



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Continuing Professional Development

February 2011

The *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (National Law) as in force in each state and territory came into effect on 1 July 2010. Under the National Law there is a mandatory requirement for registrants to participate in continuing professional development (CPD), the Board has therefore developed a Registration Standard in relation to CPD.

From 1 July 2010 all dental practitioners in Australia have to meet the CPD requirements set by the Dental Board of Australia's (Board) Registration Standard (approved by Ministerial Council). The Registration Standard and the CPD Guideline (which provides more detail about CPD requirements) are published on the Board's website at www.dentalboard.gov.au.

These responses to frequently asked questions may provide dental practitioners with further detail and understanding about the Board's requirements for CPD

What range and variation of CPD activities is expected by the Board from dental practitioners?

The Board has not specified any mandatory CPD activities and the Board expects dental practitioners to engage in a **range of CPD activities**.

There are no set limits on the number of hours a dental practitioner can spend on particular types of CPD activities, however it is expected that dental practitioners will undertake a **variety of activities in line with the objectives of CPD**. For example a dental practitioner engaged in a formal supervision program of another dental practitioner or a dental practitioner who oversees examinations should not rely on those activities solely for meeting the requirements of the CPD Registration Standard. Similarly, reading journal articles or preparing and delivering lectures on dental topics to dental practitioners should not be the only CPD activities undertaken to meet the requirements of the CPD Registration Standard.

How does a dental practitioner evaluate the CPD activities undertaken?

The Board has not specified an approval process for courses or course providers who provide CPD. However, the *CPD guidelines* detail some requirements and expectations at point 4. Registrants must make a professional judgement about the appropriateness of the CPD activity undertaken.

When deciding what CPD activities to undertake, practitioners should first consider if the activity relates to the objectives of their personal CPD plan. They should assess the stated aims, objectives and outcomes of the activity. Practitioners can also evaluate the suitability of CPD activities against any or all of the following criteria and set of questions.



How does a dental practitioner assess the content of the CPD being provided and what is the scientific or practical basis of the material being presented?

Activities should address contemporary clinical and professional issues. Scientific and clinical activities should reflect accepted dental practice or be based on critical appraisal of scientific literature. The content must as far as possible be evidence based without exaggerated claims. Activities should have scientific integrity and independence. Clinical content should reflect best practice care and evidence based treatment that is supported by scientific and biomedical research

What types of information should I retain on my CPD record/log book when I have attended a course or program?

- Retain the certificate of attendance / verification of participation, that contains at least the following information:
 - Your name
 - Provider's name
 - Activity name
 - Date, time and location of activity
 - Number of CPD hours (excluding breaks) and Type of CPD hours (scientific/non scientific) that are awarded as a result of completing the activity
- Such certification need not be a formal document. The record of participation may take the form of an email or end of year summary of the person's activities.

What are clinically or scientifically based activities?

These activities relate to the scientific, clinical or technical aspects of oral health care. Activities about infection control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or patient record keeping for instance would be classified clinical/scientific; as would a range of topics relating to oral health or particular dental procedures such as endodontics, caries treatment, crown preparations etc.

What are non-scientific activities?

These are activities that are indirectly related to, but supportive of dental care and include courses about practice management and dento-legal responsibilities. The activities need to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of a dental practitioner's knowledge, skills and performance of oral health care.

The subject matter of CPD may also include activities in dentistry outside the dental practitioner's usual practice, for example dental prosthetists may undertake study about implants, drug therapies and digital radiography; dental therapists and hygienists on prosthetics and occlusal therapy or orthodontics. This type of subject matter would be considered a scientific activity. Similarly Specialists do not have to attend CPD activities limited to their area of specialty. Practitioners are encouraged to reflect on their own practice and identify areas where they can derive maximum benefit from CPD.

How many hours of CPD does a person registered as both a dental hygienist and dental therapist need to do?

If you are registered as both a dental hygienist and dental therapist you only need to complete 60 hours over the three years.



How many hours of CPD does a practitioner who only works part-time need to do?

Regardless of whether you practise one day a year or five days a week, you need to complete 60 hours of CPD. If you are practising at all, patients are entitled to expect the same level of knowledge and skill whether you are full time or part time and therefore CPD requirements are the same.

How much CPD does a non-practising registrant need to do?

None. The requirements do not apply to those with this type of registration.

Can hours spent undertaking clinical supervision as part of an employment role count as CPD time?

No, as it is a part of your employment role.

Are the number of hours adjusted if a person registers during the CPD cycle?

The only time CPD hours are pro-rata is if you are registered for the first time part way through a CPD cycle. The number of CPD hours that a new registrant will need to complete will be calculated on a pro-rata basis to the nearest half-year.

What happens if a practitioner accumulates more than 60 hours in the cycle?

If you accumulate more than 60 hours in the three year cycle you cannot roll over the additional hours into the next cycle. The hours specified in the CPD registration standard are a minimum requirement and it is expected that many practitioners will attend a far greater number of hours of CPD than this minimum.

Do all CPD activities have the same weighting?

In general, attending a course for 7 hours (excluding breaks) would be equivalent to 7 hours of CPD, provided that the time is invested in CPD programs that meet the Board's guidelines. What has been known as 'Continuing Education, or CE credits' will in most cases translate to hourly CPD credits.