

RADIOGRAPHY AND RADIATION PROTECTION
NOTE ON CPD REQUIREMENTS

References:

- a. Guidance Notes for Dental Practitioners on the Safe Use of X-Ray Equipment, NRPB 2001.
- b. GDC website – Enhanced CPD (accessed 13/4/2018).

During a recent CPD training day, members from one particular practice had apparently been informed that it was a 'requirement' that CPD training be spread evenly and to this end they reported that they had been asked to provide evidence that each member of the team had undertaken 1 hour of Radiography and Radiation Protection in each year of their 5-year revalidation cycle.

From a trainer's perspective this requirement, were it to be true, would make it difficult to ensure that dental professionals cover the whole of the suggested revision syllabus as set out in Ref A:

A3.7 Practitioners are recommended to attend formal courses covering all aspects of radiation protection as part of their five-yearly recertification cycle. Such courses would normally be expected to provide at least five hours of Verifiable CPD... Appropriate courses would be expected to cover:

- (a) the principles of radiation physics;*
- (b) risks of ionising radiation;*
- (c) radiation doses in dental radiography;*
- (d) factors affecting doses in dental radiography;*
- (e) the principles of radiation protection;*
- (f) statutory requirements;*
- (g) selection criteria;*
- (h) quality assurance.*

I have checked with Jessica Rothnie, the Policy Manager at the GDC with responsibility for Enhanced CPD, and she is clear that there is no requirement on behalf of the GDC that Radiography and Radiation Protection needs to be spread out on a yearly basis as seems to have been suggested.

I also confirmed with John Milne, the Senior National Professional Advisor for Dentistry with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) that they do not require such training to be spread out in one-hour sessions over the 5-year cycle. He suggests that this misunderstanding may have arisen due to a misinterpretation of the GDC's guidance on their website:

Ref B: *Enhanced CPD guidance for dental professionals:*

4.2 Spreading activity over the cycle

...However, CPD is more beneficial when spread throughout the cycle, rather than a large amount of activity in a short period of time. To encourage you to do regular activity, there is a requirement for you to do a minimum of 10 hours CPD for every two consecutive CPD years.

To me, the intention of this requirement is clear in that dental professionals should not attempt to fulfil their required cpd hours in one concentrated ‘lump’. The GDC does not, however, specify which cpd topics should be included within the minimum 10 hours.

In summary, neither the GDC nor the CQC have imposed any restriction on how the 5-hours of recommended verifiable training in Radiology and Radiation Protection have to be delivered. There is no requirement on behalf of either the GDC or then CQC that dental professionals should have to undertake one hour of such training in every year of their re-certification cycle.

Hope this is helpful.

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