



Update: Continuing Professional Development

8 June 2010

The *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (National Law) comes into effect on 1 July 2010. Under the National Law, the Board has the power to set registration standards and there is now a mandatory requirement for registrants to participate in continuing professional development (CPD).

From 1 July 2010 all dental practitioners in Australia will have to meet the CPD requirements set by the Dental Board of Australia's Registration Standard which has been approved by Ministerial Council. The Registration Standard is published on the Board's website at www.dentalboard.gov.au.

In summary, the CPD Registration Standard requires all dental practitioners to:

- a. complete a minimum of **60 hours** of CPD activities over **three years**
- b. ensure that 80% of the minimum 60 CPD hours are clinically or scientifically based
- c. make a declaration of their compliance with CPD requirements at the time of annual renewal
- d. maintain their own records detailing their CPD activities for audit purposes
- e. produce evidence of their CPD activities when requested to do so by the Board.

The Board has also released a CPD guideline for consultation. This provides more detail about the requirements set by the Board in relation to CPD. This CPD Guideline will soon be finalised. The draft is published on the website.

CPD requirements are relevant for **all registrants** of the Board, **except** those registered under student, non-practising and limited registration for teaching or research categories of registration. It may not apply to those registrants with limited registration for postgraduate training and supervised practice.

When the Board refers to all registrants this includes dentists, dental specialists, dental prosthetists, dental hygienists, dental therapists and oral health therapists.

The new national CPD cycle will begin on **1 July 2010** and the renewal requirements under the National Law will apply only to CPD hours generated after this date. Individual registrants should **retain evidence** of CPD completed before July 2010, when this is required under existing State and Territory requirements. This will enable retrospective verification should this be necessary in the national scheme, for example if the national board is investigating a notification made about matter that occurred when previous laws applied. The Board expects that dental practitioners will gradually accumulate CPD hours over the new three-year cycle.

The 60 hours of CPD undertaken from 1 July 2010 should consist of 80% clinically or scientifically based and 20% non scientific CPD. The CPD guidelines provide detail explanations of these terms, as follows:



*For an activity to be recognised as **clinically or scientifically** based, it must relate to the scientific, clinical or technical aspects of oral health care. Activities about infection control, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or patient record keeping, for instance, would be classified as clinical/scientific, as would topics relating to oral health or particular dental procedures such as endodontics, caries treatment, crown preparations etc. **Non-scientific activities** are those that are indirectly related to but supportive of dental care, and include courses about practice management and dento-legal responsibilities. Subjects that relate to a dental practitioner's financial wellbeing (such as marketing or personal finance) would not be considered to be clinically or scientifically based. The activities need to contribute to the maintenance and enhancement of a dental practitioner's knowledge, skills and performance of oral health care.*

The subject matter of CPD may also include activities in dentistry outside the dental practitioner's usual practice, for example dental prosthetists may undertake study about implants, drug therapies and digital radiography; dental therapists and hygienists on prosthetics and occlusal therapy or orthodontics. This type of subject matter would be considered a scientific activity.

For employees of education institutions it would be reasonable to include formal peer review sessions, journal reviews and study groups, writing publication of dental research or review papers as qualifying for clinical and scientific CPD.

The Board has not specified an approval process for courses or course providers who provide CPD. However, the CPD guidelines detail some requirements and expectations at point 4. Registrants must make a professional judgement about the appropriateness of the CPD undertaken. What has been known as 'Continuing Education, or CE credits' will in most cases translate to hourly CPD credits. In general, attending a course for seven hours would be equivalent to 7 hours of CPD hours, provided that the time is invested in CPD programs that meet the Board's guidelines.

The Board will provide more detail about CPD in an Information Sheet.