

CPD FOCUS REPORT



Kelly St Pier, RCCP Registrar, discusses the challenges and opportunities for Continuing Professional Development during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

These are challenging times for our registrants. The COVID-19 pandemic continues to cause disruption to many organisations, particularly healthcare services. The cumulative impact of COVID-19 on health and care services and the wider society may take many months to quantify and understand, with the likelihood of there being longer term impact on service capacity and resilience. The RCCP thank you for all you are doing to support patients and clinical services during the pandemic.

We understand that the 6 clinical physiology disciplines registered by RCCP register have been impacted in different ways during the pandemic period, some assisting directly on the frontline where their unique clinical skills have been in high demand. Other disciplines have been tested with redeployment. However, some of our registrants have been fortunate to have had more time to undertake CPD where routine services were reduced or in some cases suspended for a period. The post pandemic consequences to diagnostic pathway waiting lists are starting to emerge and are likely to be a further pressure on healthcare professionals for some time to come.

Despite these challenging times, as a professional registration body, we have a responsibility to remind our Registrants of their need to continue to meet the RCCP's Standards in order to maintain their registration. Registrants renew their registration annually and every year confirm that they continue to meet the RCCP standards, including our CPD standards.

We acknowledge that circumstances will vary across and within the clinical physiology disciplines including the impact the pandemic is having on our personal lives, our physical and mental wellbeing. We will take into account these circumstances when making any regulatory decisions.

2017-2019 CPD Audit Report

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the way in which RCCP registrants continue to learn and develop throughout their careers so that they keep their skills and knowledge up to date and are able to practise safely and effectively. CPD should improve your work and have a positive impact on service delivery and for service users.

The RCCP audits CPD profiles for the purposes of patient safety and public confidence in the clinical physiology professions, and as a requirement of its accreditation with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA). Every 2 years we randomly select 3% of our registrants and ask them to submit their CPD profile covering the previous 2 years of clinical practice.

In March 2020, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on healthcare professionals was becoming increasingly apparent. In order to help reduce any additional burden on our Registrants, the RCCP Board made the decision to suspend the 2017-2019 CPD audit prior to completion. Many CPD profiles by this stage had been submitted, assessed and accepted. A number of submissions following initial assessment did not meet the CPD Standards and required additional information from the Registrant before making a final decision. Where any submission was found to fall significantly short of the CPD Standards these Registrants will be asked to resubmit their CPD profile. For those Registrants whose submission fell just short of meeting the CPD Standards they will be given the opportunity to resubmit or be automatically included in the 2019-2021 audit cycle.

We have collated the outcome of this audit, the full CPD Audit Report (2017-2019) can be found [here](#).

We encourage all Registrants to read this report.

COVID-19 and beyond - CPD opportunities

We accept there will be additional challenges for our Registrants when trying to access CPD opportunities, further impacted by ongoing self-isolation and social distancing measures. Although the full range of CPD opportunities may not be available for the foreseeable future, in particular scientific conferences, formal classroom academic courses and practical professional body exams, there are still however many other ways to fulfil your CPD obligations.

The RCCP CPD guidance (<https://www.rccp.co.uk/articles/329/CPD-Guidance>) is there to assist you and remind you of the various CPD activities that you could consider undertaking, including self-directed study, work-based learning and professional activities. Have you ever considered applying to sit on your Professional Body Council or becoming an RCCP CPD/Registration Assessor? All great examples that you can reflect on and include in your CPD portfolio.

COVID-19 has in some circumstances become a positive catalyst to explore innovative solutions using digital technology in education and the provision of CPD. Although formal educational learning may have been impacted during this period, education institutions have however adapted to new ways of working with innovation driving many to move their lectures online. This same innovation that has helped many of you to deliver some of your vital clinical services with the increasing use of remote monitoring being just one example.

Professional Bodies have been going online with the use of video-conferencing CPD opportunities and webinars where scientific conferences are largely cancelled. The RCCP has been highlighting many of these valuable CPD activities to our Registrants through the use of social media platforms throughout this pandemic period.

Professional development comes from knowing what changes you need to make each year and making them. CPD is the perfect tool for reflecting on your career as well as knowing how to move forward taking into account the need to demonstrate service and patient benefit.

When thinking about your CPD, you can make it easier by following these simple rules:

- 1 Make a plan (this may be incorporated in your annual appraisal with your line manager)
- 1 Reflect on your broader skills and knowledge as well as any updating of technical skills required
- 1 Reflect on the needs of the service
- 1 Reflect on how your CPD will benefit patients/clients
- 1 Be prepared to change your plan during the year to address any issues that arise

You know how best to manage your time. You are also the best person to identify your skill gaps and know where you should focus your professional development.

The earlier you plan your CPD the more opportunities you give yourself for reflection and to take part in discussions with peers and colleagues around chosen topics, all of which embeds learning and allows the benefits to translate into the workplace.

CPD is easy to put off until the last minute and a small number of our registrants were off guard when they received the written notification to submit their CPD profile. To support our Registrants, we are currently in the process of upgrading our website and will be providing all Registrants with the ability to log their CPD activities on a new online CPD platform.

More information

For those Registrants concerned about undertaking CPD and meeting the CPD Standards or our approach to monitoring, please do not hesitate to contact us at rccpadmin@rccp.co.uk and we will be pleased to support you through the process.

Please keep in touch and let us know what support you need and how we can help.