



Enhanced CPD for DCPs: a recap



For our continuing education themed issue of *BDJ Team*, **Priya Sharma** clarifies the GDC CPD requirements for DCPs.

Introduction

It has been over five years since the Enhanced Continuing Professional Development (ECPD) requirements for dental professionals came into force. According to the General Dental Council (GDC) the goal is to '... ensure CPD activity is firmly embedded in the professional life of dental professionals. It is intended to support registrants in doing CPD regularly, in accordance with our standards and within their current scope of practice'.¹

Emphasis is placed on engaging dental professionals to take charge of their learning needs to improve their skills and abilities throughout one's professional life whilst gaining insight. ECPD is a dynamic process where the learning is part of the journey. It

is a compulsory requirement for the GDC's regulatory system. Not complying with the ECPD requirements can put your registration at risk.

Unfortunately, there appears to be some misunderstanding about the requirements. The aim of this brief article is to summarise the various aspects of ECPD for registrants.²

When does my ECPD cycle start?

The first CPD cycle starts at a registrant's first full year of registration with the GDC. The dates of your cycle can be found on the GDC's eGDC website: <https://www.egdc-uk.org/>. You will need to create an account.

Dentists' CPD years are from 1 January to 31 December. All dental care professional (DCP) titles are from 1 August to 31 July. You must declare your CPD within 28 days of the end of the relevant annual period; for dentists 28 January and for all other registrants 28 August.

As part of the annual renewal of registration you must make either an annual or end of cycle statement, even if you have not completed any CPD during that year.

It is paramount to remember that the

GDC requires that all registrants carry out a minimum of ten hours of verifiable CPD across any consecutive two-year period, including when you end one cycle and start a new one. If you have not completed any CPD in a given year, then you must do ten hours of verifiable CPD the year before or the year after. This is to ensure that you spread out your CPD over the five years. This requirement has caused some confusion for dental professionals.

How many hours do I need to complete?

You will need to complete a minimum of set verifiable CPD hours for your professional title on the GDC register in your five-year cycle:

- Dentists = 100 hours
- Dental therapists, dental hygienists, orthodontic therapists and clinical dental technicians = 75 hours
- Dental nurses and dental technicians = 50 hours.

If you hold more than one professional title with the GDC then you must complete the higher CPD hours requirement.

Author information

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Is it compulsory to do verifiable CPD?

Be mindful that only verified CPD is acceptable. Ensure that the CPD you choose to do has clearly documented aims, outcomes and objectives. Retain all certificates as proof of completion of CPD.

Are there any recommended CPD topics?

The GDC highly recommend carrying out CPD activity in medical emergencies, disinfection and decontamination, and radiography and radiation protection. Other recommendations are legal and ethical issues, complaints handling, early detection of oral cancer and safeguarding.²

What is a CPD record?

Registrants must maintain a CPD record which will include their PDP, log of completed CPD activity (date CPD undertaken, number of hours as shown on the CPD certificate, title and provider of CPD, GDC development outcome addressed and reflection) and certificates of CPD activity.

dentistry. According to the GDC: 'Reflection is an important process for you to evaluate the impact of your CPD activity on meeting your professional needs for maintenance and development. Taking some time to review and reflect on your activities allows you to assess what benefits you have gained and how you have implemented your learning. After reflecting, you may find that you need to adjust your PDP and activity.'

To reflect you will need to look back at your CPD activity, analyse your current knowledge, participate in learning and incorporate this into your practice while evaluating for the future.

It is your decision how you will reflect on your CPD, either after each CPD activity, periodically or at the end of each year. The way you record your reflection is your decision however you should make a record that you have reflected on your learning.

Do I continue with ECPD if I am absent from work?

Regardless of any absence from work, career break or parental leave you are responsible to

restored to the register. A restoration fee will apply and there may be a few months delay depending on administrative backlog.

How long should I keep my ECPD documentation?

The GDC may randomly select registrants to check records at any time during or after a CPD cycle. Retain your records (PDP, log of completed CPD activity and certificates) for five years following each cycle.

What should I do now?

It is probably best to know where you are in your cycle, revisit your PDP and ensure that you are on track to meeting the ECPD requirements.^{2,3}

References

1. Sharma P. All change please... Enhanced CPD. *BDJ Team* 2017; doi: 10.1038/bdjteam.2017.154. Available at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdjteam2017154> (accessed November 2023).
2. General Dental Council. CPD for dental professionals. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/education-cpd/cpd/enhanced-cpd-scheme-2018/> (accessed November 2023).
3. General Dental Council. eGDC. Available at: <https://www.gdc-uk.org/> (accessed November 2023).

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What is a Personal Development Plan (PDP)?

The GDC states the following: 'The PDP is designed for you to carefully consider your role as a dental professional, and what CPD will give you maximum benefit for maintaining and developing your practice in your current and future areas of work'. Each learning need must relate to one of the four GDC development outcomes. A template for a PDP and the development outcomes may be found on the GDC website.² The PDP must include the CPD you plan to undertake in your cycle which is relevant to your field of practice, anticipated development outcomes and expected timeframes.

Do I need to reflect on my CPD?

Reflective practice is of utmost importance in

keep up to date with your CPD.

What if I don't have enough CPD hours at the end of my cycle?

If you are coming to the end of your five-year cycle and realise that you will not be able to complete the mandatory required hours, you must submit a request to the GDC outlining your exceptional circumstances and why you require a grace period. If approved, you will be given an additional 56 days to complete your CPD.

What happens if I fail to meet the requirements?

If you do not meet the ECPD requirement, then you will be removed from the register. Once you have met the CPD requirements then you can apply to have your name

HOW DO YOU DO CPD?

How do you get your CPD hours? Do you do your CPD as a practice, on your own at home, or in a combination of ways? Do you take part in *BDJ Team* CPD? Do you find the GDC's CPD requirements straightforward to meet or do you worry about completing the required number of hours of CPD in your cycle? We would love to hear from you! Email bdjteam@nature.com or send a message through one of our social media channels:

- <https://www.facebook.com/bdjteam>
- <https://www.instagram.com/bdjteam2023/>
- <https://twitter.com/EditorKate2>

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41407-023-2021-0>