

Continuing Professional Development

The South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) is pleased to share with the profession its vision for the formal introduction of continuing professional development (CPD) into the practice of pharmacy in 2010.

A web based system will be used for the submission of details of CPD activities. This simply means that after attending a CPD activity, workshop or reading a Journal, you will be expected to reflect and record your lessons learned on the CPD online program. In the case of persons who do not have access to the Internet, special arrangements will be made.

What is CPD?

CPD can be defined as ongoing learning, or means by which a person maintain, broaden and improve his or her professional competence throughout his or her working life.

SAPC's intention is mainly to ensure that persons registered remain committed to being professionals, keeping up to date and continuously seeking to improve their knowledge and optimising themselves on their career opportunities, both current and for future endeavors/undertakings.

SAPC CPD activities for 2009

Council will conduct workshops and road shows in all provinces to introduce members of the profession to the CPD online program. A pilot project will be undertaken where council will nominate members of the profession to enter their CPD activity on line and familiarise themselves with the program. Any person registered with the SAPC can also volunteer to participate.

For more information on CPD online program, contact the SAPC Customer Care line on 0861 7272 00 or E-mail:

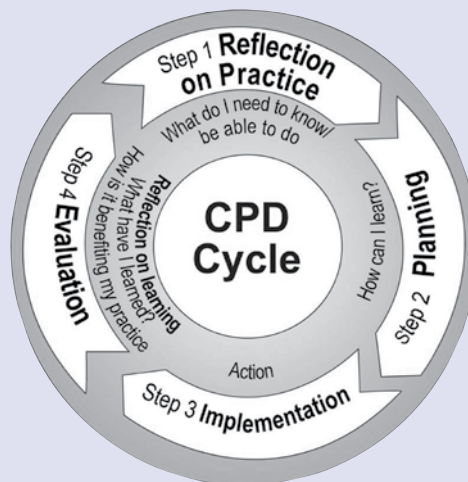
customercare@sapc.za.org

Making the CPD Cycle work for you

By now you should be familiar with the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) cycle. The four stages of the CPD process are:

- Reflection on practice
- Planning
- Implementation
- Evaluation.

These stages are going to be even more important to you in the future – the countdown has begun!



Luckily, it's as easy as 1 2 3. All you need to do is to follow the process. Your consumers will benefit from your continued competence to practice, and you will benefit when your professional development enhances your personal growth. You will satisfy most of Council's CPD requirements, but the bottom line is that your professional life will definitely benefit.

One of the most important CPD requirements of Council is keeping a record of your CPD activities. It's good idea to start recording every step now. You don't have to write a thesis – sometimes a few words will be sufficient.

Step 1: Reflection on practice

In this step you need to answer the questions:

- What do I need to know?
- What do I need to be able to do?

You are the only person who can do this. No one else knows your practice like you do. You must identify your own individual learning needs.

There are many different ways in which you can identify what knowledge or skill you need to develop. You can sit down and analyse your practice, in particular your knowledge and skills gaps, or sometimes the answer could arise unexpectedly.

Example 1: I am a community pharmacist. I notice that many of my patients have diabetes. I decide that I can offer a screening service to other patients, and I should be able to advise them on insulin resistance and metabolic syndrome. But I don't know as much as I should about the latest insulin products and dosage regimens. I have actually identified a number of areas where I need to improve my competence.

Example 2: I am a hospital pharmacist. A doctor phones me to ask whether or not a medicine is safe for a patient with porphyria. I don't know the answer.

Example 3: I start a new job as a registration pharmacist, but I've never done this before. There's a lot I don't know!

Example 4: I go to a local CPD evening. It is a lecture on hormone replacement therapy. I can't tell in advance what I'm going to learn. It may or may not be new to me. So actually I don't start my CPD at Step 1. I get the invitation, plan to attend, and jump straight into Step 3.

Step 2: Planning

The question here is how can I learn? Do I need to look for a course on a particular subject? Is there practical work involved? Can I do some self-study by surfing the net? Or reading journal articles? What about contacting one of the professors at the university? Or my knowledgeable friend down the road? And where do I begin?

You need to recognise that learning may occur at the workplace. It is also important to acknowledge that people learn in a variety of ways – what works for others may not necessarily work for you.

Obviously, part of your planning should be to prioritise how you are going to address the learning activities. You may prioritise them in terms of either urgency or importance, or even in terms of what is the easiest and quickest to accomplish. Choosing his/her preferred learning style to gain knowledge.

Step 3: Implementation

This is the “just do it” stage! It describes the action taken.

Step 4: Evaluation or reflection on learning

Now comes the crunch – What have I learnt? How is it benefitting my practice? You need to evaluate the outcome of the learning activity. Did it meet my learning need? Has it resulted in yet more questions? Have I identified other learning skills that I need to pursue? Do I need to try a different activity to get the knowledge or skill?

The most important aspect of CPD is also found in this step – How do I apply my newly acquired knowledge or skill to my daily practice? What will the effect be on the patients I serve? Will it help me to work more efficiently? Or faster? Again, you are the only person who can answer these questions, but make sure you record the answers!

The Pharmaciae is continuously having articles on CPD. Ensure that you do not miss any opportunity by reading the Pharmaciae. It will help you e.g how to use the software that has been developed for maintaining your CPD portfolio.

Legislative changes

The CPD regulations and guidelines will soon be made available on line and will be easily accessible on the SAPC Website: www.sapc.za.org

Looking forward to the launching of the CPD project. Together we can achieve a lot for the greater good of our profession.

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