

Checking the reflective responses submitted by a sample of 10% of GCC registrants in their 2020/21 CPD returns: Report of a project undertaken by the Royal College of Chiropractors on behalf of the GCC

1. Introduction

The GCC contracted the Royal College of Chiropractors (RCC) to conduct qualitative checks on the 2020/21 CPD returns of a random sample of 10% of registrants, focusing on registrants' reflections on the CPD they felt was most significant i.e. the responses provided to the four questions posed in section 3 of the CPD reporting portal:

1. What knowledge and/or skills did you gain from this learning activity?
2. To what extent did the learning activity affirm or challenge your previous understanding of this topic?
3. How will you implement lessons drawn from this learning activity into your professional practice?
4. How has the learning undertaken guided your future learning on this and/or other topics?

2. Methods

The GCC provided data for 345 CPD activities relating to 340 registrants.

The responses to each of the four questions for each activity (345 x 4 = 1,380 responses) were reviewed by one analyst to determine the following:

- a. Whether responses had been provided for each of the four reflective questions
- b. Whether sufficient detail been provided for each response
- c. Whether responses were relevant and appropriate to the questions posed
- d. Whether the activity was appropriate i.e. aimed at improving the care provided for patients and/or developing the chiropractic profession

Following the qualitative review, those registrants who did not appear to comply with one or more of the checking criteria were highlighted to the GCC with a recommendation to seek resubmissions. Suggested templates were developed to assist the GCC in approaching the registrants concerned. These proposed communications included explanations of the shortcoming/s identified and signposted registrants to the generic online CPD guidance.

The GCC subsequently provided the resubmissions received from 31 registrants, and these were checked, as before, with the outcome notified to the GCC.

3. Results

3.1 Responses provided for each of the four reflective questions

Answers were provided to all four questions in 344 cases. For the remaining case, the registrant had completed the return for two activities and full answers were provided for one of them. Thus, 100% of the registrants checked submitted answers to each of the four questions.

3.2 Sufficiency of detail

The CPD guide advises registrants that they need to use ‘at least 2-3 sentences’ to provide a full answer to each question. Review of the responses identified 14 activities relating to 12 registrants (12/340 = 3.5% registrants checked) where at least one of the responses comprised only a single brief sentence or phrase and was insufficient in providing a full answer to the question posed. Table 1 provides examples of such responses.

Table 1. Examples of responses to the reflective questions posed in section 3 of the CPD reporting portal deemed insufficient in terms of the detail provided.

What knowledge and/or skills did you gain from this learning activity?	To what extent did the learning activity affirm or challenge your previous understanding of this topic?	How will you implement lessons drawn from this learning activity into your professional practice?	How has the learning undertaken guided your future learning on this and/or other topics?
Really good to review and felt my exam is faster to implement in clinic with more confidence	Important to continue reviewing past learning to keep things fresh.	It has given me more confidence in cranial nerve examination	Confirmed that I need to find a course to make sure I am full up to date on the examination in clinic and to improve my understanding further.
Essential revision and research of uncommon conditions	appreciating need for constant updating of knowledge base	applying new info to presenting patients	Appreciating the need for revision and research as each case demands
Not a lot as I already do more than was expressed during this lecture	It did not	I will not	I need to start teaching the global approach that move this subject forward

N.B. Spelling and grammar shown as submitted

The GCC asked each of the 12 registrants to make a resubmission.

3.3 Relevance of responses to the questions posed

The reflective questions are designed to prompt specific responses, however some responses submitted lacked specificity and failed to identify the actual knowledge/skills gained (question 1), for example:

“Each moth (sic) we get together we tend to focus on a particular (sic) topic or a patient that has a specific problem or disease process. We then explore that.”

“A deeper discernment of the importance of understanding the underlying causes of many illnesses.”

In response to question 2, which prompts a reflective response regarding the extent to which previous understanding was challenged, some responses failed to address the question specifically, for example:

“The distinction between similar remedies has become clearer.”

“it broadened and deepend (sic) my knowledge (sic) and understnaing (sic)”

A small number of responses lacked specificity when explaining how their learning would be implemented (question 3):

"I take the knowledge learnt away with me and if applicable implement it immediately."

"When I am faced with new or different approaches, I read journals and case studies to learn more and integrate this in to my professional practice. I also continue to seek advice from my colleagues during these sessions."

In total, 13 of the 340 (3.8%) registrants checked provided responses that lacked specificity and failed to answer one or more of the questions. The GCC asked each of the 13 registrants to make a resubmission.

3.4 Appropriateness of activities reported

When reviewing the responses to the reflective questions, it became apparent that a number of registrants had reported activities that did not appear to meet GCC requirements in terms of improving the care provided for patients and/or developing the chiropractic profession. Some of these related to practice management, for example:

"Clinic management - booking software, room systems, consultation/report of findings layout."

"Brand and digital marketing for the chiropractor"

A total of 16 activities were highlighted and the GCC asked 6 registrants (7/340 = ~2%) to make a resubmission.

3.5 Checking of resubmissions

All 31 resubmissions were found to relate to appropriate activities and provided suitable answers to the four reflective questions.

4. Conclusions

Among the sample of 10% registrants randomly selected for checking, 309/340 (~91%) submitted appropriate responses to the reflective questions posed in section 3 of the CPD reporting portal for the 2020/21 CPD year, at the first attempt. The remaining registrants in the sample submitted appropriate responses at the second attempt following additional guidance.

These findings provide encouragement that chiropractors are engaging well with the process of simple reflection on learning and that further progress towards encouraging and supporting reflective practice among chiropractors could now be pursued.