



**Continued Professional
Development (CPD)
Scheme**

March 2010



Background

On 31 December 2008 the Postgraduate Medical and Dental Board (PGM&DB) was dissolved and its functions were transferred to the Health Services Executive (HSE). The Dental Council assumed responsibility for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) from the HSE on 1 July 2009. The concept of mandatory CPD as a condition for ongoing registration is one which is supported by the Dental Council however this will require a change in legislation.

This guide has been produced by the Dental Council to assist dentists prepare for the commencement of mandatory CPD by encouraging them to begin their CPD journey now. It sets out the Dental Council's expectations so that when mandatory CPD comes into effect dentistry will have developed within itself a culture which will overcome this challenge.

This guide also contains a frequently asked questions section and a form to enable dentists' record their CPD activities throughout the year. This form can also be downloaded from our website (www.dentalcouncil.ie).

Introduction to CPD

CPD is a continuing learning process that complements formal undergraduate and postgraduate education and training. The Dental Council's Code pertaining to Professional Behaviour and Dental Ethics states that all dentists have an obligation to maintain and update their knowledge and skills through CPD. CPD is necessary for dentists to maintain and improve their standards across all areas of their practice. Dentists should embrace a culture of lifelong learning to make sure that they remain competent in their practice in order to provide a high-quality of patient care. CPD will also help dentists to keep up to date even when they are not practicing.

CPD is defined as studying a course, attending a training course or a seminar, reading and other activities undertaken by a dentist which could reasonably be expected to advance his or her professional development as a dentist. Non-clinical activity can also count as CPD.

CPD Subjects

Core CPD

The Dental Council recommends that all dentists carry out CPD in the three areas listed. These are recognised by the Dental Council as areas in which all dentists are expected to be proficient. Dentists are required to undertake ongoing development in these areas on a regular basis throughout their practicing career:

- Medical emergencies including Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) (at least 10 hours in every 5 year cycle)
- Cross-Infection Control (at least 5 hours in every 5 year cycle)
- Radiation Protection (at least 5 hours in every 5 year cycle).

Suggested CPD

The Dental Council recommends that dentists working in a clinical environment carry out CPD relating to **all aspects of their clinical practice**. Other CPD topics dentists may consider include: legal and ethical issues, handling complaints, health and safety including risk management, pain management, business planning, communications, evidence-based dentistry, child protection and clinical audit.

Types of CPD

The Dental Council recommends dentists complete and keep records of at least 50 hours of CPD per year, at least 20 of which should be verifiable CPD. While the amount of CPD hours completed may vary from year to year, dentists should complete at least 250 hours of CPD every five years, of which a minimum of 100 hours should be verifiable CPD.

Verifiable CPD

Activities in Ireland

Only activities approved in advance by the Dental Council can be regarded as verifiable CPD activities. Attendance at verifiable activities will be recorded (including the dentists name and registration number) by the course organiser and forwarded to the Dental Council, similar to the procedure operated previously by the PGM&DB. Course organisers are required to apply to the Dental Council at least three months in advance of the activity occurring for approval. To count as verifiable CPD an activity must have:

- Concise educational aims and objectives
- Clear anticipated outcomes
- Quality controls (ie there must be an opportunity for dentists to provide feedback)
- Documentary proof of attendance/participation from the course organiser.

Activities abroad

Dentists may record an activity attended abroad as verifiable CPD once it meets the Dental Council's requirements. Dental Council approval to count activities attended abroad as verifiable CPD is not required. It is recommended that dentists keep documentary evidence that the activity meets the Council's criteria for verifiable CPD.

General CPD

General CPD activities are those which contribute to a dentist's professional development but either do not meet all four of the criteria for verifiable CPD or are not approved by the Dental Council. For example, in most cases journal reading will not be verifiable CPD since it is unlikely that a certificate of attendance will be issued. Similarly, if a dentist attends a course which has concise educational aims, clear anticipated outcomes and the course organiser gives a certificate of attendance, but if there is no opportunity to give feedback the activity will not be approved as verifiable CPD. However this activity probably could still be recorded as general CPD as they do not require prior approval by the Dental Council.

Planning for CPD

Planning to meet your CPD requirements

- Step 1 - Make sure you understand the hours requirement
- Step 2 - Plan what CPD activities will meet the requirement
- Step 3 - Record your CPD

Step 1 – Make sure you understand the hours requirement

The Dental Council recommends that you should start your CPD programme as soon as possible. Under the scheme you should complete and keep records of at least 50 hours CPD per year, at least 20 of which should be verifiable CPD. While the amount of CPD hours you complete may vary from year to year dentists should complete at least 250 hours of CPD over five years, of which a minimum of 100 hours should be verifiable CPD.

Step 2 – Plan and choose what CPD activities will meet the requirement

When choosing which activities to undertake to meet the requirements, you should always ask yourself *“Does this activity contribute towards my continuing professional development as a dentist, is it appropriate and is it general or verifiable CPD?”* The Dental Council is recommending that dentists should carry out CPD in certain core subject matter (see Core CPD).

Checklist

- ✓ Plan how you will meet the minimum CPD requirement
- ✓ Ensure you have a suitable method of recording your CPD activity (eg Dental Council recording form)
- ✓ Keep separate records for general CPD and verifiable CPD
- ✓ Ask yourself 'does this activity contribute towards my continuing professional development?'
- ✓ For verifiable CPD check with the service provider that the scheme has been approved by the Dental Council as verifiable CPD
- ✓ Review your activity regularly to ensure you will meet the minimum requirements
- ✓ The Dental Council will **not** require you to submit any documentary evidence until the scheme becomes mandatory

Possible Sources of CPD

The following are activities that you might consider counting towards your CPD. The list is not exhaustive:

- Courses and lectures
- Vocational Training or General Professional Training study days
- Educational elements of professional and specialist society meetings
- Peer review and clinical audit
- Distance learning
- Multimedia learning
- Staff training
- Background research
- Private study/study groups
- Journal reading
- Attendance at conferences.

Step 3 – Record your CPD

It is planned to issue a statement of verifiable CPD hours recorded by the Dental Council to each dentist once a year. **However the onus is on you to meet the requirements and therefore the records that you keep will be your way of verifying that you are meeting with the scheme's requirements.** It is your responsibility to keep all the relevant records to support your CPD activity and to keep them safe. You can use the Dental Council recording form for this purpose which is available to download from the Council's website www.dentalcouncil.ie. It is recommended that dentists record the following information:

- Your name and Dental Council registration number
- Date of course/activity
- Venue (where appropriate)
- The name of the organisation or individual running the course/activity
- The title and subject matter of the course/activity
- Separately record verifiable CPD and general CPD activity
- The number of hours you spent doing the CPD activity (you should not include lunch breaks or travel time).

The Dental Council recommends that dentists keep separate records of verifiable CPD and general CPD. This will enable you to identify how close you are to meeting the schemes requirements on both an annual and five yearly basis.

The Dental Council will **not** require you to submit any documentary evidence until the scheme becomes mandatory.

Frequently Asked Questions about CPD

How many hours of CPD do I have to do?

The Dental Council recommends that you should complete, and keep records of at least 50 hours of CPD per year, at least 20 of which should be verifiable CPD. While the amount of CPD hours you have completed may vary from year to year, you are expected to complete at least 250 hours of CPD over five years, of which a minimum of 100 hours should be verifiable CPD.

What if I work part-time/work as a locum/am a temporary registrant?

CPD is recommended for all registrants, including those who work part-time, those who are retired but want to remain on the register and temporary registrants.

What is verifiable CPD?

To be verifiable CPD the activity must have:

- Concise educational aims and objectives
- Clear anticipated outcomes
- Quality controls (ie there must be an opportunity for you to give feedback on the activity)
- Documentary proof of your attendance/participation from an appropriate third party
- Approval from the Dental Council.

It is your responsibility to check with the activity organiser that the activity has approval from the Dental Council to count as a verifiable CPD activity. If an activity is not approved by the Dental Council it will not count as verifiable although you may wish to count it towards your general CPD – see ‘What is general CPD?’

What is general CPD?

General CPD are activities which are of benefit to your continuing professional development but which are self-directed – for example, journal reading.

Are there recommended CPD core subjects?

The recommended core subjects and suggested minimum number of verifiable hours per cycle that all registrants should spend on these are:

- Medical emergencies including Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (at least 10 hours in every 5 year cycle)
- Cross-infection control (at least 5 hours in every 5 year cycle)
- Radiation protection (at least 5 hours in every 5 year cycle).

In addition, the Dental Council recommends that registrants working in a clinical or laboratory environment or those who are in any way involved in the care of patients carry out CPD (verifiable or general) to make sure they are up to date in:

- Legal and ethical issues
- Complaints handling.

Can you tell me if a course is approved by the Dental Council as verifiable CPD?

If the Dental Council approves an activity it will count as verifiable CPD, but it is up to you to check this with the course provider directly. An advisory group within the Dental Council will publish guidelines for organisers wishing to have courses approved for verifiable CPD.

Does the Council have a list of courses I can attend?

No. The Dental Council will not be publishing lists of approved courses.

Is it my responsibility to keep records regarding CPD?

Yes. The recording of CPD is your responsibility. If you go on a course it is your responsibility to make sure you get proof of attendance. The Dental Council recommends that you record your verifiable and general CPD as you undertake it. Recording evidence of your participation in CPD will be important when the scheme becomes mandatory.

What happens if I am not sure what to record?

The Dental Council has produced a sample recording form showing the information you should keep. The Council recommends that you keep separate forms for recording verifiable and general CPD. The information you record should include:

- Your name and your Dental Council registration number
- Date of course/activity
- Title of course/activity
- Subject matter of course/activity
- Venue (where appropriate)
- The course provider (name/company/organisation)
- The number of hours you spent on the activity (excluding lunch/breaks).

Can I count an activity I go on abroad as verifiable CPD?

Yes, you may record it as verifiable CPD if you are satisfied that it meets the Dental Council's requirements. You do not require Dental Council approval to count activities attended abroad as verifiable CPD but you should record it as part of your verifiable CPD record and keep evidence that it meets the Council's criteria. Accurate recording of your CPD will be important when the scheme becomes mandatory.

What happens if I take time out to go abroad, or take a short career break?

The Dental Council recommends that you retain your Irish registration if you plan to take a break from practice or work abroad for a limited period of time. The Dental Council still recommends that you complete and keep records of at least 50 hours of CPD per year, at least 20 of which should be verifiable CPD and/or at least 250 hours of CPD over five years, of which a minimum of 100 hours should be verifiable CPD.

I won't bother doing any CPD – what will that mean?

The Dental Council recommends that dentists undertake 50 hours of CPD a year. You should bear in mind that the CPD requirement is underpinned by the Dental Council's Code pertaining to Professional Behaviour and Dental Ethics which requires dentists to continue professional education on a regular and frequent basis.

When do I send my CPD recording form and the documentary proof to the Dental Council?

The Dental Council will **not** require you to submit any documentary evidence until the scheme becomes mandatory

Can attendance at a trade show be recorded as verifiable CPD?

Unless the trade show has received prior Dental Council approval it cannot be recorded as verifiable CPD. However you may consider if the activity could be recorded as general CPD.

I am undertaking postgraduate training – do I need to do CPD also?

Dentists on approved postgraduate programmes in Ireland are not expected to undertake CPD while enrolled on the programme. The postgraduate programme is deemed to meet CPD requirements.

Is CPD now mandatory for me?

No, CPD cannot become a mandatory condition for ongoing registration under the Dentists Act, 1985. The Council's CPD recommendations contained in this document are suggested as a good way of ensuring that you develop a culture of continuing education and life-long learning. The Dental Council reminds you of your obligation under Council's Code of Professional Behaviour and Dental Ethics to maintain your professional knowledge and skill by continuing education and by keeping yourself informed of developments in methods of treatment.

Record of Verifiable and General Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Name _____

Dental Council Registration Number _____ Verifiable / General CPD _____

Date	Title Of Event/Activity	Venue	Provider	Subject Matter	Hours	Comments





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