



**A GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING, PLANNING AND
DOCUMENTING
CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
(CPD) ACTIVITY**

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1. Purpose of this Guide

The purpose of this guide is to provide registrants of the Pharmaceutical Society NI with an understanding of CPD and how learning associated with CPD should be documented in order to meet the statutory requirements of the regulatory body.

The guide will outline:

- what CPD is and what the Regulator expects registrants to do to meet their statutory obligations;
- the four stages within a CPD cycle;
- methods to identify learning needs;
- how to document CPD which is relevant to your scope of practice; and
- the evaluation criteria used to assess CPD cycles.

2. Statutory CPD

CPD is a statutory requirement for all pharmacists registered with the Pharmaceutical Society NI. The [CPD Framework 2021](#) sets out what a registrant must do to meet their CPD obligation.

[The Council of the Pharmaceutical Society NI \(Continuing Professional Development\) Regulations \(Northern Ireland\) 2012 \(“the Regulations”\)](#) states the following:

“CPD

- a) means the continuing professional development which registered persons are required to undertake in order to have their name retained in the register and to maintain competence; and
- b) includes —
 - i. any continuing professional development that relates to an annotation in respect of a specialist area of practice recorded against a registered person's name in the register,
 - ii. any continuing professional development that a registered person is required to undertake by virtue of these regulations; “

In addition, Principle 5 of [The Code](#) states that a registrant is obliged to maintain and develop professional knowledge, skills and competence by observing the following requirements:

- practice only when competent and fit to do so;
- identify development needs, undertake CPD relevant to their scope of practice and maintain appropriate records;
- keep knowledge and skills up to date, evidence-based and relevant to their scope of practice; and
- apply knowledge and experience appropriate to their scope of practice.

3. Benefits of CPD

To the Pharmacist

- improves performance and confidence in their role;
- improves skills and knowledge;
- makes learning more effective;
- enhances career progression;
- evidence learning and development; and
- meets the statutory requirements of the regulator.

To the Patient

- improves patient care;
- demonstrates pharmacists' commitment to providing high standards of patient care; and
- increases patient and public confidence in pharmacy healthcare professionals.

To the Employer

- improves pharmacists' performance; and
- helps meet organizational objectives.

CPD is about the identification of learning needs, taking account of organisational development and facilitating the achievement of the personal and professional needs and development of the organisation's employees.

Employers should provide support to pharmacists by:

- developing procedures that support CPD;
- providing development opportunities;
- assisting with resources and expertise; and
- providing positive encouragement and recognition.

4. CPD Standards

As a registrant of the Pharmaceutical Society NI, **you must:**

- keep a legible record of your CPD, either electronically online or as a hard copy, in the form and manner specified in the [CPD Framework 2021](#);
- complete a minimum of 30 hours' CPD learning activity annually. Those registrants who have been granted a partial submission for a particular CPD year by the Registrar, through the Extenuating Circumstances process, must complete a minimum of 15 hours' CPD learning activity;
- complete a minimum of 4 CPD cycles per year which are relevant to the safe and effective practice of pharmacy and to your scope of practice and maintain appropriate evidence of same;
- develop a reflective approach to learning, ensuring that there is a predominance of scheduled learning activity where prior learning needs have been identified;

- ensure that your annual CPD portfolio complies with the Pharmaceutical Society NI recording format and the essential assessment criteria;
- record if your CPD is relevant to the safe and effective practice of pharmacy and to your scope of practice; and
- submit your CPD portfolio annually to the Registrar of the Pharmaceutical Society NI by the published deadline.

5. Scheduled and Unscheduled learning

Scheduled learning is planned learning and starts with a previously identified learning need. At least 50% of CPD cycles submitted must relate to scheduled learning activities.

Example: If a patient asks you a question to which you don't know the answer, you look up the information to enable you to answer the question.

Unscheduled learning is unplanned and does not start with a previously identified learning need. A maximum of 50% of CPD cycles submitted may relate to unscheduled learning activities.

Example: You are asked to attend a conference at which you learn something which you can apply to your practice.

6. Essential Criteria

Each CPD cycle must be recorded under the 4 domains of successful learning and the 6 essential criteria listed below. All 6 essential criteria must be answered successfully for a CPD cycle to meet the standard.

Reflection	1. Did the pharmacist identify a specific learning need(s)? 2. Did the pharmacist describe why they wanted to learn about this (the context for the learning activity)?
Planning	3. Did the pharmacist describe, the learning activity/activities they plan to complete to meet the learning needs? ⁸
Action	4. Did the pharmacist include a summary of the related activities they have completed to meet the learning need identified?
Evaluation	5. Did the pharmacist evidence how their practice has changed or will change after meeting the specific learnings identified? 6. Is it evident that the learning needs identified have been fully addressed within the specific cycle?

7. CPD CYCLES

REFLECTION

- (1) “I identified the following specific learning need(s): ...”
- (2) “I wanted to learn about this because (please give context for learning activity(ies))...”

A key element of CPD is the identification of learning needs through self-evaluation and reflection upon your practice. Identifying the right needs and undertaking the right learning will result in improvements in your practice.

Reflection helps you to identify your learning and development needs by thinking about what you have done in your practice, how you have done it and how you could do it better or differently.

There are various ways to reflect on your practice and identify your learning needs including:

- Critical incident analysis - learning from a situation that did not go according to plan:
 - What went wrong and why?
 - What could you do differently in the future?
 - What new skill or knowledge do you need to acquire to help you perform better or differently in the future?
- Feedback from others - this can take the form of:
 - informal discussion with colleagues;
 - peer review; or
 - appraisal.
- Other activities – this can include:
 - reading;
 - workshops & study groups.
- Personal SWOT analysis – the identification of your:
 - Strengths
 - Weaknesses
 - Opportunities
 - Threats
- Personal Development Plan (PDP)

A PDP can help to identify career goals and a development plan can be developed and updated throughout the year to achieve those goals.

Recording Reflection

- Be specific about what you need to learn or what you need to be able to do.
- Think about what you want to learn as more than simply updating your knowledge and consider what particular aspects of the topic you want to know about.
- Ensure that your wording not only describes the task to be carried out but rather what you need to learn in order to deliver the task.
- Describe why you want to learn about the topic/area, for example, you want to deliver a new smoking cessation service.

PLANNING

- (3) “I plan/planned to complete the following learning activity(ies) to meet the identified learning need(s): (Please describe the learning activity(ies) and their intended completion date”

Having identified your learning needs, you must decide what method of learning you wish to use. There is a wide range of learning activities to meet both your learning needs and your learning style including:

- reading, writing, research;
- university and distance learning courses;
- teaching, mentoring;
- work shadowing, learning by doing;
- conferences, workshops and study groups;
- speaking with colleagues, peer review;
- undertaking presentations, projects.

Find the most effective learning method for you as some may be too time-consuming, involve time off work, etc. In addition, ensure that your planned activities are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-limited.

Recording Planning

- State the date on which you plan to complete the CPD activity.
- State what method(s) of learning you intend to undertake.

ACTION

- (4) “In meeting the identified learning need(s): I completed the following learning activity(ies) and set out a summary of what I learned in relation to my identified learning needs: ...”

The response under Action takes the form of an Action table to be completed and a summary of what you have learned in free text.

Recording Action

In order to successfully meet this criterion, you must:

- (a) list the following in the table provided:
- the learning activities completed;
 - the date on which each learning activity was completed;
 - the time taken to complete each learning activity; and
 - the evidence of your participation and completion of each learning activity by uploading the relevant document(s) against each activity listed. Evidence can include certificates of attendance, certificates of completion, copies of presentations or articles read with personalized notes and personal notes in relation to any informal learning.
- (b) summarise, in the area provided, what you have learned in relation to your identified learning need(s).

EVALUATION

- (5) “In meeting the specific learning need(s) identified, my practice has changed or will change as follows: ...”
- (6) “I confirm that the identified learning need(s) has/have been fully addressed in this CPD cycle. (Please “X” the box below as confirmation)”

To meet this criterion, you should consider the following:

- Have you met your learning need(s)?
- How has your practice changed (or will change in the future) as a result of your learning?
- Is it evident that your original identified learning need(s) has been met and have you adequately mapped and evidenced this throughout the cycle?

If you have found it difficult to meet your learning need(s), you may wish to consider:

- Was the learning need(s) appropriate?
- Was the learning need(s) too general/not adequately specific?
- Was the learning activity(ies) appropriate to meet the learning need(s)?

CPD must be evaluated in relation to your current scope of practice and the environment in which you work to enable you to evaluate how a learning cycle has been closed and the learning outcomes evaluated in practice.

Some CPD learning (maximum 25% of submitted cycles) can be evaluated using simulated practice or by evaluating their application to a situation in future practice or sectors.

Recording Evaluation

Under (5) you must record how the learning has been applied to your practice in order to bring benefit to you and/or your patients.

Avoid phrases like “I feel more confident” – rather, state what you have done as a result of the learning.

Where several learning needs have been identified under Reflection, you should map these through the subsequent stages of the cycle and explain how your learning activity has been put into practice.

In the best interests of patient safety and practice development, you should, wherever possible, apply your learning to practice to complete and close the Evaluation stage of the cycle.

Sufficient detail must be provided.

Under (6), ensure that you “X” the box provided to confirm that the identified learning need(s) have been fully addressed in the cycle.

Compulsory Field

Before closing off the CPD cycle, you must indicate, within the table provided, all the sectors in which you work.

8. Assessment Outcomes

Following the assessment of a selected CPD portfolio by one or more independent CPD assessors, the assessment results will be made available on the registrant's ROL homepage. The table below shows the possible outcomes following portfolio assessment.

Assessment Result	Outcome and Next Steps
50% or more of the submitted cycles are acceptable, each having successfully met all 6 essential criteria; and the successful cycles represent 50% or more of the total hours submitted in the CPD portfolio.	Portfolio has met standard . No further action required.
Less than 50% of the submitted cycles are acceptable, having not successfully met all 6 essential criteria; and/or the successful cycles represent less than 50% of the total hours submitted in the CPD portfolio.	Portfolio has not met standard . Registrant enters into the first remedial stage – Reassessment 1 – and is given 9 weeks to submit 3 new CPD cycles, totalling a minimum of 10 hours, undertaken during the current CPD year.