

CPD Frequently Asked Questions

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What is CPD?

Continuing professional development (CPD) is a process of continuing learning and development throughout the life of a professional. It enables pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to develop in their roles and demonstrate that they are competent in their area(s) of practice. It is not just about participating in continuing education, but an ongoing process of reflection, planning, action and evaluation.

Where can I find more information about the General Pharmaceutical Council's requirements for CPD

The GPhC's CPD requirements comprise the CPD standards and the CPD framework, both of which can be downloaded from the CPD section of our website www.pharmacyregulation.org. The GPhC has a duty under the Pharmacy Order 2010 to have these requirements in place together with CPD rules which define what we mean by non-compliance with the CPD requirements and what action we might take when this happens.

Who should do CPD?

All pharmacists and pharmacy technicians must undertake and record CPD as a condition of their registration with the General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC). The CPD requirements are not changed by factors such as part-time employment, working in a role where you do not have direct contact with patients, or living or working outside Great Britain.

What do the CPD standards require me to do?

The standards require you to keep a legible record of your CPD and make a minimum of nine entries per year of your registration in a format approved by the GPhC. These can include a range of activities from training courses to work-based skill development and reading relevant to your field of practice. You should reflect on and record how each CPD task has helped you to develop or improve the quality of your practice, and submit your records to the regulator when requested to do so.

When did these standards come into force and what does that mean?

The GPhC's CPD standards came into force on 27th September 2010. The GPhC has, for an interim period, adopted the standards that were introduced by the Royal

Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain in March, 2009. This means that any entries made in your CPD record after 27th September 2010 must comply with these standards. Any entries made between 1 March 2009 and 26 September 2010 should also comply.

What about entries made before 1st March 2009?

Undertaking and recording CPD has been a professional obligation for practising pharmacists and pharmacy technicians registered with the RPSGB since 2005. If your CPD record is called for review you may submit CPD entries made prior to 1st March 2009. Entries made prior to 1st March 2009 do not have to meet the CPD standards but would be expected to follow previous guidance on CPD, such as being legible and kept in an approved format.

Could my CPD record be called in by the GPhC?

Yes. The CPD call and review process is now a statutory process (which means that registrants are now required by law to keep records of their CPD and to submit these to the GPhC when requested). Most registrants should expect their records to be called for review every five years. Some registrants may have their records called more often than this.

In addition to the standards for CPD, I understand that the CPD framework and rules have now come into force. When did this happen and what does this mean?

The CPD framework and CPD rules came into force on 2 July, 2011. The CPD framework sets out in detail the minimum requirements to be met by pharmacy professionals with respect to their CPD.

The CPD rules deal with non-compliance, the list of circumstances in which we will regard someone as having failed to comply with our CPD requirements and the action we may take when this happens. As a result of the CPD framework and rules coming into force, there are a few changes to our CPD requirements and to the CPD call and review process. The most significant changes, that apply from 2 July, 2011, are outlined below:

- At least 3 out of the 9 required CPD entries for each full year of your registration must start at “reflection”;
- When your CPD record is reviewed, the GPhC will check that you have applied at least 50% of the assessable criteria for good recording practice;
- If the outcome of your CPD record review is that you have not met the GPhC’s CPD requirements we may ask you to undertake additional CPD activities by a specified date and to make a record of this learning in your CPD record; and

- If you fail to respond to a request from us to submit your CPD record for review by the deadline given, we may now remove you from the appropriate register.

I am a pharmacist or pharmacy technician living outside GB and/or not working in a pharmacy environment. Do I need to undertake CPD?

By registering or maintaining your registration with us you have declared to us that you intend to practise as either a pharmacist or pharmacy technician in Great Britain, the Isle of Man or Channel Islands. This means that if you are on the GPhC register you must comply with the CPD standards even if you are currently based overseas and/or are working outside of the pharmacy profession.

How long do I have between being asked for my CPD record and having to submit it?

Normally you will have six weeks to submit your CPD record for review from the date of the initial request. Your record can be submitted either electronically, using the CPD website www.uptodate.org.uk or on paper, provided that it is in a GPhC approved format. We recommend that you use the online system to record your CPD as you can be assured that your CPD entries will be stored securely and it is the quickest and easiest way to submit your record for review when you are asked to do so. Further information on how to submit your CPD record will be sent to you when your record is called for review.

My CPD record has been called for review but I will not be able to meet my deadline due to circumstances beyond my control. What should I do?

If you have a good reason why you are unable to meet your deadline (for example, you or a close family member is seriously ill) you **must** contact us in advance of your deadline to request an extension. You will need to complete a CPD Extension Request form which you can download from our website www.pharmacyregulation.org. We recommend that this is e-mailed back to us at cpdsubmissions@pharmacyregulation.org, but you can also post the completed form back to us at the following address:

CPD Submissions
General Pharmaceutical Council
25 Canada Square
London
E14 5LQ

Remember to include a daytime telephone number with your extension request so that we can contact you if necessary. All requests for extensions must normally be supported with relevant evidence.

I am currently not working due to illness or maternity leave. Will I still be expected to do CPD?

If you are absent from work due to illness or maternity leave, you are exempt from making CPD entries provided that your period of absence is twelve months or less. When your CPD record is called for review we will ask you to provide some information about the reasons for any gaps in your CPD record using the CPD Incomplete Record Notification Form which you can download from our website www.pharmacyregulation.org and to support this with appropriate evidence. This can be e-mailed back to us at cpdsubmissions@pharmacyregulation.org, or posted to the following address:

CPD Submissions
General Pharmaceutical Council
25 Canada Square
London
E14 5LQ

We recommend that, when you are able to and particularly towards the end of your sickness or maternity leave, you undertake some learning, such as reading journals articles, to prepare yourself for your return to work. You can use some of this learning as the basis for making some CPD entries. You may not be able to evaluate the benefits of this learning to your practice until you return to work, in which case we recommend that you make a note to take another look at the entries once you are back at work.

What do I need to submit if my records are requested?

When your CPD record is called for review we will invite you to submit record for review that have been recorded over a period of 5 years prior to the date that your record is called or from the date that your CPD record was last called for review if you have already had a CPD record reviewed (we call this the review period). If you have been registered for less than 5 years when your CPD record is called for review then your review period will cover the period from the date of your first registration.

We will expect you to demonstrate that you have met the requirements and conditions for recording CPD that have been in place during the review period. That means that we will expect you to have made a minimum of nine CPD entries per year for **each** full year of registration since the CPD standards were first introduced by the RPSGB in March 2009 or the date you joined the register, whichever is later, **plus** a proportion of 9 for each part year. These entries must be submitted in a format published or approved by the GPhC, such as the template provided on the online recording website www.uptodate.org.uk. CPD entries that you make after 2 July, 2011 must comply with the additional requirements of the CPD framework (see above).

What happens if I do not submit my CPD record within the six weeks?

You will receive a limited number of reminders. If you do not respond to the original request or to any of the subsequent reminders, the GPhC will be able to remove your name from the register. You will receive notice from the Registrar that he intends to remove your name from the register and will be given a limited amount of time in which to respond. You will be given the opportunity to make written representations and request a hearing if you believe there is a valid reason why an entry in the register should not be removed. If you do not request a hearing or make representations or, if following the hearing and consideration of the representations the Registrar is still of the opinion that you have failed to comply with our CPD requirements, he may proceed to remove your name from the register. This is one of the reasons why it is vitally important that you inform us of any change of address, even one that is temporary.

How often will my CPD record be called in?

You can expect to have your CPD record called in at least once every five years. Some registrants may have their CPD records called in for review more often than others, for example if their previous CPD submission did not meet our CPD standards.

What type of activities should I include in my CPD records?

Not all CPD records have to relate to clinical activity or dealing with patients. Your CPD record can reflect anything that is relevant to your particular role or scope of practice as a pharmacist or pharmacy technician.

For example, a manager's record might contain entries reflecting managing, coaching or training skills being developed. Likewise, if you are working in a specialist field, such as oncology, or as an advanced practitioner, such as a prescriber, your records should contain entries to reflect this. CPD records do not have to reveal commercially sensitive information about your organisation and must not breach patient confidentiality by identifying individual patients or customers by name.

I don't think my CPD entries are very good. Will I be struck off?

No, you will not, as long as you respond to any request to submit your CPD record for review and have made a genuine attempt to fulfil our CPD requirements. If, for any reason, your submission does not meet the requirements of our CPD standards or the CPD framework we may ask you to undertake some additional CPD activities within a set time frame and/or to make additional entries in your CPD record. Your feedback report will provide you with information about the strengths and weaknesses of the entries that have been reviewed and some guidance to help you improve your future entries.

What if I work across different areas of pharmacy?

Your CPD record needs to be relevant to you and reflect each area of practice that you work in. Therefore, if you work in secondary care most of the time but undertake occasional locums in community practice your records should include CPD that is relevant to both areas.

What if I work part-time?

If you work part-time within pharmacy you will still be expected to record, as a minimum, nine CPD entries for each year of your registration starting from 1st March 2009. Like all full-time pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, you will have been under an obligation to undertake and record CPD since 2005, unless you registered after this date or have previously been registered in the RPSGB's non-practising register.

What feedback can I expect?

You will receive a feedback report based on the entries in your CPD record that the reviewer has selected for review. Feedback will cover each of the four areas of the CPD cycle and will show where you have done well. It will also highlight any areas where improvements to CPD recording might be made and provide advice on good recording practice.

Is there some way of getting my entries reviewed for acceptability without having to submit them to the regulator during Call & Review?

This service is not available from the GPhC. A list of organisations that offer support for CPD, including the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and the Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK is available at the end of this document.

How can I get a reminder of my user details for CPD online?

If you need a reminder of your username and password for recording CPD online, please go to the login problems section of www.uptodate.org.uk, scroll to the bottom of the page and add your GPhC number and surname. If you have registered your email address with the GPhC, have previously used the online system and have set up a secret question that you are able to answer, your user details will be emailed to you automatically. If you have not previously logged on to www.uptodate.org.uk or do not have an email address registered with the GPhC, then your user details will be posted to you (please note that this may take up to 7 days).

How secure is my online CPD account?

Your online account is backed up externally every hour, every day and an offsite backup is carried out every week at a secure data centre. No one, including staff at the GPhC, has access to your personal CPD account unless you have given them permission using the viewer access facility that you can set up by clicking the “properties” tab when you are logged into your online account. If your CPD record has been called for review, the GPhC will have access to those entries in your record that you have submitted for review.

What support and resources are available from the GPhC to help me with my CPD?

There are a number of resources available. These include:

- The CPD online recording website: www.uptodate.org.uk.
- A guide to the CPD recording system known as Plan and Record which is available to download from www.pharmacyregulation.org.
- Technical support for online CPD recording (there is a helpline Tel: 01225 731329 and technical questions and answers are available on the CPD online website, at www.uptodate.org.uk).

Where else can I go for support with CPD?

A number of organisations provide opportunities for education and professional development. They include:

- The Royal Pharmaceutical Society (www.rpharms.com)
- The Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education (www.cppe.ac.uk)
- The Welsh Centre for Pharmacy Professional Education (www.wcppe.org.uk)
- NHS Education for Scotland (www.nes.scot.nhs.uk)
- The Association of Pharmacy Technicians UK (www.aptuk.org)
- The National Prescribing Centre (www.npc.co.uk)
- The UK Clinical Pharmacy Association (www.ukcpa.org)
- National Pharmacy Association www.npa.co.uk
- Pharmaceutical Services Negotiating Committee www.psnco.co.uk
- Community Pharmacy Scotland www.communitypharmacyscotland.org.uk/
- Community Pharmacy Wales www.cpwales.org.uk/
- UK Medicines Information www.ukmi.nhs.uk/