

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) FOR DENTAL CARE PROFESSIONALS

GENERAL DENTAL COUNCIL



Dear colleague

All dental professionals have a duty to keep their skills and knowledge up to date so that patients receive the best possible treatment. As a dental professional myself, I know just how important that is.

On 1 August 2008, we will be introducing compulsory continuing professional development (CPD) requirements for dental care professionals. These new requirements will simply set out a formal policy for what dental care professionals everywhere are already doing. We are issuing this guidance so that you can be sure about what we expect from you.

- If you first registered with us on or before 31 July 2008, you need to start keeping records of your CPD from 1 August 2008. (If you register after 1 August 2008, check this guidance for your start date.)
- You need to complete at least 150 hours of CPD every five years. At least 50 of these hours will need to be 'verifiable CPD' (see page 3).
- You should carry out verifiable CPD in three core subject areas as part of the 50 – hour minimum amount.

Finally, I want to let you know about our plans to introduce a revalidation scheme for all members of the dental team. The aim of revalidation will be to protect the public by making sure that all dental professionals show they are fit to stay on our registers. Dental professionals will do this by regularly 'revalidating' their registration, and will need to be able to show that:

- their knowledge is up to date and relevant to their practice;
- their professional performance is up to the standards needed to maintain registration; and
- their behaviour meets the standards set out in our guidance 'Standards for dental professionals'.

Compulsory CPD for all dental professionals will form a solid foundation on which to build revalidation.

Please remember that there are many ways to complete CPD. Please see our website at www.gdc-uk.org for some suggestions.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage team training so that all dental professionals can complete CPD together. I have found this very successful at my practice.



Hew Mathewson
President

GDC

protecting patients, regulating the dental team

"We aim to

- protect patients
- promote confidence in dental professionals
- be at the forefront of healthcare regulation

We

- register qualified professionals
- set standards of dental practice and conduct
- assure the quality of dental education
- ensure professionals keep up to date
- help patients with complaints about a dental professional
- work to strengthen patient protection"

Introduction

'Standards for dental professionals' sets out the principles all dental professionals should follow. As a dental care professional (DCP), you are responsible for:

- putting patients' interests first and acting to protect them;
- respecting patients' dignity and choices;
- protecting the confidentiality of patients' information;
- co-operating with other members of the dental team and other healthcare colleagues in the interests of patients;
- maintaining your professional knowledge and competence; and
- being trustworthy.

All dental professionals should carry out continuing professional development (CPD) to support these principles. By law, dental care professionals must take part in our compulsory CPD scheme.

What is CPD?

We define CPD as 'study, training, courses, seminars, reading and other activities undertaken by a dental professional, which could reasonably be expected to advance his or her professional development as a dental professional'.

What do I have to do?

By law, if you are a dental care professional, you must do and keep records of 150 hours of CPD over every five-year cycle. At least 50 of the 150 hours that you do in every five-year cycle must be **verifiable CPD** (see the next column). The purpose of CPD is to provide high-quality care. It is very important that the CPD you do takes into account the needs of patients and is relevant to your practice.

You should use a personal development plan so that you and the patients you carry out work for benefit as much as possible from your CPD. Personal development plans allow you to identify your learning needs, prioritise them, and set a plan for meeting each need and for assessing learning activities afterwards. Examples of personal development plans may be available from your local postgraduate dental deanery or professional association.

CPD activities

Activities which could count as CPD include:

- courses and lectures;
- in-house team training;
- study days;
- educational parts of professional meetings;
- peer review and clinical audit;
- distance learning;
- multimedia learning (for example, web-based learning and using a CD-ROM);
- staff training in the practice or laboratory;
- going to educational workshops at conferences;
- reading journals; and
- private study.

What is verifiable CPD?

Over each five-year cycle, 50 of the 150 hours of CPD you do must be verifiable CPD. This means an activity must meet all four of the following conditions.

- 1 You must get and keep a certificate (or other type of documentary proof) proving you took part in the activity. The certificate should come from the activity provider or organiser, and should show the number of hours you spent on the activity.

The activity itself must have:

- 2 'concise educational aims and objectives' - the activity should have a clear purpose or aim;
- 3 'clear anticipated outcomes' - you should know what you can expect to gain as a result of taking part in the activity; and
- 4 'quality controls' - you should have the chance to give feedback, with a view to improving quality.

We do not approve any educational provider or course for verifiable CPD. Instead, you are responsible for deciding whether or not to count an activity as verifiable CPD. You must use your professional judgement to decide whether or not it meets all four of the above conditions for verifiable CPD. If you are not sure, ask the activity provider to explain whether the activity will meet these four conditions before you agree to do it.

If you are satisfied that an activity meets all four of the conditions, you can count it towards the verifiable CPD requirement. If it doesn't meet all four conditions, it isn't verifiable CPD.

Do I have to do verifiable CPD in any particular subjects?

We have identified three areas of CPD that all dental care professionals should do as part of the 50-hour minimum amount. These are:

- a medical emergencies (at least 10 hours in every CPD cycle);
- b disinfection and decontamination (at least five hours in every CPD cycle); and
- c radiography and radiation protection (at least five hours in every CPD cycle).

Exception for dental technicians: Instead of radiography and radiation protection, dental technicians can substitute radiography and radiation protection with materials and equipment (at least five hours in every cycle) as their CPD, as the application of radiography is not covered in the curriculum for dental technicians. In all other cases, we recommend that dental technicians carry out CPD in the same core verifiable CPD subjects as other dental care professionals.

We recommend that all dental professionals do CPD in medical emergencies every year.

If you work in a clinical environment, we also recommend that you keep yourself up to date by doing CPD (verifiable or general) in legal and ethical issues, and handling complaints.

What is general CPD?

If you are not satisfied that an activity meets all four of the conditions for verifiable CPD, but it still adds to your continuing professional development as a dental professional, you can count the time you spend on the activity as **general CPD**. Your general CPD may include activities such as reading journals, background research and private study.

Working with others

You may find it useful to carry out CPD with other people - this may be particularly helpful if you work in a team. Dental professionals should discuss and review their CPD with others as appropriate. In some circumstances, it will be useful for a dental team to carry out training together - for example, in training to handle medical emergencies in the practice.

What records must I keep?

You must keep a personal record of all the CPD hours that you do - both verifiable CPD hours (for which you must also keep documentary proof from the activity provider) and general CPD hours - up to a total of 150 hours (of which 50 are verifiable CPD) in each five-year cycle.

The records that you keep (including documentary proof of verifiable CPD) will be your evidence that you have met the CPD requirements.

You may use the recording form on the back of this booklet for your records. You can photocopy this or download it from our website at www.gdc-uk.org.

You can use a different recording method if you prefer. Whatever method you use, you should keep a record of:

- the date of the activity;
- the title or subject matter of the activity;
- the venue (if this applies);
- the name of the organisation or person running the activity;
- whether you are counting the activity as verifiable or general CPD; and
- the number of hours you spent doing the CPD activity. (You should not include lunch breaks or travel time.)

How will you check that I am meeting the CPD requirements?

After the end of each year of your five-year cycle, we will ask you to fill in a CPD annual return statement. You must do this by law. You will need to fill in the number of hours of verifiable CPD and general CPD that you have done the year before. We will keep a record of the CPD hours you send to us.

At the end of each five-year cycle, we may ask you to send us your full CPD records (including documentary proof of your verifiable CPD) to check that you have met the requirements. You should not send us your records unless we ask you to do so.

What happens if I do not meet the CPD requirements?

If you do not meet the requirements, we may take you off the register. If this happens, you will not be allowed back on the register until you can show that you have met the CPD requirements for rejoining the register (see below).

If you are thinking of leaving the register, or you are removed from the register (for not carrying out CPD or for any other reason), you will need to show evidence that you have done a certain amount of CPD to be allowed back onto the register in the future. This means that you must carry on doing and recording CPD while you are not on the register.

How much CPD will I have to show to be allowed to rejoin the register?

Your CPD cycles - which are fixed in law - carry on running whether or not you are on the register.

For example, if your first CPD cycle began on 1 August 2008, it will end on 31 July 2013. Your second CPD cycle then begins on 1 August 2013 and ends on 31 July 2018, and so on.

To rejoin the register, you will have to show evidence that you have completed CPD from the beginning of the CPD cycle in which you left the register, until the date of your application to rejoin the register, at an average rate of 30 hours of CPD (of which 10 are verifiable CPD) each year.

For example, if you are two years into your first CPD cycle and take two years off the register to work abroad, you will need to show that you have done four years' worth of CPD - 120 hours (30 x 4) of which 40 (10 x 4) are verifiable CPD - before you can rejoin the register.

If you are off the register for one year or less

You will not need to show any CPD evidence to rejoin the register, **unless** you come off the register in one CPD cycle and apply to rejoin it in the next. If you do this, you will have to show that you have done the CPD needed for the whole of the CPD cycle in which you left the register. In other words, you will have to show that you have done 150 hours of CPD (of which 50 are verifiable CPD).

If you are off the register for five years or more

You will have to show that you have completed 150 hours of CPD (of which 50 hours are verifiable CPD) in the five-year period ending on the date of your application to rejoin the register.

What do you mean by 'evidence'?

By evidence, we mean your CPD records and documentary proof of any activity you want to count as verifiable CPD. If you take time off the register, you should continue to keep records of CPD and certificates as proof of verifiable CPD in exactly the same way as you would if you were on the register.

What happens if I don't show enough CPD evidence when I apply to rejoin the register?

If you don't show enough CPD, you risk not being allowed to rejoin the register. If this happens, you will be able to appeal against the decision.

Contact us before you leave the register

You should take account of the CPD rules before you make a decision to leave the register, and you will need to make sure that you know what you will have to do to rejoin the register in the future.

Checklist

- Use a personal development plan to help you decide how you will meet the minimum requirement of 150 hours of CPD, of which at least 50 hours are verifiable CPD.
- Decide on a recording format for your CPD activity (for example, GDC recording form). Consider keeping separate records for verifiable CPD and general CPD.
- Always ask yourself 'does this activity contribute towards my continuing professional development?' For verifiable CPD, also check that the verifiable CPD conditions have been met.
- Make sure you are up to date in core areas, including medical emergencies, disinfection and decontamination, and radiography and radiation protection (or materials and equipment if you are a dental technician). You should carry out a minimum number of hours in each of these areas as part of your verifiable CPD.
- If you work in a clinical environment, also make sure that you carry out CPD (verifiable or general) in legal and ethical issues and handling complaints.
- For all verifiable CPD, make sure that you have documentary proof of your involvement (for example, a certificate).
- Remember to send us a yearly statement of your CPD hours when we ask you for it.
- If you are thinking of taking time off the register, remember that you will need to carry on doing CPD while you are off the register.
- Ring our Customer Advice and Information Team on 0845 222 4141 before you go, to check that you understand the CPD requirements.
- Carry on keeping records of the CPD that you do while you are off the register, including documentary proof of any CPD you want to count as verifiable CPD.
- Ring us at any time if you need advice on the CPD requirements.

If you have any questions about CPD

Visit our website at www.gdc-uk.org or contact us in the following ways.

Phone: 0845 222 4141
E-mail: GDCRegistration@gdc-uk.org
Fax: 020 7487 2643
Post: Registration Team
 37 Wimpole Street
 London
 W1G 8DQ

Our staff are here to help you.

CPD advice sheets

We have produced the following advice sheets on CPD for dental professionals working in particular circumstances. These are available on our website at www.gdc-uk.org.

- CPD for dental professionals working as teachers or researchers
- CPD for dental professionals in vocational training
- CPD for dental professionals in postgraduate training
- CPD for dental professionals in medical training
- CPD for dental professionals working overseas

We also have an advice sheet for educational providers of CPD, so that they can make sure they help dental professionals to meet our requirements.

Dates

Date of first registration	First CPD cycle	Start date of the second CPD cycle
If you are on the register at 31 July 2008	1 August 2008 to 31 July 2013	1 August 2013
If you register between 1 August 2008 and 31 July 2009	1 August 2009 to 31 July 2014	1 August 2014
If you register between 1 August 2009 and 31 July 2010	1 August 2010 to 31 July 2015	1 August 2015



