹. Registered pharmacists are ethically required to be engaged in continuing education programmes to achieve professional self-improvement and meet competencies requirements for practice.

At KK Women's and Children's Hospital (KKH), pharmacists are scheduled yearly for continuing education presentations as presenters and participants. This is to encourage continuing learning and enhance development among pharmacists. However, we have an overall low attendance rate for pharmacists' CPE with a median of 11 participants per session in year 2019. We seek to identify reason(s) for this low attendance rate and to explore solution(s) that may increase the participation rate of pharmacists for pharmacists' CPE sessions.

Aim

This project aims to assess the **improvement** in participation rates of CPE and the **impact** of the introduction of innovative active learning strategies for pharmacists in KKH.

Methodology

A root cause analysis was carried out (Figure 1) and a survey was conducted for pharmacists to investigate the low participation rate and engagement in pharmacist's CPE. The survey found that "Topics discussed are irrelevant to my current area of practice" was the top reason for pharmacists not attending CPE.

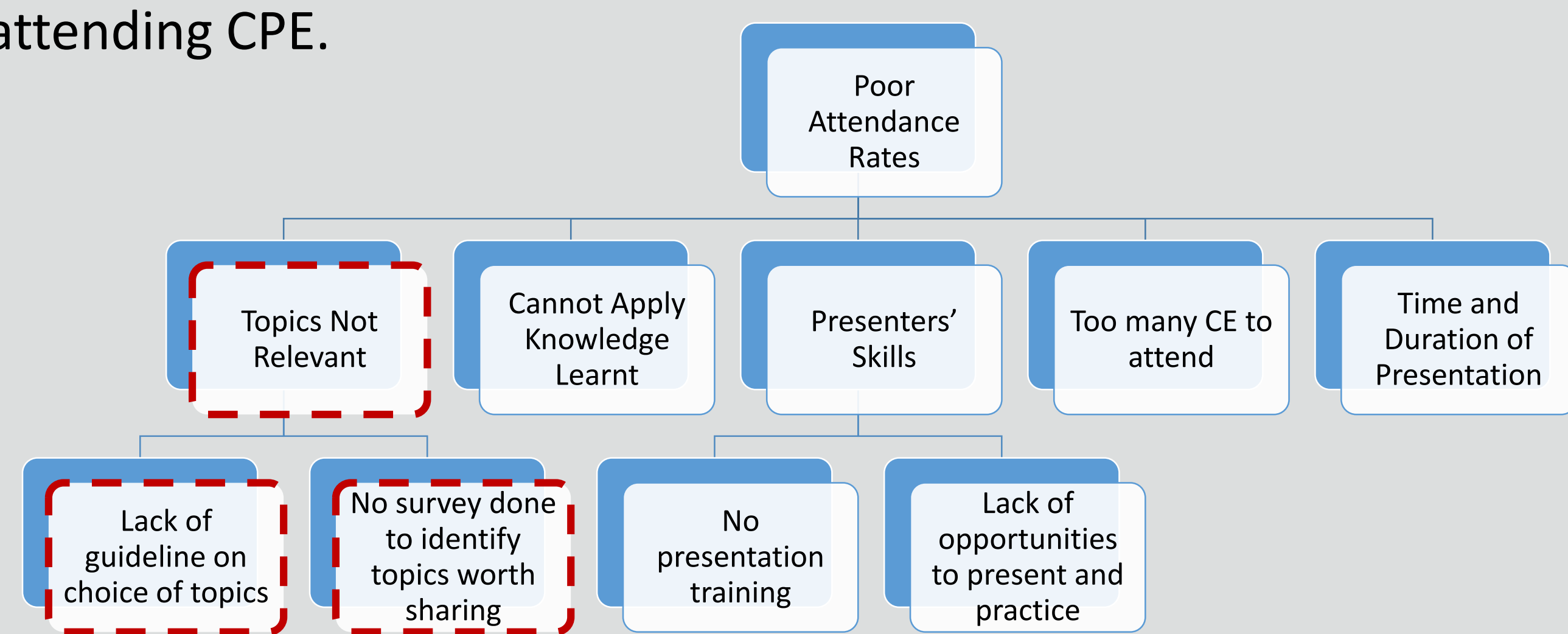


Figure 1. Root cause analysis of poor attendance rates and engagement for pharmacists' CPE.

Pharmacists were encouraged to suggest presentation topics for the year 2020. The CPE topics were then selected and scheduled based on pharmacists' interests and their relevance to practice. A guideline (Figure 2) was also developed to streamline the presentations' format and duration. In order to provide guidance on proper presentation styles, teaching sessions on setting multiple choice questions and learning objectives were arranged.

This new CPE format was disseminated to the pharmacy department and implemented in the year 2020. Coupled with opportunity from the COVID-19 pandemic, all presentations were eventually conducted virtually via ZOOM. Post-implementation survey was also carried out to assess the impact of these changes.

- Learning objectives for the presentation to be sent 2 weeks in advance.
- To include one interactive tool to engage the audience – for example: Kahoot, pooling e.t.c.
- To set 5 questions on the topic presented and scores among sections will be collated.
- Sections are grouped into teams and the winning section will be rewarded end of the year.
- Duration of presentation: keep to max 30 mins (to allow time of Q and A).
- Sessions timing: 1-2pm/2-3pm

Figure 2. Guideline for pharmacists' CPE presentations

Results

The attendance rate increased by 186% for CPE presentations in year 2020 compared to year 2019 (Figure 3).

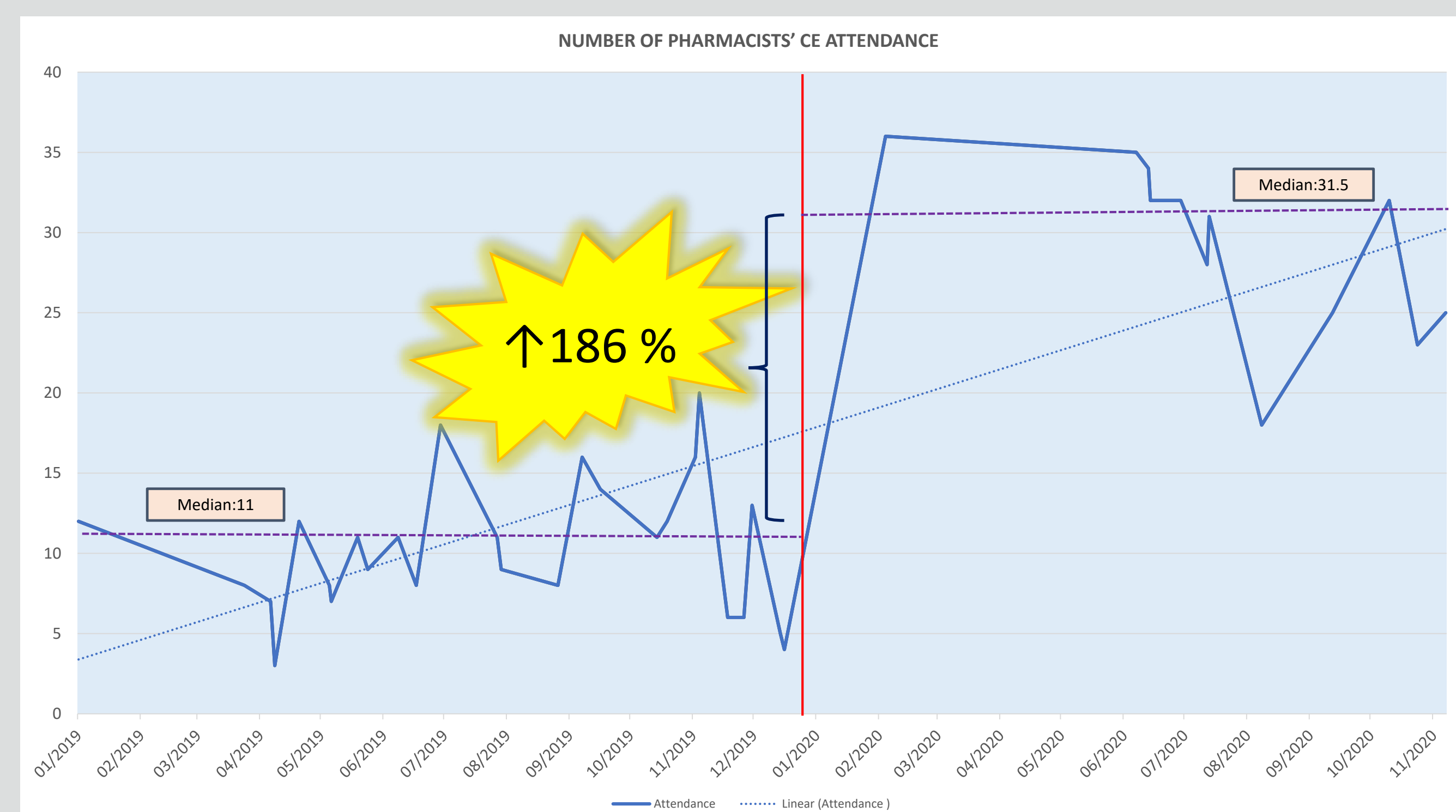


Figure 3. Significant increase in participation numbers for year 2019 vs year 2020 in pharmacists' CPE.

Based on the results of the post-implementation survey (Figure 4), more than 80% agreed that topics were relevant to practice. Eighty percent of the respondents agreed that by having a brief introduction of the topics beforehand had encouraged them to attend CPE. Almost 80% agreed that topics were easy to comprehend and were applicable to practice.



Figure 4. Post-implementation survey results

Overall, participants felt that the sessions were engaging with 83% agreeing that virtual platform is useful for conducting pharmacist's continuing education. Ninety-six percent of respondents agreed that they felt more motivated to attend CPE when they are involved in the choice of CPE topics.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the involvement of pharmacists in the choice of CPE topics encourages attendance. Virtual platform such as Zoom provides the flexibility of joining CPE presentations regardless of physical location. The uploading of CPE audio recordings onto learning platform will be conducted in year 2021, in order to reach out to more pharmacists.

References

1. Singapore Pharmacy Council. Guide to compulsory CPE for Pharmacists Ver (2.1). Sept 2018.