# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **I would like to get certified, but I'm not sure which level may be the most appropriate. Is there someone who can assist me?**
   While the level of certification that applicants pursue is most often an individual choice based on education and SPHM experience, applicants may also want to consider short and long-term goals for themselves and their organization. Applicants who would like to discuss their options with an experienced SPHM professional may do so easily through our **Mentor Program**.

2. **What is the cost of applying for certification?**
   The selected certification level determines the cost of the application. For more information on the cost of each certification level, please refer to our **Fee Schedule** located on our website and in our *Certification Handbook*.

3. **Can I apply for any level of certification, or must I follow a specific order (i.e. CSPHA → CSPHC → CSPHP)?**
   An applicant may apply for any level of certification provided they meet the requirements as detailed in our *Certification Handbook*. Although some applicants begin by applying for the CSPHA, there is no requirement to achieve the CSPHA certification before pursuing the CSPHC or CSPHP.

4. **What benefits are there concerning one level of certification over another?**
   The overall value of certification at any given level is individual/organization-specific. Early data indicates that organizations with SPHM certified individuals leading their program have lower workers' compensation claims costs as compared to organizations without certified individuals. For more information on this data, please refer to AON's 2018 Health Care Workers' Compensation Barometer Report.

   Additionally, many organizations, particularly Magnet hospitals, want to increase their number of professional certifications. The CSPHP certification is currently the only level recognized by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and with Magnet Recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center. Individuals should also consider that achieving a certification may factor into annual performance reviews.

5. **If I decide to pursue a higher level of SPHM certification, can I use the experience that qualified me for my first level of certification again? For example, would the two years of SPHM-specific work experience that counted towards my CSPHA certification also count towards the CSPHC or the CSPHP level?**
   Yes—since there is no prerequisite to obtain one certification before another, an applicant's SPHM-specific work experience counts towards any certification level. However, the final determination for credit ultimately resides with the Reviewer(s) who will examine the applicant's portfolio in its entirety.

6. **What constitutes professional development (PD)?  How are the professional development hours (PDH) counted?**
   The Certified Safe Patient Handling Professionals™ provides applicants with a variety of ways to obtain professional development hours (PDH).  Each certification level has a predetermined number of PDH that correlates with the knowledge, skill and experience expected from an applicant applying for that level.  Applicants should refer to the **Professional Development (PD) Activities Chart** within the *Certification Handbook*.  Depending on the selected certification level, there may be maximum limits for certain categories.

7. **Does leading or attending a SPHM committee meeting count towards my professional development hours (PDH)?**
   No—work-related activities other than training, education, and competency will not be accepted.  Rather, this may illustrate an applicant's SPHM-specific work experience.  Applicants may choose to count the number of years that they have performed these type of responsibilities towards the number of required years for the selected level of certification.

8. **If I teach the same SPHM class one hour each month, can I count that as 12 professional development hours (PDH) per year?**
   No—applicants may receive one PDH for each _unique_ hour of SPHM technology in-service content per year.  No credit will be given for repetition of the same content.

9. **Do my letters of recommendation have to attest to all nine core competencies?**
   Reviewers do not expect applicants to be proficient in all of the nine core competencies.  The core competencies are skill sets beneficial for those leading and supporting SPHM programs and in SPHM Coordinator/Program Manager roles.  The Certification and Renewal Committee will examine an applicant's portfolio for these skill sets upon review.  Applicants should ensure that letter(s) of recommendation reflect their expertise and strengths in these areas.

10. **How can I prepare for the CSPHC or CSPHP examination?**
    Applicants are encouraged to take the **Certification Practice Examination** and review the **Examination Content** and **Examination Review References** contained within our *Certification Handbook*.  These items may be helpful in preparing for the Clinician and Professional examinations, but are not all-inclusive nor suggestive that the examinations are solely based on these references.

11. **What is the difference between the CSPHC exam and the CSPHP exam?**
    The CSPHC examination contains 50 questions, whereas the CSPHP examination includes 75 questions.  Questions on both exams cover all of the nine core competencies.  However, the CSPHC examination is more heavily weighted on the clinical application of SPHM at the bedside:  clinical knowledge and experience; training deployment; unit-specific customization; team leadership; risk analysis and control.

12. **Do I take the CSPHC/CSPHP examination at home and is it timed?**
    Yes—these are timed examinations taken remotely via Live Online Proctoring (LOP).  Once the applicant has begun the exam, they will have 60 minutes for the CSPHC and 90 minutes for the CSPHP.  If the applicant fails to complete the exam within the allotted time, they will "time out." Applicants will receive their score upon completion of the exam.  The applicant will _not_ be provided with a summary of the questions they answered incorrectly.