

Newsletter

Issue No. 5
October 2008

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

It is not unusual for prospective applicants to ask exactly what constitutes a CPD record. CPD is identified as ***“A process of lifelong learning for all individuals which enables professionals to expand and fulfil their potential”***

Reasons why you must participate in CPD:

- **A Quality Service** – Quality standards in the NHS are being ensured by a system of Clinical Governance, life-long learning and professional self regulation. Life-long learning is an investment in quality. CPD is a process of life-long learning for all individuals and enables professionals to expand and fulfil their potential. ***As a professional it is your responsibility to develop yourself and maintain competence in your work.***
- **Registration** – CPD is a compulsory requirement for all registered professionals. It is the means by which they can evidence their continued competency to practice.
- CPD does have its benefits for you and may include greater work satisfaction, greater motivation, greater career flexibility and career advancement.
- CPD should be an integral part of your personal development plan.
- Many CPD activities provide evidence against dimensions included in your KSF profile.

What can count as CPD?

- Training within the work area i.e. learning a new technique
- Reading articles, journals, books
- Job rotation, secondments and shadowing
- Teaching and mentoring
- Reflection
- Asking questions
- Attending seminars
- Study sessions with colleagues
- Attending lectures
- Work based projects
- Working through the results of audits
- Team discussions
- Undertaking additional duties
- Focus groups
- Conferences
- Meetings
- Research
- Acting up
- Learning from critical incidents
- Distance learning
- Personal study

These are but a few examples so be creative!

Recording CPD Activity

You must retain a record of your CPD activity. If you belong to a professional body the chances are that they will recommend a particular format for you follow. They may even provide CPD activities and support.

If you are not a member of a professional body you still must maintain a record. There are a range of formats that you can choose from but all that is needed is information recorded under four headings as detailed below (includes an example):

Date	CPD Activity	What I learned	Time spent learning
02/04/02	Read article entitled "How to bake a cake" from (name the book, journal and include page number)	How to prepare and cook a sponge cake.	30 minutes

Terry Johnson
VRC Chair

It is important to remember that you do not have to belong to a Professional Body to apply for registration via VRC.

Application forms are available via the VRC website <http://www.vrcouncil.org/>
Or directly from

Executive Business Support Ltd
Suite 4, Sovereign House
22 Gate Lane
Boldmere
Sutton Coldfield.
B73 5TT

T: 0845 838 6267
F: 0121 355 2420
E: vrccouncil@execbs.com
W www.vrcouncil.org

The fee for a new application is £45. To view the full list of charges please visit the website or see below.

VRC has been set up to provide a stepping-stone for healthcare science professions aspiring toward formal regulation via the Health Professions Council (HPC).

VRC is delighted to accept applications for registration from the 6 following professions:

Anatomical Pathology Technologists

Cytotechnologists

Critical Care Technologists

Genetic Technologists

Diabetic Retinal Screeners

Ophthalmic Science Practitioners

Fee	Details	Amount
Registration	Initial Application	£45.00
Incomplete Registration	Minor Omissions For example documents or cheque are unsigned	£20.00
Incomplete Registration	Major Omissions For example, the application is returned by the assessor requesting further information	£35.00
Renewal Fees		£25.00
Late Renewals		£50.00
Registration Reactivation		£50.00
Replacement Certificates		£5.00

Newsletter

Issue No.5



The British Association of Retinal Screeners (BARS) was established in the autumn of 2001, with its inaugural meeting and first annual conference at St. James' Park in Newcastle. The Association's main remit is to provide support to those involved in screening for diabetic retinopathy.

Retinal screeners come from a wide variety of backgrounds, both medical and non-medical and their work ranges from taking retinal photographs to running shared care clinics for people with diabetes on behalf of hospital ophthalmology and diabetes departments.

Most screeners are now engaged in diagnostic work and therefore quality assurance is an important issue. An aim of the Association therefore, is to establish codes of practice and develop standards of proficiency for screeners through appropriate training and education. In addition BARS is involved in working towards registration and regulation of screeners as well as assisting in the development of a standardised national accreditation programme.

The National Programme for Diabetic Retinopathy Screening was established under the auspices of the United Kingdom's National Screening Committee (NSC), working under the direction of the Department of Health. Part of the remit of the National Programme was the development of a qualification for retinal screeners. The pilot qualification was rolled out in spring 2006 and the resulting Certificate in Diabetic

Retinopathy Screening, accredited by City and Guilds has been available since October 2006. The Certificate will become the sole means of accreditation for all retinal screeners by 2008.

The Certificate has three mandatory and six optional units and each candidate must complete three of the optional units in addition to the mandatory ones in order to qualify. The Certificate covers all aspects of retinal screening including understanding the principles and protocols of the national programme, service administration, anatomy, physiology and pathology of the eye. It features specific units dealing with disease recognition and aims to provide candidates with a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the aetiology of diabetes and its management.

The certificate is a level 3 Vocationally Related Qualification (VRQ). However, the Diabetic Retinopathy Advisory Group, which has BARS representation, is looking at the development of higher level qualifications both at degree and at post graduate level.

Although BARS has been involved in the development of the VRC since its inception in 2004 and has already registered its first members, BARS council continues to seek advice on whether full Health Professions Council (HPC) registration in the future will be possible with the qualification as it currently stands.

Jacqueline Mansell

VRC Scrutiniser for Diabetic Retinopathy Screeners.