CPD FOR PCDs

no longer an option

GDC plans for PCDs will mean major changes in demand for ongoing professional development, report **Kate Craig** and **Ruth Glover**.

The GDC intends to introduce compulsory registration for all PCDs in the near future (see *Opening Doors*, *Vital* launch issue). In conjunction with this, the GDC also plans to introduce minimum requirements of continuing professional development (CPD) for PCDs.

CPD is categorised as either 'verifiable' or 'non-verifiable', although the latter is commonly referred to simply as 'general'. Verifiable CPD would typically (though not exclusively) be a certificated course or lecture, whilst general CPD might include any of a wide variety of self determined activities that advance your professional development. The level of CPD required for PCDs has not yet been declared by the GDC, but the requirements for dentists may give a hint of what is to come: dentists must currently complete 75 hours of verifiable CPD and 175 hours of general CPD over a period of five years.

In order to qualify for verifiable CPD, training will have to meet several criteria such as having specific educational aims and objectives, and certificating the number of hours of CPD. General CPD could include courses (that do not meet the criteria of verifiable CPD), seminars, and simply keeping up to date with dental literature. To evidence general CPD, individuals will keep their own record of activities and time, in a log book.

The compulsory requirement for verifiable CPD in particular will generate a demand for appropriate qualifying training. The GDC do not offer lists of approved courses, and so individuals will need to ensure that training events that they intend to take as part of verifiable

fiable CPD will properly comply with the regulations. PCDs will therefore want to give due consideration when choosing courses and course providers.

CPD providers are already tailoring their courses towards the new requirements. While Eastman Continuing Professional Development (Eastman CPD) already run established programmes for nurses, hygienists and therapists, opportunities for technicians have been more limited and a programme to serve the needs of technicians is under development. Study days for all of these professional groups are also to be launched.

Although the introduction of 'compulsory' CPD may sound like a lot more work, ideally it shouldn't mean doing anything more than PCDs would be doing already.

In the upcoming book *Advanced Dental Nursing*¹, Janet Goodwin and Robert Ireland comment that although CPD is often per-

ceived as education that continues if and when required by the individual, it is in fact life-long learning that should be ongoing throughout a person's working life.

Registration timescale

It may be at least two years before the GDC introduce verifiable CPD but as it will eventually become a mandatory aspect of re-registration the sooner the concept is embraced the easier it will be in future.

If you would like more information regarding CPD for PCDs at the Eastman, contact Ruth Glover, PCD Programme Coordinator, telephone 020 7905 1239 or email r.glover@eastman.ucl.ac.uk or visit the Eastman's website at www.eastman.ucl.ac.uk/cpd.

1. Goodwin J, Ireland R. Career development pathways *In Ireland R (ed). Advanced Dental Nursing*. Blackwell Munksgaard, 1994 (*In Press*).