

## **(d) Continuous Professional Development**

### **CONTINUED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT STATEMENT**

This document was developed by a subgroup of the Health and Social Care Professionals Education and Advisory Group in conjunction with the HSE and aims to promote a shared understanding of Continued Professional Development (CPD). This document does not replace CPD statements that are produced by relevant Health and Social Care professional bodies. Professionals reading this document are advised to do so in conjunction with the CPD statement from their own professional body.

#### **What is CPD?**

CPD is any activity where an individual learns new skills or knowledge relevant to their professional role. CPD is an ongoing cyclical process in which individuals reflect on their practice and assess their knowledge and skills, identify learning needs, decide on actions required to meet those learning needs, implement the learning plan and evaluate the effectiveness of their learning (TPO, 2007). Various definitions of CPD are offered by professional bodies in Ireland and are available at the end of this document. All definitions demonstrate a common understanding in relation to CPD and reflect the fact that CPD is an essential and integral part of being a healthcare professional today.

#### **What drives CPD?**

CORU has already stated that we must:

- Audit, reflect on and review practice
- Identify one's own professional development needs through reflective practice
- Develop and regularly review a personal development plan
- Understand the value of reflective practice and the need to record the outcome of such reflection

There are a number of other drivers that encourage Healthcare Professionals to engage in CPD. The joint principles of quality and accountability incorporated in the 2001 Health Strategy developed by the Department of Health and Children require health professionals to remain highly competent and motivated to continually improve

their knowledge and clinical skills. This strategy also highlights increased professional accountability, increased rights and expectations of clients and tighter professional demands. A number of other documents have in recent years placed CPD high on the agenda. 'There has been a substantial development in best practice which has placed additional demands on professionals' (Expert Group, 2000). The 'Action Plan for People Management' (2002) focuses on the need for the organisation to improve the management of people within the health sector. This plan also recognised that training need not be external and costly, but more training should happen within the organisation, including coaching, mentoring and action learning. The Action Plan for People Management outlines the organisation's responsibility to develop its workforce. The HSE Transformation Programme (2007-2010) recognises the need for continuous improvement and the on-going learning of all health professionals. The Education and Development of Health and Social Care Professionals in the Health Service 2009-2014 recommends "facilitating CPD and the development of recording, monitoring and review mechanisms for same. All levels of CPD from on-the-job learning to more formal programmes and post-graduate studies should be recognised and recorded'. This document also states that "CPD should be viewed as a quality issue and consideration should be given to making evidence of CPD a requisite to practice and promotion". CPD is a vital component in building and maintaining competence and fitness to practice, and ensures that personal and professional development goals are both set and achieved.

The HIQA – Draft National Standards for safer and better healthcare also reinforce the requirement for professional development.

- "The quality and safety of healthcare depends on the people who deliver it. Therefore, the workforce should have, maintain and continuously develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to provide safe and high quality care"
- Standard 5.3 "The workforce have and maintain the competencies required to deliver high quality and safe care"
- 5.4.4 "Service providers inform the relevant professional body where they consider that the performance or conduct of a professional may be below the requirements of the professional body"

The Health and Social Care Professionals Act (HSCPA, 2005) – set in motion statutory registration for 12 Health and Social Care Professional groups overseen by

the Health and Social Care Professionals Council (HSCPC). The Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU) is currently introducing mandatory registration for Health and Social Care Professionals. The purpose of statutory registration is 'to protect the public by promoting high standards of professional conduct and professional education, training and competence among registrants of the designated professions.' (HSCPA, 2005).

### **Why should professionals engage in CPD?**

The HSCP Education and Advisory Group acknowledge a range of benefits obtained from engaging in CPD activities. These include but are not limited to the following;

#### *Benefits to the client:*

- The client receives a high quality, evidence-based service

#### *Benefits to the Professional*

- Improves confidence in delivery of professional service
- Promotes and maintains competence to practise
- Improves satisfaction with work role
- Promotes lifelong learning
- Provides structure and support for the health professional and for his or her valued goals
- It enhances career opportunities

#### *Benefits to the organisation:*

- Contributes to meeting the increasing demand for accountability, flexibility and a skilled and competent workforce
- Improves inter-professional working
- Meets organisational objectives
- Improves staff motivation and morale
- Contributes to Quality Assurance

#### *Benefits to the profession:*

- Enhances the status of profession
- Promotes research and evidence based practice increasing professional recognition

- Provides stakeholders with evidence of the professions commitment to a high quality service

## **Types of CPD**

CPD involves any activity where the individual is learning. CPD can incorporate a range of formal, informal and work-based activities. It occurs on the job through day-to-day experiences, performance reviews, journal clubs, peer discussion, in-service training, critical analysis and personal reflection. Clinical supervision, lecturing, clinical teaching, writing reports, significant incident analysis and research are also identified as CPD activities. Healthcare professionals also learn from direct association with peers and colleagues, and from interaction between team members and with service users/clients. 'There is also a growing trend to acknowledge the value of interprofessional and team based CPD– CPD should recognise the benefits of learning across professional boundaries' (GMC, 2003). This can be as a result of planned inter-professional education or can happen spontaneously in the workplace.

Examples of CPD activities are listed below. This list is not exhaustive and provides some examples of CPD activities. Each professional body will categorise CPD activities in various ways e.g. Formal, Informal, Work- based learning, self-directed activities.

- Attending Courses, conferences and in-services
- Student education
- Writing articles for a newsletter or journal
- Active involvement in your professional association or committees
- Further education and research
- Coaching of and from others
- Discussion about a clinical case with colleagues
- Peer review
- Involvement in wider work of employer
- Work shadowing (this can also involve shadowing a professional from another discipline)
- Clinical audit
- Secondments
- Job rotation
- Attending or organising a journal club

- Reading journal articles
- Supervision of staff/students
- Presenting at an in-service or workshop
- Developing new policies or procedures for the workplace
- Resolution of conflict
- Organising courses
- Involvement in your professional body
- Membership of special interest groups
- Reflective practice

### **CPD Planning**

Appropriate CPD planning is crucial to ensure that healthcare professionals access CPD that is relevant to their individual learning needs, the needs of the service in which they work and also relevant to the needs of their service-users/clients. CPD is an ongoing cyclical process in which an individual reflects on their practice and assesses their knowledge and skills, identifies learning needs, decides on actions required to meet those learning needs, implements the learning plan and evaluates the effectiveness of their learning (TPO, 2007). Requirements for education and development will vary depending on from professional to professional and will depend on the individual's competencies, experience, job role, learning style etc. CPD planning is crucial to ensure such needs are identified and met. Departmental support and encouragement is required for this and CPD planning should be carried out in conjunction with a manager or senior colleague to ensure that the identification of learning needs are relevant to the individuals current work setting and scope of practice.

Various tools are available to help professionals with their CPD Planning. These include;

- ✓ The Therapy Project Office Continued Professional Development Planning Tools (Individual and Departmental)
- ✓ Personal Development Plans (PDP's)
- ✓ Competency assessment tool and PDP workbook on [www.HSEland.ie](http://www.HSEland.ie)
- ✓ Annual appraisal / performance review

## **How to measure CPD?**

Methods for measuring and recording CPD vary from profession to profession. Professional bodies may measure CPD in terms of hours, credits or points. Relevant professional bodies will provide guidance on this along with suggestions for a blend of CPD activities.

The most important thing professionals must consider when measuring CPD is learning outcomes and any changes in practice that take place as a result of engaging in a CPD activity. Engagement in CPD activities, learning outcomes and reflection on learning should all be documented.

## **How do we integrate knowledge into Practice?**

One way of integrating knowledge and practice is through reflection and the use of reflective practice should be promoted as a tool for learning. Reflection is an active process which develops self awareness and learning; and enhances professional expertise by enabling the practitioner to undertake 'joined-up thinking i.e. turning conscious thought into action resulting in a desirable change in behaviour and practice" (Burton, 2000).

Reflection can help;

- analyse complex and challenging situations
- consider the way you make decisions
- make connections between your non-work activities and your practice
- make it more likely that you will put what you have learned into practice
- Improve your problem solving skills
- Identify future learning needs

## **WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CPD?**

CPD involves health care professionals 'taking responsibility for the content, relevance and quality of their own development. It involves them identifying their own development needs, planning a programme of education and learning to meet those needs, and recording and reflecting on CPD activities they have undertaken' (TPO, 2007). Support from management and the organisation to which the individual belongs is essential also.

## **Conclusion**

Healthcare professionals have a responsibility to engage in CPD throughout their working lives and the term 'lifelong learning' is integral to this practice. Increasing demands are currently being placed on healthcare professionals to respond to and adapt to a changing work environment with changes in service delivery and increasing clinical demands and expectations. Engagement in Continued Professional Development is synonymous with these changes. Healthcare professionals must continually update and obtain new competencies and ensure that their practice is evidenced based and in line with best practice. A commitment to CPD is essential in this context.

All Healthcare professionals should:

- Engage in CPD planning ensuring that CPD accessed is relevant to their individual learning needs, the needs of the service in which they work and also relevant to the needs of their service-users/clients.
- Ensure that reflection on learning takes place and is recorded and evaluated and the benefits for professional learning, their service user and service are documented.
- Documenting the learning obtained from engaging in various CPD activities is absolutely essential and health care professionals must be afforded the time and given the know-how on how to achieve this.

## **Definitions of CPD offered by professional bodies:**

### **The Irish Association of Speech and Language Therapists:**

- ✓ Continued Professional Development is the ongoing process of developing and updating the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure competent professional practice (IASLT 2008).

### **The Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute:**

- ✓ “The maintenance and enhancement of the knowledge, expertise and competence of professionals throughout their careers according to a plan formulated with regard to the needs of the professional, the employer, the profession and society”. (Madden and Mitchell, 1993) adopted by INDI.

### **The Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists:**

- ✓ CPD ‘can be viewed as a process, which includes all activities that provide opportunities for the development of the individual physiotherapist and the profession as a whole. It is dependent on the individual’s ability to critically evaluate and review their work through clinical reasoning and reflection (Cooney and Blake, 2000) adopted by the ISCP.

### **The Association of Occupational Therapists in Ireland:**

- ✓ The process of learning and development which continues throughout a professional’s working life that encompasses the following elements:
  - The maintenance and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes
  - The capacity to practice in an effective and professional manner within current and evolving scopes of practice
  - A range of learning activities and ongoing reflection on, in and for practice
  - A philosophy underlying and a strategy to maintain professionalism



### **The Psychological Society of Ireland:**

- ✓ The Psychological Society of Ireland provide a number of definitions of CPD in their CPD information booklet for members. These include; CPD is any process or activity that provides added value to the capability of the professional through the increase in knowledge, skills, and personal qualities for appropriate execution of professional and technical duties, often termed competence. (Professional Associations Research Network, 2003). CPD is the systematic maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills and the development of personal qualities necessary for the execution of professional and technical duties throughout the practitioners working life. (Institute of Engineers Ireland, 2003, Maintenance of occupational competence in their specialism and sustaining an academic knowledge base underpinning that specialism.  
(Standing Committee CPD, BPS, 2000)

### **Irish Institute of Radiography and Radiation Therapy:**

- ✓ Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the means by which Diagnostic Radiographers and Radiation Therapists maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives.
- ✓ 'It refers to the process of tracking and documenting the skills, knowledge and experience that you gain both formally and informally as you work, beyond initial training (Melanie Allen). It invariably refers to the documentation of all of this learning.
- ✓ CPD is an 'ongoing professional activity in which the practitioner identifies, undertakes and evaluates learning appropriate to the maintenance and development of the highest standards of practice within an evolving scope of practice. It is a professional process and must be evidenced by an evaluation of its contribution to practice, not simply by documentation of learning or educational achievement (College of Radiographers).