

Dental Practitioners CPD

Your guide to the Dental Council's Continuing Professional Development requirements

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Background

This guide has been produced by the Dental Council to help you to prepare for mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) by encouraging you to take part in CPD activities now. This guide expands on the Council's previous guidance and sets out the Dental Council's revised minimum requirements for CPD, and it explains what activities are 'core', 'verifiable' and 'general'.

This guide also contains a Frequently Asked Questions section and a form for you to record your CPD activities throughout the year. This form can also be downloaded from our website www.dentalcouncil.ie.

Ethical Obligations

You are ethically obliged to keep your knowledge and skills current. A strong CPD record is important to give your patients and colleagues confidence in your clinical judgement as it shows your commitment to high standards and to your own development as a healthcare professional. We expect that this will become a statutory requirement in the proposed new Dental Act.

Introduction to CPD

CPD may be defined as the systematic maintenance of your knowledge and skills across all areas of your practice throughout your professional life. It is a continuing, lifelong learning process that complements formal undergraduate and postgraduate education and training. CPD is necessary for you to maintain and improve your standards of professional practice.

Effective CPD needs a planned approach to develop, maintain and increase knowledge, clinical skills and professional performance standards with the aim of providing better patient care in a safe environment.

In this way, you aim to maintain and improve your competence and skills with regard to the needs of your patients, the members of your dental team and your clinical practice.

CPD includes formal activities such as lectures, courses, conferences and workshops as well as self-directed reading and study clubs. CPD will also help you to keep up to date even when you are not practising.

Types of CPD

The Dental Council recommends you complete, and keep records of, at least 50 hours of CPD every year. Twenty of these hours should be 'verifiable' CPD. Generally, only activities approved in advance by the Dental Council can be regarded as verifiable CPD activities.

While the amount of CPD hours completed may vary from year to year, you should complete at least 250 hours of CPD every five years, of which a minimum of 100 hours should be verifiable CPD.

It is recommended that your core CPD activities should take a minimum of 50 verifiable hours over a five-year period.

Core CPD subjects: Patient safety and regulatory compliance

The Dental Council recommends that all dentists carry out CPD in the areas listed below. The Council considers these to be 'core' areas and expects all dentists to be proficient in them. The suggested hours, which should be considered as the minimum time to be allocated to these subjects over a five-year period, are set out.

Recommended core subject matter

- | | |
|--|----------|
| • Infection prevention and control | 10 hours |
| • Radiology informatics and radiation protection | 5 hours |
| • Professional communication | 10 hours |
| - Relationship management | |
| - Ethical and legal issues | |
| - Conflict resolution | |
| - Handling of complaints | |
| - Communication | |
| • Medical emergencies (excluding Basic Life Support) | 5 hours |
| • Audit | 7 hours |
| • Record keeping | 5 hours |

- Governance 8 hours
 - Workplace legislation / HR
 - Health and safety at work
 - Development of practice protocols (team based)

Total (half of the overall required verifiable hours) 50 hours

Note regarding Basic Life Support: You are obliged to maintain valid Basic Life Support (BLS) accreditation. The time taken to maintain BLS accreditation is **in addition** to the core CPD set out above.

Verifiable CPD

Activities in Ireland

When you take part in verifiable activities approved by the Council, the Course Organiser will record your attendance (including your name and registration number), and give you a certificate of attendance for your records. Course Organisers must apply to the Dental Council for approval at least three months in advance of the activity date.

To count as verifiable CPD an activity must meet the following criteria:

1. concise educational aims and objectives
2. clear anticipated outcomes
3. quality controls (for example, there must be an opportunity for you to provide feedback)
4. documentary proof of attendance and participation from the course organiser.

Activities abroad

If you have taken part in an activity abroad, you may record it as verifiable CPD once it meets the Dental Council's requirements. You do not need to look for Dental Council approval in advance to record activities attended abroad as verifiable CPD. It is recommended, though, that you keep documentary evidence that the activity meets the Council's criteria for verifiable CPD.

Peer-reviewing papers

You may record each paper you review for a peer-review journal as 2 hours of verifiable CPD.

Maintenance of clinical skills

CPD should be planned in such a way to give sustained professional development and should cover a broad range of topics appropriate to your individual practice and your patients' needs. This should take a minimum of 50 verifiable hours over a five-year period (10 hours each year) in addition to core CPD activities.

General CPD

General CPD activities are those which contribute to your 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 be general CPD rather than verifiable CPD. Similarly, if you attend a course which has concise educational aims; clear anticipated outcomes and the Course Organiser gives a certificate of attendance but there is no opportunity to give feedback, then the activity will not be approved by the Council as verifiable CPD. However, these activities may still be recorded as general CPD if you feel the activity has contributed to your own personal development.

Planning for CPD

Planning to meet your CPD requirements:

Step 1 - Make sure you understand the time requirement

Step 2 - Plan CPD activities to fulfil your anticipated professional requirements

Step 3 - Record your CPD

STEP 1: Make sure you understand the time requirement in hours

You should complete and keep records of at least 50 hours CPD each year, and at least 20 of these hours should be verifiable. While the amount of CPD hours you complete may vary from year to year, you 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 CPD activities to fulfil your professional requirements

When choosing activities to undertake to meet the Council's 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?"

Checklist

- Plan how you will meet the minimum CPD requirement.
- Ensure you have a suitable method of recording your CPD activity (for example, the Dental Council recording form).
- Keep separate records for verifiable CPD and general CPD.
- Ask yourself: "Does this activity contribute towards my continuing professional development?"
- For verifiable CPD, check with the service provider to see if the activity has been approved by the Dental Council.
- Review your activity regularly to ensure you will meet the minimum requirements.

Possible Sources of CPD

You might consider the following are activities as sources of 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 or study groups

- Journal reading
- Attendance at conferences

STEP 3: Record your CPD

It is your responsibility to keep records to support your CPD activity and to keep those records safe. You can use the Dental Council recording form for this purpose. This is available to download from the Council's website. It is recommended that you record the following information:

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

Note: Record verifiable CPD and general CPD activity separately.

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

You are not required to give any documentary evidence to the Council now, but you should note that this may become a requirement under the proposed new legislation.

For Course Organisers

Course Organisers must apply to the Dental Council for approval at least three months in advance of an activity. Please note that the Dental Council **will not** retrospectively approve applications for courses seeking accreditation as verifiable CPD. To count as verifiable CPD an activity must have:

- Concise educational aims and objectives
- Clear anticipated outcomes

- Quality controls that is, there must be an opportunity for dentists to provide feedback)
- Documentary proof of attendance and participation from the course organiser

Applying for verifiable CPD

Course Organisers must complete the application form, which can be downloaded from our website, and submit it to the Dental Council by email to info@dentalcouncil.ie.

Course organisers should be aware of the following when applying as incomplete applications will be returned:

- You must provide enough biographical information about the speakers to justify their expertise to present or lead the activity.
- If the activity is longer than an hour or if there is more than one lecturer, you should submit a detailed timetable outlining the total hours (excluding all breaks).
- The application should show clearly the proportion of the programme that has a hands-on clinical component (if any). This can be submitted in an accompanying document if necessary.
- Applications must be completed electronically (not be handwritten) and emailed to the Dental Council at info@dentalcouncil.ie.

Attendance Sheets

Course organisers should retain the signed attendance sheets for their own records for at least five years. The attendance sheets must not be sent to the Dental Council. A sample attendance sheet can be downloaded from the Dental Council's website www.dentalcouncil.ie.

Frequently Asked Questions about CPD

How many hours of CPD do I have to do?

You should complete, and keep records of at least 50 hours of CPD each 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. You should have at least 50 hours of core CPD activity within your verifiable CPD.

What if I work part-time, work as a locum or I 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 (that is, there must be an opportunity for you to give feedback on the activity)
- Documentary proof of your attendance and participation from an appropriate third party (for example, the course organiser)
- Approval from the Dental Council

It is your responsibility to check with the 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.

What is general CPD?

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

Are there recommended CPD core subjects?

Yes. The recommended core subjects and suggested minimum number of verifiable hours for the five-year cycle are set out on page 4 of this document.

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. You should check this with the Course Organiser directly.

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

No. The Dental Council does not publish 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 very important when CPD becomes mandatory by law.

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 should record is also listed on page 8 of this document (Step 3 of Planning for CPD).

Can I count an activity I attend 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 in advance 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 CPD becomes mandatory by law.

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 recommends that you still complete and keep records of at least 50 hours of CPD per year, at least 20 of which should be verifiable CPD. (That is, 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 and you are ethically obliged to be competent to practice. You should note that your failure to do so may be a factor should a patient make a complaint to the Dental Council or take action against you for negligent treatment.

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

You should retain your own CPD records. You are not required to submit any documentary evidence to the Council just yet, though this may change when CPD becomes mandatory. You should retain your record for at least five years, but you are welcome to retain them for longer if you wish.

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, the activity might be suitable to be recorded as general CPD.

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

Dentists on recognised postgraduate programmes 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, but you do have a clear ethical obligation under Council's Code of Practice regarding Professional Behaviour and Ethical Conduct to maintain your knowledge and skills. While a statutory CPD scheme will probably be introduced in future legislation, these requirements are a good way of ensuring that you develop a culture of continuing education and life-long learning.



An Comhairle Fiaclóireachta

57 Merrion Square, Dublin 2, Dublin, Ireland.

T: (00353) 1 676 2226. **F:** (00353) 1 676 2076.

E: info@dentalcouncil.ie

www.dentalcouncil.ie

