Quality controls for verifiable CPD

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The GDC's requirements for CPD for dental professionals are set out in law. Information about the full CPD requirements can be found on the GDC website: www.gdc-uk.org.

We also set out the requirements in our guidance booklet 'Continuing Professional Development for Dental Professionals'. We recommend that all dental professionals read and make themselves familiar with this booklet.

CPD for dental professionals is defined as: lectures, seminars, courses, individual study and other activities, that can reasonably be expected to advance a person's professional development as a dentist or Dental Care Professional and is relevant to their practice or intended practice.

Within the total minimum amount of CPD required during a five year CPD cycle, dentists must undertake a minimum of 75 hours of verifiable CPD and DCPs must undertake a minimum of 50 hours verifiable CPD.

Verifiable CPD is defined in law as having documentary evidence that the dentist or DCP has undertaken the CPD and documentary evidence that the CPD has:

- concise educational aims and objectives;
- clear anticipated outcomes; and
- quality controls.

The dentist or DCP must keep a CPD Record for 5 years after the end of the CPD cycle to which it relates. Their CPD Record must include the documentary evidence about all the verifiable CPD they have done to meet our requirements.

Quality control and verifiable CPD
Registrants must satisfy themselves that the verifiable CPD they undertake and include in their CPD record meets the GDC's requirements.

By law all verifiable CPD must be subject to quality controls and there must be documentary evidence of this. If the GDC requests a registrant's CPD Record, it must include this documentary evidence, and the registrant must make the documentary evidence available to the GDC.

Quality controls for verifiable CPD

It is the responsibility of registrants to assure themselves that the verifiable CPD they undertake meets our requirements. For any verifiable CPD included in their CPD Record there must be documentary evidence that they have undertaken the CPD, and that the verifiable CPD has:

- concise aims and objectives;
- anticipated learning outcomes; and
- quality controls.

The GDC does not quality assure CPD activity or CPD provider bodies, because we do not have the legal power to exercise that function.

We made the following statement about CPD quality in April 2013:
We expect all who provide CPD for dental professionals to ensure they robustly quality assure their CPD products and services.

We call on the dental CPD industry to be proactive in working together to develop industry-led quality standards to give dental professionals, as CPD consumers, assurances about their products and services.

We also call on all registrants, as consumers of CPD, to make careful choices when investing time and money in CPD products and services and to obtain advance assurances as to the quality and value for money.

You can read the full statement on the GDC website: www.gdc-uk.org.

Opportunities for quality controls
We recommend that registrants are proactive in assuring themselves that the verifiable CPD they undertake has adequate quality controls in place.

Quality controls should be present at all stages of verifiable CPD activity - before, during and after - no matter what form the CPD activity is delivered or received, or whether it is paid for or free. There are a number of ways verifiable CPD could be effectively quality controlled. There are some suggested examples on the following page.

Quality controls for verifiable CPD

Pre-CPD quality controls by a CPD provider could include:
- educational governance policy
- equality and diversity policy
- CPD needs assessment
- peer reviewed content

- linking content to GDC Standards
- delivery of evidence-based content
- policies and procedures to avoid commercial bias
- appropriate recruitment and selection of those delivering CPD
- integration of pre-existing feedback
- accurate advertising and marketing
- transparency of verifiable criteria

Quality control during a CPD activity by a CPD provider could include:
- implementation of an equality and diversity policy
- robust methods in place to confirm attendance and complete participation by attendees
- methods to monitor and evaluate content delivery
- documentary evidence of aims, objectives, anticipated learning outcomes and quality controls provided to every participant for them to keep
- content relating to anticipated learning outcomes throughout delivery
- opportunities for participant reflection during activity
- assessment of learning
- accurate measurement of duration of CPD activity

Quality control after a CPD activity by a CPD provider could include:
- participant evaluation methods
- post-delivery evaluation
- a complaints procedure

The examples set out in this advice sheet are advisory only and may not be exhaustive.
All registrants should satisfy themselves that a CPD provider is adequately controlling the quality of their CPD provision.

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