Principles for **continuing professional development** and lifelong learning in health and social care

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January 2019

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Next

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Sue Russel (National Education Administrator, College of Paramedics) for her administrative support throughout this project. We would also like to thank the design team at the Royal College of Occupational Therapists for designing this document, and the College of Paramedics Board of Trustees for funding and supporting this initiative. We are grateful to the professional bodies and organisations that hosted meetings throughout the project and to all stakeholders that provided feedback.

The Allied Health Professions Federation (AHPF) have reviewed this document and offer their full support of the principles for continuing professional development and lifelong learning in health and social care.

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Definitions

Continuing professional development (CPD)
The way in which you continue to learn and develop throughout your career. CPD is essential. It adds to your skills, knowledge, professional identity and ways of thinking so that you stay up to date and practise safely and effectively, now and in the future.

Lifelong learning
Formal and informal learning opportunities that allow you to continuously develop and improve the knowledge and skills you need for employment and personal fulfilment.

Service user
Anyone who uses or is affected by your services, for example, patients, clients, carers, families, students, volunteers, staff members or colleagues.

Wider system
Any group or organisation that supports, provides the resources for or governs the health and social care workforce, for example, UK administrations, professional bodies and associations, service user groups, trade unions, other service providers and regulators.

Health and social care workforce
Everyone who works in the health and social care workforce, including in research, education, leadership, management and clinical practice. This covers all sectors and settings, both public and private and across the community.

Introduction

The principles outlined in this document have been agreed by the organisations represented within the Interprofessional Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group (Membership list – Appendix A).
This document replaces the 'Joint statement on CPD for health and social care practitioners' published in 2007.

Continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning are necessary for the development of everyone who works in health and social care and for the experience of service users. CPD and lifelong learning support a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high-quality care and services.

The principles set out in this document should be applied across the health and social care workforce in all sectors, to support CPD and lifelong learning. Registered health and social care professionals also have a responsibility to meet the standards of their regulatory or professional body.

CPD and lifelong learning are each person's responsibility. Also:

- professional bodies and trade unions have a shared responsibility to promote CPD and lifelong learning to their members and provide guidance to support the highest standards of practice;
- employers have a responsibility to support you to take part in CPD and lifelong learning in line with regulatory, professional and UK health and social care system requirements (as well as any statutory and compulsory training requirements); and
- the wider system has a responsibility to promote and support fair access to CPD and lifelong learning opportunities as part of planning, developing and investing in a workforce.

By working together, the benefits will be felt across services and improve care and delivery.

The purpose of this document

CPD and lifelong learning drive improvement in how services are delivered and how the workforce is developed. This document sets out five high-level principles for the health and social care workforce across the UK and is designed for individuals, employers and the wider system.

You should use these principles alongside professional and regulatory standards. They are relevant to everybody who works in health and social care, and we encourage all organisations to follow them.

The five principles

CPD and lifelong learning should:

1 **Principle 1:**
be each person's responsibility and be made possible and supported by your employer;

2 **Principle 2:**
benefit service users;

3 **Principle 3:**
improve the quality of service delivery;

4 **Principle 4:**
be balanced and relevant to each person's area of practice or employment; and

5 **Principle 5:**
be recorded and show the effect on each person's area of practice.

These principles reflect shared responsibilities for:

- **you** to recognise and demonstrate the effect of CPD and lifelong learning on practice (see reference 1 on page 14);
- **your employer** (if this applies) to actively invest in people and provide opportunities for CPD and lifelong learning; and
- **the wider system** to support the health and social care workforce and improve the safety and quality of services by investing in and developing the workforce.

The importance and benefits of CPD and lifelong learning

Service users expect individuals and teams to have and use up-to-date knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their area of practice.

The health and social care workforce operates in a constantly changing, challenging and complex environment. Developing new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking will help you to accept new and flexible ways of working which are based on evidence, and contribute to improving services. To do this, there needs to be investment in effective, supported and quality CPD and lifelong learning for everybody.

A shared commitment to developing a well-resourced and effective workforce will improve the quality of service delivery, improve outcomes and reduce risk.

The table below lists the benefits of CPD and lifelong learning to **you, service users and organisations.**

Encourages a positive learning culture
Improves skills, knowledge, and ways of thinking and working
Makes you feel valued, motivated and confident
Develops your career and helps you to move between sectors and roles
Makes you feel able to drive change and innovation
Means you remain fit to practise and meet regulatory body standards (including codes of conduct)
Keeps you up to date with changing technology and service demands
Improves experience and outcomes
Makes you feel safe and confident in the services provided
Increases satisfaction with services
Contributes to up-to-date and evidence-based services
Influences service development
Improves the quality of service delivery
Supports recruitment, keeping staff, and creating a flexible workforce
Adds to the mix of skills and productivity of staff
Improves performance

1 **Principle 1:** CPD and lifelong learning should be each person's responsibility and be made possible and supported by your employer

You	You are responsible for regularly planning, prioritising, carrying out, applying and reflecting on CPD and lifelong learning. You appreciate and recognise that valuable learning can happen in both planned and unplanned situations. You are responsible for identifying and demonstrating the benefits of learning to influence and gain support from your employer (if this applies).
Your employer	Has a responsibility to make sure that you are safe, up to date with current practices and can meet the needs of service users, in line with your professional standards. Provides fair access to time, study leave and funding to allow you to: • plan learning • carry out learning, and • think about the outcomes of learning. Encourages and supports access to learning that is separate to statutory and compulsory training, for the benefit of service users. Provides and supports access to resources (for example, technology) when they are needed.
The wider system	Is responsible for creating and promoting opportunities for integrated learning across teams.

2 **Principle 2:** CPD and lifelong learning should benefit service users

You	Your learning should develop new knowledge and skills, add to your existing skills, and provide opportunities to initiate and reinforce best practice. Your learning should be relevant to the needs of your service users or your employer (or both) and used in your area of practice.
Your employer	Is responsible for identifying the needs of service users to guide how relevant your learning is.
The wider system	Is responsible for supporting and promoting quality CPD and lifelong learning that benefits service users.

3 **Principle 3:** CPD and lifelong learning should improve the quality of service delivery

You	You explore and use ways to show how your learning has improved the quality of your practice. Your learning and the outcomes of your learning improve the quality of your service delivery and reduce risk. You identify opportunities to learn from and share learning with others.
Your employer	Encourages a culture of learning from experiences with positive outcomes, as well as from situations that did not go well. Supports learning opportunities between individuals, teams and networks, across services and organisations. Supports learning activity with time, staffing and resources to improve the quality of their service.
The wider system	Provides resources for quality learning through management, workforce and service delivery plans. Evaluates the effect of an appropriately qualified workforce on the quality of services. Has systems in place to assess the quality of CPD and lifelong learning activity.

4 **Principle 4:** CPD and lifelong learning should be balanced and relevant to each person's area of practice or employment

You	Your learning should include activities across the following four areas: • Health and social care • Learning and education • Leadership • Evidence, research and development. (Adapted from: NHS Education for Scotland, Four Pillars of Practice, 2012. See reference 2 on page 14). You take part in a range of learning activities, both formal and informal, as well as active and reflective (where you think about what you have learned). You take part in learning that is relevant to, challenges and develops your current or intended area of practice. Your learning meets relevant organisational, professional or regulatory standards.
Your employer	Recognises and supports learning across the following four areas: • Health and social care • Learning and education • Leadership • Evidence, research and development. Provides opportunities for a range of learning, including employees learning with and from each other. Responds to your learning needs within a constantly changing, challenging and complex environment.
The wider system	Promotes the value of a range of learning activities. Recognises and reinforces that the most important parts of learning are the outcomes.

5 **Principle 5:** CPD and lifelong learning should be recorded and show the effect on each person's area of practice

You	You are responsible for keeping a record of your learning that demonstrates: • what you learnt • how it adds to or develops your area of practice, and • the effect on service users or service delivery. You are responsible for accessing, promoting and using the resources available to you to support your CPD and lifelong learning. You are responsible for making sure you respect service users' confidentiality.
Your employer	Provides time, resources and opportunities to allow you to record and think about the outcomes of learning. Provides the opportunity to share the outcomes of learning across organisations. Has systems in place to monitor and audit fair access to CPD and lifelong learning activity.
The wider system	Raises awareness of existing and new resources to support recording and thinking about the outcome of learning.

Summary

This document continues a journey to develop and improve CPD and lifelong learning within the broader health and social care workforce. The principles will help to guide you, your employer and the wider system to encourage a culture of continuous improvement and workforce development for the benefit of those who use our services.

We will evaluate the effect of these principles to continue supporting the health and social care workforce with CPD and lifelong learning.

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Further resources

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Appendix A – List of Group members

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Appendix A – List of Group members

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Appendix B – Contact details

Organisation	Website
Allied Health Professions Federation Scotland	http://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/allied-health-professions/about-nes-allied-health-professions/ahp-directory/allied-health-professions-federation-scotland.aspx
Association of Clinical Scientists	http://www.assclinsci.org/acsHome.aspx
British Association of Art Therapists	https://www.baat.org
British Association for Music Therapy	https://www.bamt.org
British and Irish Orthoptic Society	https://www.orthoptics.org.uk
British Dietetic Association	https://www.bda.uk.com
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy	https://www.csp.org.uk
College of Operating Department Practitioners	https://www.unison.org.uk/at-work/health-care/representing-you/unison-partnerships/codp/
College of Paramedics	https://www.collegeofparamedics.co.uk
Institute of Biomedical Science	https://www.ibms.org
Royal College of Nursing	https://www.rcn.org.uk
Royal College of Occupational Therapists	https://www.rcot.co.uk
Royal Pharmaceutical Society	https://www.rpharms.com
The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists	https://www.bapo.com
The British Psychological Society	https://www.bps.org.uk
The Royal College of Midwives	https://www.rcm.org.uk
The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists	https://www.rcslt.org
The Society and College of Radiographers	https://www.sor.org
UNISON	https://www.unison.org.uk
Unite the union	https://www.unitetheunion.org

Publisher information

Published in January 2019 by the College of Paramedics, The Exchange, Express Park, Bristol Road, Bridgwater, TA6 4RR.
Due for review: January 2021

Share your thoughts on how you use these principles with us via Twitter
#CPDTogether

Reference: Broughton W. and Harris G. (2019) (Eds.) on behalf of the Interprofessional CPD and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group. Principles for Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning in Health and Social Care. Bridgwater: College of Paramedics.