Principles for Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning in Health and Social Care

Prepared by:
The Interprofessional CPD and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group

List of Group members

Graham Harris (Chair)
National Education Lead
College of Paramedics

Will Broughton (Vice chair)
Trustee Official for Professional Practice
College of Paramedics

Helen Chang
Head of Faculty and Foundation
Royal Pharmaceutical Society

Louise Coleman
Professional Officer for Education and Accreditation
The Society and College of Radiographers

Gill Coverdale
Professional Lead – Education Standards and Professional Development.
Royal College of Nursing

Colin Crookston
Vice-convenor
Allied Health Professions Federation Scotland

Mike Donnellon
Chair Education and Standards Committee
College of Operating Department Practitioners

Thomas Elton
Professional Development Manager
The British Psychological Society

Dr Sally Gosling
Assistant Director, Practice & Development
Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Victoria Harris
Learning Manager
The Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
Kate Hon
BIOS Education and Professional Development Committee Representative
British and Irish Orthoptic Society

Dr Val Huet
Chief Executive Officer
British Association of Art Therapists

Val Johnston
Assistant National Officer, Health Service Group
Unison

Carmel Lloyd
Head of Education and Learning
The Royal College of Midwives

Lucie Nield
Education Board Member and Senior Lecturer
British Dietetic Association

Ethel Rodrigues
Lead Professional Officer (Education) Health Sector
Unite the Union

Lynne Rowley
Executive Chair
The British Association of Prosthetists and Orthotists

Dr David Stirling
Executive Director
Association of Clinical Scientists

Dr Stephanie Tempest
Education Manager for Professional Development
Royal College of Occupational Therapists

Alan Wainwright
Executive Head of Education
Institute of Biomedical Science

Grace Watts
Development Director
British Association for Music Therapy

Menna Wyn-Wright
Education Lead
British Dietetic Association

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Education Lead
British Dietetic Association
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References and further reading

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Definitions

**Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
An essential process by which you regularly identify, plan, engage and evaluate to continue learning and developing throughout your career. This enhances your skills, knowledge, professional identity and ways of thinking in order to remain up to date, to practise safely and be effective within your current and future scope of practice.

**Lifelong Learning**
The provision or use of both formal and informal learning opportunities throughout people’s lives in order to foster the continuous development and improvement of the knowledge and skills needed for employment and personal fulfilment.
(Collins English Dictionary, 2018)

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

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

The principles outlined within this document have been agreed by the organisations represented within the Interprofessional Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group.

Continuing professional development (CPD) and lifelong learning are fundamental to the development of all those engaged in health and social care practice and the enhancement of service user experience. CPD and lifelong learning underpins a workforce that is capable of delivering, evaluating and improving high-quality services.

The principles set out in this document are applicable across the health and social care workforce in all sectors, to support engagement with CPD and lifelong learning. In addition, registered health and social care individuals have a responsibility to meet the continuing professional development requirements of their regulatory and/or professional body.

CPD and lifelong learning are primarily the responsibility of the individual. In addition:

- Professional bodies and trade unions have a responsibility to promote CPD and lifelong learning to their members and provide guidance to support the highest standards of practice.

- Employing organisations have a responsibility to support individuals to engage in CPD and lifelong learning in accordance with regulatory, professional and UK system requirements. This is in addition to any statutory and mandatory training requirements.

- The wider systems have a responsibility to promote and support equitable and fair access to CPD and lifelong learning opportunities as part of workforce planning, development and investment.
Purpose of this document

This document sets out the five principles for all individuals working across all sectors and roles within health and social care.

The five principles

CPD and lifelong learning should:

Principle 1: benefit the service user;
Principle 2: be owned by the individual and be supported and facilitated by the employer;
Principle 3: improve the quality of service delivery;
Principle 4: be balanced and relevant to the individual’s scope of practice;
Principle 5: be recorded and reflect the impact on the individual’s practice.

These principles each have linked responsibilities to enable:

- the individual\(^2\) to recognise and articulate the importance of CPD and lifelong learning;
- the employing organisation (where applicable) to actively support and facilitate engagement with CPD and lifelong learning;
- the wider systems that support the health and social care workforce (including UK administrations, professional bodies, trade unions, other service providers and regulators) to promote activities to improve the safety and quality of services and to aid workforce development and sustainability.
The importance of CPD and lifelong learning

Service users have a right to access individuals and teams who they trust to possess and utilise up-to-date knowledge, skills and abilities appropriate to their scope of practice.

The health and social care workforce is operating in a continually changing, challenging and complex environment. The development of new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking enables individuals to embrace innovative and flexible ways of working and contribute to quality improvement. This increased demand from service providers requires efficient, supported and quality CPD and lifelong learning for all.

A commitment to developing a well-resourced and effective workforce will enhance the quality and safety of service delivery.

Benefits of CPD and lifelong learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service user</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• enhance the service user experience and outcome</td>
<td>• feel valued and motivated</td>
<td>• enable improvement of quality service delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• feel safe and confident in the services provided</td>
<td>• career development</td>
<td>• support recruitment, retention and creation of a flexible workforce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• increased satisfaction</td>
<td>• empowered to drive change</td>
<td>• enhance the skill mix and productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• receive the most up-to-date and evidence based services</td>
<td>• enhanced skills, knowledge and ways of thinking</td>
<td>• foster an organisational culture for learning and ongoing sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• remain fit to practise and meet regulatory body requirements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• be up to date with changing technology and service demands</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Principle 1: 
CPD and lifelong learning should benefit the service user.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The individual</td>
<td>Your learning should reinforce best practice, enhance existing attributes and develop new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking. Your learning should be relevant to the needs of your service users and/or the employer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The employing organisation</td>
<td>You are responsible for identifying the needs of service users to inform the relevance of the learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The wider systems</td>
<td>You are responsible for supporting and promoting quality CPD and lifelong learning that benefits service users.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Principle 2:**
CPD and lifelong learning should be owned by the individual and be supported and facilitated by the employer.

| The individual | You are responsible for regularly prioritising and undertaking CPD and lifelong learning.  
|                | You appreciate and recognise that learning can happen in unplanned situations and is still of value.  
|                | You have responsibility to identify and demonstrate the benefits of CPD to influence and gain support from the employer (where applicable). |

| The employing organisation | You have a responsibility to ensure that all individuals are safe, current, and capable to meet the needs of the service user.  
|                            | You provide fair access to time, study leave and funding to allow individuals to:  
|                            | • plan learning  
|                            | • undertake learning  
|                            | • reflect on the outcomes of learning  
|                            | You encourage and support access to learning activity that is separate to statutory and mandatory training, for the benefit of service user outcomes, experience and service delivery.  
|                            | You provide and support access to the resources (e.g. technology) required at the point of need. |

<p>| The wider systems | Your responsibility is to advocate for creative and integrative learning opportunities. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle 3:</th>
<th>CPD and lifelong learning should improve the quality of service delivery.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **The individual** | You explore and utilise ways to evidence how your learning has improved the quality of practice.  
Your learning and learning outcomes improve the quality of your service delivery and outcomes.  
You identify opportunities to learn from and share learning with others. |
| **The employing organisation** | You foster a culture of learning from experiences with positive outcomes, as well as from situations that did not go well.  
You support learning opportunities between individuals and teams; and across services and organisations.  
You support learning activity with time, staffing and resources to improve quality of your service. |
| **The wider systems** | Your management, workforce and service delivery plans provide resources for quality learning.  
You evaluate the impact of an appropriately qualified workforce on quality of services. |
**Principle 4:**
CPD and lifelong learning should be balanced and relevant to the individual’s scope of practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The individual</th>
<th>Your learning should include activities across the following four pillars of practice:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• practice of health and social care;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• facilitation of Learning;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• leadership;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• evidence, research and development.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from: NHS Education for Scotland, Four Pillars of Practice 2012\(^3\)).

You engage in a range of learning, accompanied by reflection.

You engage in learning that is relevant to, challenges and develops your current or intended scope of practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The employing organisation</th>
<th>You recognise and support learning across the following four pillars of practice:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Practice of health and social care;</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Leadership;</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Evidence, research and development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You facilitate opportunities for a range of learning including interprofessional and peer to peer learning.

You are responsive to the learning needs of individuals within a continually changing, challenging and complex environment.
| The wider systems | You promote the value of a range of learning activities. You recognise and reinforce that the outcome and impact of the learning are the most important components. |
**Principle 5:**
CPD and lifelong learning should be recorded and reflect the impact on the individual’s practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The individual</th>
<th>You are responsible for maintaining a record of your learning that demonstrates:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• what you learnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• how it enhances or develops your scope of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• the impact on service users or service delivery</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

You are responsible for accessing, advocating for and using the resources available to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The employing organisation</th>
<th>You provide time, resources and opportunities to enable individuals to record and reflect upon the outcome of learning.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| The wider systems | You raise awareness of existing and innovative resources to support the recording of, and reflection on, the outcome of learning. |
References and Further Reading


# Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association of Clinical Scientists</td>
<td><a href="http://www.assclinsci.org/acsHome.aspx">http://www.assclinsci.org/acsHome.aspx</a></td>
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