

21 September 2010

## Media release

### Frequently asked questions about CPD for pharmacists

Under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme and national law, there are continuing professional development (CPD) requirements for all ten health professions. All pharmacy organisations have provided input to make this workable for our profession.

Guidance on the new national approach is available on the Pharmacy Board of Australia (PBA) website. This is an opportunity to undertake activities that are both enjoyable and useful.

The APLF member organisations are keen to reassure all pharmacists that these CPD requirements are achievable, regardless of where they live or whether they can easily attend face to face sessions.

The following frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been developed to assist pharmacists to understand what the new requirements may mean for them in their pharmacy practice.

#### FAQ 1

##### How will I choose my CPD?

CPD activities should be:

- **Relevant** to the scope of your role as a pharmacist
- Be of **significant intellectual or practical content** and deal primarily with matters directly related to your practice of pharmacy
- Meet the Pharmacy Board of Australia's requirement for **CPD credits**  
<http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/Codes-and-Guidelines.aspx>

#### FAQ 2

##### How will I know if the CPD activities are relevant to my role?

Ask yourself:

- Will this improve my practice as a pharmacist?
- Will I be able to use this information in practice?
- Will this prepare me for new/future roles as a pharmacist?

### **FAQ 3**

**I work in an area with no direct patient care.**

**Do I need to choose CPD activities that are related to the practice of pharmacy with direct patient care?**

The registration standard specifically states that CPD must be ‘**relevant to the scope of the registered pharmacist’s role as a provider of pharmacy services and to the practice of pharmacy**’, where practice means ‘any role, whether remunerated or not, in which the individual uses their skills and knowledge as a pharmacist in their profession.’

For the purposes of this registration standard, practice is not restricted to the provision of direct clinical care. It also includes working in a direct non-clinical relationship with clients; working in management, administration, education, research, advisory, regulatory or policy development roles; and any other roles that impact on safe, effective delivery of services in the profession and/or use their professional skills.

While there is no obligation to choose CPD activities related to direct patient care it may also be beneficial to include some activities that assist you to keep ‘in touch’ with the current use of medicines.

### **FAQ 4**

**I’m about to go on maternity leave, and won’t be practising as a pharmacist for this year. What CPD activities will I need to choose?**

The Pharmacy Board of Australia states that “the following requirements must be met by pharmacists absent from practice:

- absences up to one year — no CPD requirement
- absences between one and three years — complete a minimum of one year’s quota of CPD activities relevant to the intended scope of practice prior to recommencement; CPD activities must be designed to maintain and update knowledge, clinical judgement and technical skills.”

So position yourself well for when you return to pharmacy practice. Consider the role you intend to return to, and choose CPD activities that will address the needs of this role.

### **FAQ 5**

**How will I know if the CPD activity is of significant intellectual or practical content and deals primarily with matters directly related to the practice of pharmacy?**

CPD activities may cover a range of topics including but not limited to: clinical education with a patient care focus, leadership or management education, quality improvement, quality use of medicines or other topics relevant to your practice as a pharmacist.

If the CPD activity is accredited by an authorised provider, the Pharmacy Board of Australia will accept that the activity has been reviewed for its educational quality and for its relevance to a pharmacist’s practice.

If a CPD activity is not accredited by an authorised provider, you will need to assess potential activities for suitability and relevance and to determine whether your individual learning needs will be addressed by undertaking these activities.

In the case of all CPD undertaken, maintenance of detailed and verifiable records is the responsibility of the pharmacist.

## **FAQ 6**

### **When will I need to make my first declaration about CPD with the Pharmacy Board of Australia?**

You will first declare your compliance with the CPD standard when re-registering for 1 November 2011.

Your declaration will be regarding the CPD activities you have undertaken in the CPD year from 1 October 2010 to 30 September 2011.

## **FAQ 7**

### **How will I be sure I have met the requirement for CPD credits?**

For your first declaration, you will need to declare you have undertaken CPD activities that have an aggregate value of **20 CPD credits**.

Only 50% (or 10) of your CPD credits can come from Group 1 activities. The CPD activities you choose should come from a variety of activity types (e.g. lectures, workshops, discussion groups, web-based programs, research and preparation of articles for pharmacy publications, review of professional journals).

It may be helpful to choose some CPD activities that include interaction with peers, recognizing that this may not always be a practical option. For those in rural settings or with small children, there are many CPD activities available e.g. via websites, webcasts, videoconferences, email groups and via CD or journals.

## **FAQ 8**

### **I haven't done a lot of CPD before, this seems like a lot.**

Opportunities for professional development are often identified in the workplace and much of a pharmacist's learning is undertaken as part of new situations that arise in everyday practice. Try to document every learning opportunity you have.

The current CPD requirements are flexible enough to allow individual pharmacists to dictate their learning schedule and choose across a wide range of activities to meet their needs.

## **FAQ 9**

### **I have undertaken a lot of Group 1 activities, but these can only count for 50% of my total.**

#### **Is there a way to convert a Group 1 activity to a Group 2 activity?**

Group 1 activities are important for practitioners to undertake for their information content, but have limited effects on changing practitioner behaviour.

To encourage learner reflection and check understanding, Group 1 activities may be converted to Group 2 activities by undertaking an assessment component. For example completion of a quiz or self assessment questions associated with a journal or didactic lecture may allow a participant to convert their Group 1 activity to a Group 2 activity.

## FAQ 10

### As part of the new CPD requirements, do I have to do a Group 3 activity?

Group 3 activities are not mandatory.

Pharmacists undertake a variety of activity types and where possible, choose across a range of CPD activity groups. Group 3 activities attract 3 credits per hour of activity because they involve facilitating quality or practice improvement.

However, pharmacists will meet their CPD requirement if they undertake a range of Group 1 and Group 2 activities.

## FAQ 11

### How do I record my CPD?

There are a number of pharmacy professional organisations that can assist in maintaining your CPD records. Ultimately though, it is your responsibility.

For every CPD activity, you need to record:

- Date of activity (or date completed)
- Source or provider details (e.g. journal name, provider name)
- Type of activity (e.g. journal article, seminar, lecture, workshop)
- Topics covered during activity (e.g. specify all topics covered, list each article)
- Accreditation status (non-accredited or accredited, including the accreditation number)
- The total hours and Pharmacy Board of Australia CPD credits for the activity.

Pharmacists should also retain any evidence that they have undertaken an activity in a CPD portfolio for audit purposes. This could include certificates, flyers, conference materials, handwritten notes, Group 2 assessment question summaries etc.

Your CPD portfolio may also include a reflection on your practice as a pharmacist, any learning plan for the CPD year and any comments about what you learnt or how the learning has / will change your practice.

You should maintain these records for **at least 3 years**.

## FAQ 12

### Where can I go for more assistance?

Many pharmacy organisations are active in the CPD area and have many helpful materials to get you started. Have a look at the websites below.

Pharmacy Board of Australia <http://www.pharmacyboard.gov.au/>  
SHPA <http://cpd.shpa.org.au/scripts/cgiip.exe/WService=SHPACP/ccms.r>  
PSA <http://www.psa.org.au/site.php?id=5150>  
ACP <http://www.acp.edu.au/site.php?id=480>  
PGA <http://www.mycpd.org.au>

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**For more information:** Mr Grant Martin, Chair, APLF Mobile: 0458 149 995

*The APLF members are: The Australian Association of Consultant Pharmacy; the Council of Pharmacy Schools of Australia and New Zealand; the Australian College of Pharmacy; The Pharmacy Guild of Australia; the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia; the Australian Pharmacy Council; Pharmaceutical Defence Limited and the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia.*