

CPD and Me: an ODP educators approach to the Health Professions Council Standards for continuing professional development

An IT-based strategy for recording and documenting CPD activity for audit and review

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Abstract

ODPs are currently employed in a wide range of roles within health care and education. In this article, the author proposes that a structured record of CPD activity can be used to both meet the requirements for HPC registration, and also to help shape the wider workforce development. In particular, consideration is given to demonstrating the contribution to service quality and the benefit gained by service users.

Key words

Continuing professional development, evidence-based practice, registration, CDP, ODP, higher education, health care

Reference

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Introduction

Following a long clinical career, I made the decision in 2005, to lecture in the university setting, primarily focusing on ODP education. As with any new position, there was an on-going process of familiarisation and learning to be undertaken, and my employer encouraged a self-directed approach to both my work and development. I have, perhaps, become a typical academic, with a varied string of vague ‘interests’ and activities. However, I remain a registered ODP and to that end, I have to maintain both my *Standards of Proficiency* (HPC, 2004) and those required for continuing professional development (CPD). I therefore need to ensure that my professional development activities meet the criteria outlined in the HPC publication: *Continuing Professional Development and Your Registration* (HPC, 2006).

July 2008 is the scheduled random audit commencement for ODP (HPC, 2006) [pdf. version p.4]. Only the preceding two years will be assessed in regard to CPD [p.5], so I will be looking at activities and development from July 2006 onwards. This ensures that my development is current and on-going, and that I am not simply relying on a qualification gained back in my distant past. I will be expected to complete a formatted CPD profile, and to ‘state how my CPD has met the five Standards’ required. This will be sent to me if I am selected for audit. In addition, I will be required to provide an account of how I have planned and recorded my CPD, with limited ‘supporting evidence’ of my activities.

Evidence must include a ‘summary of all activities undertaken’ and a table format will be used for this. Although HPC suggest that it includes the date and type of activity, I also aim to include a brief indication of how each activity meets Standards 3 and 4. This will help

CPD assessors to understand both my CPD approach, and also how this relates to my practice and those who are ‘affected by my work’ (service users) [p.7]. It will also help me to reflect on how I have developed over the two-year period, allowing me to consider my current and future working practice. The resulting table will need to be concise and easy to follow (see Table 1).

My own CPD record is held on computer. Most of the evidence is held as Word, PowerPoint or pdf Files. I have summarised my activities into a PowerPoint format, and use this as a working journal, appraisal record and a tool for professional activities when working with new groups or organisations. In order to keep it ‘evidence based’, I can add supporting evidence in the form of e-mail copies, links, images and media footage, as well as text narrative. This helps me to summarise a combination of complex material, without the need for ‘*War and Peace*’. Few things now exist only in hard-copy format, and I have even scanned my original documents and qualifications to file, with the originals safely packed away. I regularly create a back-up copy, in case of a technical error or computer failure.

Although HPC will not ask to see my ‘CPD record’ [p.5], I want my profile to be a true reflection of the activities I have undertaken. Therefore, I have chosen to indicate how each item is backed up with evidenced and/or recorded in my personal record. It will include all activities that have contributed towards my CPD. For me, this will be quite a lengthy compilation. In addition to taking on a new career, I have also undertaken formal study and research work. While this may seem easy to support with evidence, I must also demonstrate that it has made a contribution to practice (including my own personal and professional development),

Table 1: Template of CPD table for recording evidence of activities relevant to Standards 3 and 4 of the HPC registration document

Profile #	Date	Activity [Type] [Relevance] (HPC, 2006) [p.23]	Standard 3 Contribution to Quality [Practice/service delivery]	Standard 4 Benefit to Service User	Evidence held (HPC, 2006) [p.24]
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

service (what has the wider group gained), and also the benefit made to others. These requirements are covered in Standards 3 and 4 [p.6,7]. Conveying this information in a concise manner will be a challenging task because what is needed is a summary of my activities, not a complex piece of writing that is difficult to understand.

Much of what we do in our professional employment we take for granted and this is perhaps the most difficult area of CPD to support with evidence. ‘Appendix 1 : examples of CPD activities’ (HPC 2006 [p.23]) highlights areas of work-based learning and professional activity that may be inherent in your role, yet still contribute to your CPD. The entry in Example 1a is used to acknowledge this, although it is by no means conclusive, and it will need to be supported by

specific additional activity. I have used the same wording to describe my activity type, as used in the HPC document. In addition to giving a clear format for assessment, this will also help me to ensure a range of activities are supported with evidence, and highlight areas for future development.

Formal study is an important part of CPD, and the relevance of the subject or qualification may be demonstrably linked to your service/practice. On its own however, recording a degree or course, would not show how development has improved my work, or been of benefit to others. In the example (Example 1b), I undertook some research studies, to supplement my teaching practice. The award itself is evidence that I undertook the study and achieved its requirements. However, I also cite materials I have

delivered, that give an example of how the learning has been used. I have published a related article in a peer-reviewed journal, which may help show how learning has been made available to a wider professional body. Provision of a reference would allow an assessor to access this if they wished to do so. Appropriate issues can be expanded upon within the written profile statement, in order to address the specific questions involved with Standards 3 and 4 [p.17,18]. I would perhaps cover the way in which my study has improved the effectiveness of my work, and how it has led to changes in my working approach [p.18]. I would not be looking to give an in-depth account of every activity, but more to ensure that I had covered a range of activities and evidence types, which

Example 1a: Your CPD record should take account of core employment activities, in this case university lecturer

Profile #	Date	Activity [Type] [Relevance] (HPC, 2006) [p.23]	Standard 3 Contribution to Quality [Practice/service delivery]	Standard 4 Benefit to Service User	Evidence held (HPC, 2006) [p.24]
		Primary occupation University lecturer (new role development) ----- Work-based learning Professional activity Formal Self-directed learning	Delivery and examination of Dip HE ODP and higher education programmes In-line with validated/ accredited framework	Student development Inter-professional working External consultancy (examples) Research	Contract of Employment Job description Appraisal record Publications



Example 1b: CPD records should include formal study, but only where it is linked to work service or practice

Profile #	Date	Activity [Type] [Relevance] (HPC, 2006) [p.23]	Standard 3 Contribution to Quality [Practice/service delivery]	Standard 4 Benefit to Service User	Evidence held (HPC, 2006) [p.24]
	--/-- Date awarded	Formal study (Level --/--) (eg research unit) Work-based learning Professional activity Formal	Achieved to support programme delivery and enhance evidence-based practice	Employed in programme delivery Unit lead responsibility Professional publication	Degree/credit cert Employment documentation Presentations student material Journal publication (refs)

were demonstrative of my CPD overall.

Similar approaches may be applied to case studies, clinical audits and related reflective practice, showing the activity, related improvements and benefits to others.

Much of my own personal and professional development has been self-determined. Following an initial period of familiarisation in my new role, I adopted an ‘action research’ approach. In this, I constantly evaluated areas of my practice and sought formal and informal feedback from all of those involved (referred to as ‘360° feedback’). In my situation, this included peers and colleagues, students, the ODP profession, wider medical professional groups, and those involved in working partnerships. I

was then able to confirm that my current practice was valid and identify any areas for improvement and development. This allowed me to undertake study and research to improve my knowledge, change or adapt my working methods and acknowledge any areas for personal or professional improvement. Evidence is held in the form of e-mails, questionnaires and related surveys and publication feedback. When used in staff appraisal, my line-manager is able to gain a concise view of my performance to date, which helps to support areas for future development. (See Example 1c.)

My new role has been a shared learning experience with all those involved, giving rise to a host of development opportunities. Membership of

specialist groups and professional bodies, volunteer work, either within the university or on an international level, research and working group participation and academic writing and publication, to name but a few. Each one of these activities will need to be clearly identified and established as being relevant to both my practice and the standards set for CPD. My approach is to ask myself:

- What type of activity have I undertaken?
- How have I employed any learning within my work – what improvements are to be seen?
- What benefits are gained from my activities, and how have others benefited?

Example 1c: Self-determined development – including discussion, and feedback from students and colleagues

Profile #	Date	Activity [Type] [Relevance] (HPC, 2006) [p.23]	Standard 3 Contribution to Quality [Practice/service delivery]	Standard 4 Benefit to Service User	Evidence held (HPC, 2006) [p.24]
	--/--	Work-based learning (360° skill set and behaviour review) Coaching from others Discussions with colleagues Peer review	Self-evaluation and development Programme development Peer evaluation	Appraisal and professional development planning Reflection on employed role Student material and teaching development	Reflective role analysis (date) Student feedback (date) Peer feedback skill set evaluation (date) Peer report teaching and assessment (date)

KISS – Keep It Simple Stupid!

I have to remind myself of this on a constant basis, as I am easily drawn into complex ideas and explanations. The CPD profile is a simple form. It requires a statement of how my CPD activity over the last two years meets the published HPC standards. Therefore, I have to have a clear picture of what I have undertaken and a clear understanding of what is required. A summary of my activities is required, so I intend to include a table, similar to that shown. Each entry will have a brief but concise rationale, that uses the language and descriptions contained in the standards (where possible). My supplied evidence will include selected examples of my work and activities. Using Appendix 1 [p.23] as an index, I will add the profile # from my table, and select a

single example of each type, which clearly shows how standards 3 and 4 have been met. This will be presented in a simple indexed file.

ODPs are employed in a wide range of settings, including clinical, managerial and educational roles. CPD activity should not only help to enable your continued registration, but also help to improve and structure your working practice. If treated as a 'tool' as opposed to a 'test', then it can help improve the professional development of you as an individual, and the service that you deliver. Your active engagement is not only a professional requirement, but also a way of engaging employers in an ongoing developmental process that is of mutual interest. Therefore, the mandatory completion of CPD is not only of benefit to the individual practitioner, but to the profession as a

whole. Start planning now and ensure you are not caught out. Read the *Standards of Proficiency* and *CPD Registration* documents (available from www.hpc-uk.org) and discuss your approach with your line manager or employer. Above all, remember that:

- You must undertake CPD to stay registered with HPC
- HPC have set standards which your CPD must meet
- Every time you renew your registration, you will need to confirm that you have met these standards
- From 2008, whenever a profession renews its registration, HPC will randomly audit (check) the CPD of a proportion of health professionals from that profession
- The health professionals randomly chosen have to send in evidence to show how their CPD meets the standards. **CODP**

Don't lose your registration!

- One in 20 operating department practitioners will be audited by the regulatory body (HPC) for evidence of CPD activity in 2008
- Those whose CPD profile does not meet the required standards may be removed from the professional register
- In the UK, you may not be employed as an operating department practitioner, if you are not HPC registered

Bibliography

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