



CPD4dentalnurses

YOUR FUTURE IN YOUR HANDS

Enhanced Continuing Professional Development – A Guide

Aims: To provide guidance on The General Dental Council's (GDC) Enhanced Continuing Professional Development (ECPD) Scheme.

Learning Outcomes: On completion of this verifiable ECPD article, the participant will be able to demonstrate, through completion of a questionnaire, the ability to:

- Understand the General Dental Council's ECPD requirements;
- Understand the importance of CPD;
- Know the role of the GDC;
- Identify the General Dental Council's Learning Development Outcomes;
- Understand the importance of personal development planning to ensure that CPD is matched to the needs of the individual to improve professional practice; and,
- Identify the GDC recommended CPD subject areas

Introduction

All dental professionals have a duty to ensure that they are keeping their skills and knowledge updated. Undertaking CPD is a requirement of registration, is an important part of maintaining the GDC standards, and makes an important contribution to patient safety. Dental professionals need to ensure that they work within their scope of practice and provide the best quality care possible and therefore make an effective contribution to dentistry.¹

CPD for dentists and Dental Care Professionals (DCPs) is defined as ““study, training, courses, seminars, reading and other activities undertaken by a dentist or dental professional, which could reasonably be expected to advance their professional development, as a dentist or dental professional”¹

On 1st August 2018, the GDC's current ECPD scheme came into force. This article will discuss the current Enhanced CPD requirements and will provide information on how to prepare a PDP and practice reflective learning, both of which are requirements of the current CPD scheme.

CPD Requirements



Principle 7 of the GDC Standards for Dental Professionals state that “You must update and develop your professional knowledge and skills throughout your working life.”

Specifically, the standards state:

7.3.1 “You must make sure that you know how much Continuing Professional Development activity is required for you to maintain your registration and that you carry it out within the required time.”

7.3.2 “You should take part in activities that maintain update or develop your knowledge and skills. Your Continuing Professional Development activity should improve your practice.”²



At the end of the five-year cycle, the GDC will carry out a CPD audit. As part of this audit you may be contacted and be asked to provide documentary evidence of your participation in CPD activities and documentary evidence that your verifiable CPD has fulfilled the verifiable criteria.³ Many of our members have already been successfully audited. Records should be kept for five years after the end of your CPD cycle.

Highly Recommended CPD

The GDC have identified some subject areas will relate to many dental care professionals in their field of practice. These subjects are “**highly recommended** to do as part of the minimum verifiable CPD requirement.” These subjects are recommended as they contribute to patient safety. Currently, these subjects are:

- Medical Emergencies- At least 10 hours in each 5 CPD cycle (recommended 2 hours per year).
- Disinfection and Decontamination- At least 5 hours in each CPD cycle.
- Radiography and radiation protection- At least 5 hours in every CPD cycle.



The GDC also recommend that you keep up to date by doing CPD in the following areas:

- Legal and ethical issues
- Complaints handling
- Oral Cancer: Early detection
- Safeguarding children and young people
- Safeguarding vulnerable adults

There are no **compulsory** subjects that need to be completed. Registrants are expected to use their own “professional judgement” when planning and undertaking CPD, ensuring that it is relevant to their individual field and scope of practice. The GDC make the recommendations because they believe that “regularly keeping up to date in these topics contributes to patient safety.”

Current Enhanced CPD Scheme

The last review of CPD by the GDC took place in 2011 and the review process included a range of information gathering, research and consultation. There was strong support for the current Enhanced CPD Scheme and Key policy factors in developing CPD rules have aimed to “optimise the quality and impact of CPD on dental practice; the contribution that the GDC’s CPD requirements can make to continuing assurance of practice; and as an important precursor to a scheme of revalidation.”⁴

The work of the GDC is defined and governed by the Dentists Act 1984, which sets statutory objectives to protect patients and to promote public confidence. As such, the GDC:

- Sets standards for education and ensures trainees are taught the right skills.
- Maintains a register of dentists and dental care professionals, checking that people meet the requirements to be on the register.
- Sets and promotes professional standards and ensures that skills and knowledge are kept up to date through CPD.
- Investigates allegations of ‘impaired fitness to practise’.

The first three of these functions, namely education, registration and setting standards, are all considered to be preventative or ‘upstream’ measures. The aim is to reduce the

risk of delivering compromised patient care standards that may lead to harm or risk of harm and therefore to a case of fitness to practise. The aim of the current enhanced CPD requirements is to shift the balance to focus on the 'upstream' approach, in order to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring in the first place by ensuring that CPD, professional standards and good practice is embedded into each professional's life and that they are completing CPD that is relevant to their individual scope of practice and learning needs. The aim is to focus the dental professional on providing high quality patient care and maintain professional standards.⁵

Current CPD Requirements

Dental nurses are required to complete 50 hours of verifiable CPD over a five-year cycle. The key points to note are:

- 1) Non-verifiable CPD is no longer a requirement from August 2018.
- 2) Inclusion of provisions requiring CPD to be more evenly **spread throughout the cycle** are now included.
- 3) There is an emphasis on **reflective practice**, and the use of the **Personal Development Plan (PDP)** to identify learning needs and direct learning.⁶

1) Removal of non-verifiable CPD

From 1st August 2018, non-verifiable CPD was no longer required. This means that only verifiable CPD is admissible under the current scheme.

2) Spreading CPD more evenly throughout the cycle

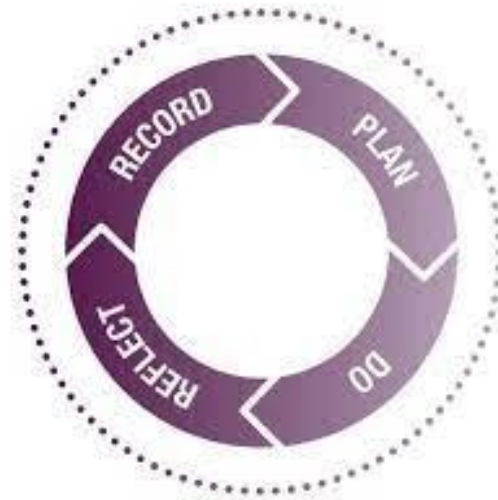
A CPD statement must be made in each year, even if zero hours are declared. Under the enhanced CPD scheme, you must declare at least 10 hours in every two years. This means that you must still complete 10 hours in each two-year period, even if you have already met the minimum required number of verifiable CPD hours of the 5-year cycle.



- ✓ At CPD4dentalnurses, we add verifiable CPD articles at regular periods during the year, so if you complete each article as it is released, you will meet these requirements.

3) Emphasis on reflective practice and Personal Development Planning

Registrants are required to produce a PDP and demonstrate reflective learning. The following steps are detailed in the current GDC enhanced CPD scheme⁶ and will be explained in more detail:



- 1) **Plan:** Learning needs will be identified through the use of a PDP.
- 2) **Do:** Once learning needs have been identified, CPD should then be planned and completed accordingly.
- 3) **Reflect:** Once the CPD activity has been completed, it can then be reflected upon.
- 4) **Record:** Correct documentation needs to be kept.

The GDC advise that learning needs can be identified individually or in conjunction with peers and colleagues. Learning needs may also be identified through patient feedback, a significant event or at a staff appraisal.⁶

Learning Development Outcomes

In the current enhanced CPD programme, the GDC has four learning development outcomes that CPD must be mapped against for each activity completed.

Each piece of CPD you complete should link to at least one development outcome (A B C or D). The development outcomes are as follows:

Development Outcome ⁶	Example of CPD content ⁶
<p>A.</p> <p>Effective communication with patients, the dental team, and others across dentistry, including when obtaining consent, dealing with complaints, and raising concerns when patients are at risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Consent • Complaints handling • Raising concerns • Safeguarding
<p>B.</p> <p>Effective management of self, and effective management of others or effective work with others in the dental team, in the interests of patients at all times; providing constructive leadership where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective practice management • Business management • Team working
<p>C.</p> <p>Maintenance and development of knowledge and skill within your field of practice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical and technical areas of study • Radiography • Cross infection control • Medical emergencies and CPR • CPD on quality assurance for MHRA • CPD specific for your daily role(s) • Upskilling opportunities
<p>D.</p> <p>Maintenance of skills, behaviours and attitudes which maintain patient confidence in you and the dental profession and put patients' interests first.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical and legal issues and developments • Professional behaviours • Equality and diversity training

The GDC advise that you should consider covering all four development outcomes during the cycle, although this is not compulsory.

Personal Development Plan

The GDC state that your PDP **must include**:

- 1) The CPD you plan to undertake during your cycle, which must include CPD that is relevant to your current or intended field (s) of practice;
- 2) The anticipated development outcomes that will link to each activity;
- 3) The timeframes within which you expect to complete your CPD over your cycle.

It is advised that you review your plan annually to ensure that it is related to your field of practice and your daily role.⁶

- ✓ Please now read our article entitled “Personal Development Plan”. This will enable you to build your PDP using our website.

Conclusion

In August 2018, the GDC brought in the current requirements for all dental care professionals. The aim is to encourage dental care professionals to focus CPD on their current field of practice and individual learning needs rather than just trying to obtain the required number of hours. In this way, the dental care professional will gain value from the CPD they complete, therefore contributing to improved patient care standards.

Personal Development Plan and Reflective Learning

This CPD is linked to the following GDC Enhanced CPD Development Outcome:

C. Maintenance and development of knowledge and skill within your field of practice.

Reflective learning is now a requirement of the GDC Enhanced Professional Development Scheme. As such, you will now need to answer some reflective learning questions, before your certificate is generated. These will be:

- 1) What did you learn (or confirm) from the activity that was helpful or relevant to your daily work and patients?
- 2) Comment on any changes/updates needed in your daily work
- 3) How has completion of this CPD article benefitted your work as a DCP?

Examples will be provided. Please remember that you need to fill this in on completion of the exam but you can also update this at any time from your CPD log. If you take a few moments to write your reflection on completion, you will have fulfilled the Enhanced CPD requirements.

Further Reading

[GDC Enhanced CPD Guidance](#)

1. General Dental Council (2017) CPD for Dental Professionals. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/education-cpd/cpd> (accessed 22/06/2022)
2. General Dental Council (2013) Focus on Standards. Available at: <https://standards.gdc-uk.org/> (accessed 22/06/2022)
3. General Dental Council (2017) Continuing Professional Development. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/professionals/cpd> (accessed 22/06/2022)
4. General Dental Council (2013) Draft Continuing Professional Development Rules Order of Council –Public Consultation. Available at: https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/enhanced-cpd-scheme-2018/enhanced-cpd-rules-order-of-council-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=33528a2d_2 (accessed 22/06/2022)
5. General Dental Council. Shifting the Balance. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/about-us/our-organisation/our-corporate-strategy-and-business-plans/shifting-the-balance> (accessed 22/06/2022)
6. General Dental Council (2017) Enhanced CPD for dental professionals. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/professionals/cpd/enhanced-cpd> (22/06/2022)