

Results, Recommendations & Learning from CPD, 2018-19

Last year we were able to make changes to the summary that registrants complete annually in order to ask for more meaningful details of what they had done. The big change was that we introduced a requirement to reflect on one of the learning activities and answer a series of four 'reflective questions'.

We were keen to understand how the summary was being completed and contracted the Royal College of Chiropractors (RCC) to work with us to determine the extent to which each CPD return demonstrated completion of a learning cycle, to explore the nature of the learning activities on which registrants decided to reflect, and to determine the extent to which registrants demonstrated a reflective approach to their professional development.

We wanted to share some of the findings with registrants to help inform future CPD and learning activities. We thought you would be interested to know that 94.5% of registrants identified a learning need and all registrants produced a suitable learning plan.

Registrants' reflection on their learning, as indicated by their responses to the four reflective questions posed, was variable but 87% of registrants provided relevant answers to three or all four of the reflective questions, demonstrating a suitable evaluation of the learning for the purposes of satisfying GCC CPD rules.

Registrants were given free rein to record the format of the learning they undertook and a wide range of terms was used. The word cloud below shows the 50 terms most frequently used by registrants to describe the learning format used for their reflective CPD (word size is proportional to frequency of use)

Top 50 terms registrants used to describe the learning format used for their reflective CPD



was the best person to learn from/ observe in order to build upon my current knowledge.”

Responses & statements that did not identify a learning need

Of the responses that did not identify a clear learning need, a number of themes were identified, as illustrated in the table below:

Theme	Frequency	Example
Part of a course	53/177	<i>“Continuation of my course.”</i>
Non-specific	44/177	<i>“Always good to recap and discuss what works best.”</i>
Attracted by the speaker	23/177	<i>“Ross Emmett himself was over from Australia to teach, with brilliant Q&A sessions.”</i>
Mandatory/routine	19/177	<i>“As part of my clinics practice, we go to CE every year.”</i>
Described the learning	18/177	<i>“We were asked to undertake a presentation to explain the origins of chiropractic, what it does and the conditions that can be treated.”</i>
Missing information	16/177	-
Convenience	4/177	<i>“It was local and relevant for practitioners.”</i>

Disallowed learning needs

In some cases, registrants attempted to identify learning needs that appeared to be inappropriate/disallowed in terms of GCC CPD requirements. These are listed below:

- *“In today’s society clients want ease of access to booking, sharing, special offers, loyalty rewards etc.”*
- *“I wanted to improve our social media”*
- *“This course was a 3-day intensive residential looking into how to grow your existing business. It focused on looking at finance projecting, business modelling and tendering. It had a day focusing on digital marketing and how to use ad words to target Facebook campaign at specific subsets of people.”*
- *“A business need”*
- *“An opportunity to have space to self-reflect and plan for future efforts in both business and life.”*
- *“Because I want to set up a new business and have fear”*
- *“To help grow my practice.”*

Knowledge & skills gained

Registrants were asked, ‘What knowledge & skills did you gain from this learning activity?’ Responses that referred to knowledge and skills gained, as prompted varied from succinct statements, such as:

- *“Dry needling”*
- *“Movement assessment, preventing injury and program peaking for athletes.”*
- *“I learnt how to manage my patients better to help improve patient outcomes and expectations.”*

to much more considered and truly reflective responses in their own right that made sense of the learning and indicated an analytical approach, including referring to feelings, for example:

“The number of older adults that Chiropractors see as patients is increasing. Although dementia is not a natural part of ageing, the risk of developing dementia increases with age, and it is said that the prevalence of pain in people with dementia is high with between 40% and 80% of people reporting frequent pain (Corbett et al, 2014). Changes in the brain for people with dementia may affect memory, language, visual perception, comprehension, orientation to time & space, mobility & fine motor skills, recognising objects, and learning new skills. All of these are in some way challenged in a chiropractic environment - from the medical history taking and physical exam to moving about in the clinic and using clinic facilities. My biggest learning was when shown images of ordinary objects, carpets, toilets and walls and how people with dementia see them. I was astonished at the degree of visual disturbance, and totally sympathetic to why it would cause panic and aggressive behaviour.”

Of those responses that did not answer the question, some registrants either provided a general/non-specific and usually brief response, for example:

- *“Continually learning in these complex areas”*
- *“I will not waste time on this type of CPD in future.”*
- *“I would attend similar workshops in the future.”*

Or provided a fairly detailed *description* of the learning activity, often including what was covered and how much they liked it, without stating what they had learned.

Affirming/challenging previous understanding

Registrants were asked, ‘To what extent has the activity affirmed or challenged your previous understanding of this topic?’. Unfortunately around 50% of registrants submitted single-sentence responses.

Implementation of learning

Registrants were asked, ‘How has this learning guided your future learning on this and/or other topics?’ Responses varied from brief statements including, for example:

- *“I’m now back to using ultrasound.”*
- *“We can make a better screening form for neonatal care.”*
- *“I am now able to give better exercise advice to patients”*

To more detailed statements, for example:

“I am now confident that my choice of intervention for low back and neck pain is in keeping with current national guidelines and am able to discuss this with patients to enhance patient preference in their treatment sessions. I am also able to choose questionnaires to assess barriers to progress and make provision for this within

treatment plans. I am also able to integrate cognitive functional therapy into my treatment plans with confidence.”

Responses that did not answer the question could be categorised into a number of themes, as illustrated in the table below:

Theme	Frequency	Example
Described the activity	9/89 (10%)	<i>“Psychotherapist Babette Rothschild, in her book '8 keys to safe recovery from trauma' outlines the building of trust and care around trauma - and we must operate within our professional boundaries and safe practice.”</i>
Referred to the outcome/conclusion of the learning	41/89 (46%)	<i>“I have a better understanding of the special interests of my colleagues within chiropractic”</i>
General / non-specific	39/89 (44%)	<i>“Was there a possible future approach to simpler issues such as normalising hormones with the use of nutrition and exercise? How about lifestyle changes when considering conditions such as obesity, diabetes, NAFLD and allergies?”</i>

Conclusions

1. Nature and format of the learning undertaken

The majority of learning was carried out with others in a group-learning environment and registrants’ learning covered a very broad range of topics. However, there was a clear focus on the core aspects of chiropractic practice, although some topics reported may be questionable in the context of evidence-based practice.

2. Responses to reflective questions

Taken collectively, appropriate responses to the four reflective questions indicate that registrants had reflected on their learning. However, approximately half of the responses submitted were single-sentence answers, some of which comprised only one or a few words.

Reminder: The Intended purpose of the four reflective questions

Question	Intention
What knowledge and/or skills did you gain from this learning activity?	To prompt the registrant to think about and report the knowledge/skills gained in the context of their learning need.
To what extent has the activity affirmed or challenged your previous understanding of this topic?	To prompt the registrant to think about what the learning meant to them in terms of their understanding before they undertook the learning activity, and to report on whether this was confirmed or altered by the learning undertaken.
How has this learning guided your future learning on this and/or other topics?	To prompt the registrant to think about whether their learning need has been satisfied, and whether and how they feel they should now extend their learning on this or another topic.
How have you / will you implement lessons drawn from this activity into your professional practice?	To prompt the registrant to think about and explain how they intend to apply, or have already applied, their learning to their work as a chiropractor.