

# Guidance for CPD Providers

**Information and help for organisations  
providing CPD for chiropractors**

**November 2016**

**General  
Chiropractic  
Council**



## What is the purpose of this guidance?

The General Chiropractic Council (GCC) has a mandatory scheme of CPD for all chiropractors in the UK. Chiropractors must meet the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements to maintain their registration with the GCC, and be able to continue practising as a chiropractor.

This guidance is designed for organisations offering (or considering offering) CPD to chiropractors.

It seeks to clarify:-

- what is contained within the current GCC scheme and
- the GCC's interest in high quality CPD provision.

We recognise that some CPD providers concentrate their products and services solely on chiropractors whereas others have chiropractors as just one of a number of practitioners to whom such services are provided. This guidance is intended for both forms of providers.

CPD providers are likely to find the more detailed guidance on our requirements that has been produced for chiropractors to also be of interest.

## Introduction

Continuing to learn and develop in order to maintain and enhance professional practice is an important aspect of professional life. It is particularly important for healthcare professionals as their actions have a direct impact on their patients and members of the public.

Every chiropractor who is eligible to practise in the UK and is on our register is required to undertake CPD. Individuals may currently be practising chiropractic or, they may be taking a break from practice and registered as non-practising.

Every chiropractor on our register is required to undertake CPD to keep their knowledge, skills and competence up-to-date. This is so they can fulfil their duty to maintain, develop and work within their professional knowledge and skills and make sure their personal behaviour maintains patients' confidence in them and the chiropractic profession as a whole.

## What are the GCC's Continuing Professional Development – CPD – requirements for chiropractors?

Our current CPD Rules (2004) define CPD as:

“training which comprises lectures, seminars, courses, practical sessions, individual study or other activities undertaken by a registered practitioner which could reasonably be expected to advance his professional development as a chiropractor or contribute to the development of the profession of chiropractic”.

We interpret the term 'training' broadly, as the activities that a chiropractor undertakes to maintain, enhance and develop their professional knowledge, skills and competence once they have gained their initial chiropractic qualification.

Every professional will have their own strengths, have different gaps in their knowledge and skills, and different short and long term goals. The patients they work with will also vary as will their areas of interest.

Because of this we believe that chiropractors are the people best placed to determine the learning and development that best meets their needs and interests and to set their own professional aims and objectives. CPD is the means by which chiropractors can achieve their aims and objectives by driving their own learning and development.

The GCC's CPD scheme is designed to be flexible so as to be appropriate to every chiropractor's professional development. We set some mandatory elements within the scheme in order to provide some basic assurance that chiropractors are taking their professional development seriously and are engaged with the broader chiropractic and healthcare community.

The CPD scheme is based on learning cycles and is similar to those of other healthcare professional regulators.

The mandatory elements of the CPD scheme are:

Chiropractors must:

1. complete and record one complete learning cycle as follows:
  - a. reflecting on and assessing learning needs and interests within the context of professional practice
  - b. planning how to meet their identified learning needs or interests and recording this in a personal development plan
  - c. undertaking CPD in accordance with the personal development plan
  - d. evaluating the CPD undertaken and its effectiveness in meeting the learning needs or interests they identified
2. undertake at least 30 hours of learning, of which at least half – 15 hours – is learning with others
3. claim activities as CPD which relate to his/her professional learning and development
4. confirm that the CPD record summary is a fair and true record of their CPD.

The GCC's CPD year runs from 1 September to 31 August every year and we allow a month for individuals to complete and submit their CPD records. This means every chiropractor must submit an annual CPD return by 30 September each year.

### **Does the GCC accredit CPD programmes or CPD providers?**

No.

We do not accredit activities for CPD. We don't approve the number of CPD hours advertised on courses or conferences, or approve CPD providers. We have no intention of doing so in the future.

We don't accredit activities because doing so would:

- potentially restrict the professional learning and development that chiropractors want to undertake and that they will find useful
- add unnecessary cost to the process.

### Does the GCC use a CPD points system?

No.

We have an hours requirement that sets out the minimum amount that must be undertaken rather than a points requirement.

We find that most chiropractors undertake many more hours than the minimum number we specify. We recognise that the hours requirement is a fairly simplistic means of assessing CPD. However, we believe that it reminds chiropractors of the importance of undertaking CPD each year and, coupled with the focus on learning cycles, it serves its purpose as a basic simple tool.

### How can you make your CPD provision of interest to chiropractors and help them meet their CPD requirements?

There are a number of ways in which we think providers could support chiropractors in meeting the current CPD requirements. These include:

1. setting out clear aims, objectives and outcomes for the learning that is offered so that chiropractors can understand what is on offer and will be able to evaluate if it is likely to meet their needs
2. ensuring that the CPD that is offered is relevant, applicable, current, structured, is inspirational and where possible has a practical element and follow up activities
3. offering CPD throughout the calendar year
4. offering CPD activities throughout the UK. Much CPD provision is currently located in the south of England which means that chiropractors in other parts of the country are not so well served
5. offering a range of different forms of learning as different individuals have different ways of learning
6. focusing the CPD that is offered on areas of development that might be expected to advance chiropractors' professional development as a chiropractor or developing the profession of chiropractic
7. keeping the cost of CPD activities as low as is possible to facilitate those who are at different stages of their working lives to participate
8. assuring the quality of the CPD that is offered
9. offering records of participation / certificates in the learning to enable chiropractors to more easily demonstrate what they have learnt and how they have developed.

## Are there any plans to change the GCC's approach to CPD?

We are not planning to radically change our approach to CPD over the next few years as we still believe that individual chiropractors are best placed to assess their learning needs and interests, plan how to meet those needs, and evaluate how well they have learned once they have undertaken learning and development activities.

As a consequence, you can plan future CPD activities safely knowing that there won't be any significant change to our requirements.

However in March 2015, the GCC Council decided to develop and build on the current CPD scheme so that it can provide a better assurance of chiropractors' continuing fitness to practise. We have been working with chiropractors over the last few months and will continue to do so to further develop our thinking.

Our plans are to ask registrants to:

1. undertake a small number of CPD hours (approximately 2 - 3 hours in a 3 year cycle) in an area that we identify is of importance to the profession as a whole (eg ongoing issues that arise in fitness to practise cases or the introduction of new legislation).
2. have a structured discussion about their CPD with someone else to support them in reflecting on their learning and development and applying it to their practice – we will ask them to do this at a minimum once every three years
3. undertake at least one objective activity every three years so they gain feedback from other sources on what they are doing and apply the feedback in their further learning and development. Objective activities include: peer observation and feedback, patient feedback, and clinical audit. This requirement builds on and enhances our current requirement of 15 hours working with others in order to ensure that there is some external input to every chiropractor's learning and development.

As a CPD provider to chiropractors, you can help us meet these aims – and potentially increase the take-up of your products and services – by:

1. offering CPD provision in those areas where there are known to be common issues for chiropractors – you are likely to find [our report on fitness to practise issues](#) of use in this regard
2. developing a group of individuals who are able to offer one-to-one support to chiropractors through using structured discussion about their CPD – this will help individual chiropractors think through what their learning needs and interests are and what might be a useful focus in the coming year, enable individuals form these into SMART objectives, and help them demonstrate how they are actively engaging with learning and development and reflective practice.
3. developing CPD provision related to objective activities so that chiropractors can develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in how to undertake clinical audit or gain patient feedback and feed the outcomes into the development of their practice.

### Further Information

For further information, or if you have a question about CPD, please feel free to contact us at:

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