

GDC Press Release

15 September 2006

New core subjects for dentists' CPD

The General Dental Council (GDC) is recommending that all dentists carry out continuing professional development (CPD) in core recommended subjects from the beginning of their next CPD cycle. This recommendation follows a public consultation earlier this year.

The recommended core subjects and suggested minimum number of verifiable hours per CPD cycle that dentists spend on them are:

- a. medical emergencies (at least 10 hours per CPD cycle)
- b. disinfection and decontamination (at least 5 hours per CPD cycle)
- c. radiography and radiation protection (at least 5 hours per CPD cycle)

In addition, the GDC recommends that dentists working in a clinical environment carry out CPD (verifiable or general) to make sure that they are up to date in:

- Legal and ethical issues
- Handling complaints

The GDC is also recommending that all dentists use a personal development plan so that patients and dentists themselves benefit as much as possible from their CPD.

GDC President Hew Mathewson said:

“Compulsory CPD for all our registrants will form an important component of revalidation. Therefore the introduction of these core subjects for dentists CPD will make sense to all our colleagues and is an inevitable progression on our route to revalidation.

“The aim of revalidation is to improve public protection by requiring all dental professionals to show that they are fit to stay on our registers. Dental professionals will do this by ‘revalidating’ their registration on a regular basis, and will need to show that their knowledge is up-to-date, their professional performance is up to the standards required to maintain registration, and their conduct meets the standards set out in our guidance ‘Standards for dental professionals’. Compulsory CPD, which we plan to extend to dental care professionals in 2008, is essential to demonstrating the first of these requirements – that dental professionals’ knowledge is up-to-date.

“It is vital that colleagues plan their CPD so that it provides the maximum benefit to their patients and their own professional development. These core subjects are fundamental to good practice and are areas on which any dentist should be competent.”

Dentists should start incorporating these core subject areas into their CPD when they begin their **second** CPD cycle (see table below). Those who are not yet registered with the GDC as a dentist should incorporate these core subject areas into their CPD from the beginning of their **first** CPD cycle, which will begin on 1 January in the year following the year in which they first register (i.e. a dentist who registers in 2007 will begin their first CPD cycle on 1 January 2008).

The GDC is producing new guidance for dentists about CPD. This will be sent to all dentists in October this year.

If you are already a registered dentist

Date of first registration	Start-date of 2nd CPD cycle
Between 1 January 1990 and 31 December 2001 and on the Register at 31/12/01	1 January 2007
Between 1 January 1990 and 31 December 2001 but not on the Register at 31/12/01	1 January 2008
Between 1 January 1980 and 31 December 1989	1 January 2008
On or before 31 December 1979	1 January 2009
2002	1 January 2008
2003	1 January 2009
2004	1 January 2010
2005	1 January 2011
2006	1 January 2012

Ends

For media enquiries, please contact Rachel Lea on 020 7009 2782.

Notes to Editors

1. Every dentist must carry out CPD by law to keep his or her name on the UK Dentists Register. If dentists do not meet the legal requirements of CPD, they risk being taken off the Dentists Register. More information about CPD requirements for dentists is available on the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/Current+registrant/CPD+requirements/>
2. CPD is defined as “study, training courses, seminars, reading and other activities under taken by a dentist, which could reasonably be expected to advance his or her professional development as a dentist.”
3. By law dentists must do, and keep records of, 250 hours of CPD over every five-year cycle. At least 75 of the 250 hours must be verifiable CPD; the rest can be general CPD.

4. The GDC monitors compliance with the CPD scheme by undertaking random sampling of dentists' CPD records after the completion of a five-year cycle. A number of dentists who appear to have met the requirements of the CPD scheme, on the evidence of their annual return statements, will be selected at the end of their five-year cycle at random for compliance monitoring.
5. The Council consulted on proposals to enhance the dentist CPD scheme from January to March 2006. The key proposal was that all dentists should undertake CPD in five core areas: medical emergencies, disinfection and decontamination, radiography and radiation protection, legal and ethical issues, and handling complaints. Comments were also invited on the current CPD hours requirement, the split of verifiable and non-verifiable CPD hours, and the suitability of the current CPD scheme for dental care professional (DCP) groups. Further information about this consultation is available on the GDC website at <http://www.gdc-uk.org/News+publications+and+events/Consultations/Closed+consultations/Revalidation+consultation.htm>
6. All dental professionals are expected to keep their skills and knowledge up to date. Currently dental care professionals do not have a formal CPD scheme but the GDC plans to introduce one in 2008, when registration is compulsory for all groups.