

Reflecting on CPD: Guidance for physicians

The GMC requires doctors to carry out CPD that covers the whole scope of their practice, but does not require doctors to record a certain number of credits annually. The GMC emphasises that at a doctor's appraisal the quality of the CPD and their reflection on that CPD are particularly important.

The GMC document 'Continuing Professional Development' states that 'Reflection drives change in performance and is the key to effective CPD'. It goes on to say that a doctor should reflect on what they have learnt from their CPD activities and record whether their CPD has had any impact (or is expected to have any impact) on their performance and practice. This will help the doctor concerned assess whether their learning is adding value to the care of their patients and improving the services in which they work.

The Federation CPD Diary provides a section for reflection on each CPD activity undertaken by a physician with 4 subsections. These sections include prompts which ask about the key learning from the activity and the impact of that learning on the physician's practice, colleagues, organisation and patients. The other 2 sections ask whether a physician has identified any additional learning or development needs and provide an area for (other) notes. The CPD Diary also includes a section for an annual reflection, which asks the physician to summarise their thoughts about their learning over the 12-month period.

As a physician, what should I include in my reflection and how much should I write?

The content and extent of each reflection should be appropriate for the CPD activity you have undertaken and the value of the learning to your development. Some reflections will be just a few lines, while others will be more extensive. A number of models for reflection exist, the Federation is not prescriptive about which model you use, although the diary does include some questions to prompt your reflection, as outlined above. When you record a reflection it should enhance the educational value of the activity for you as well as providing evidence for appraisal. The appendix includes some examples of reflective notes on CPD activities.

Appendix

Examples of reflection:

A. Activity - Attendance at 'Frontiers in colorectal and intestinal disease symposium'

What key learning have you gained from this activity?

- 1. I gained an update on the full range of medical treatments available for treatment of Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD)*
- 2. I gained an understanding of newer surgical techniques that are available for IBD and where these may fit into the treatment algorithm*
- 3. I learned that many options are available for an individual patient and that involving the patient in the decision making process is important in terms of coming to the right treatment option for the right patient*

Does this relate to your PDP for the year?

Yes. I wanted to get an update on the newer treatments that have recently been licensed for IBD

What impact will your learning have on your practice, colleagues, organisation? -

- it will improve my ability to offer patients who attend my clinic with IBD the full range of treatment options available*
- it will improve my interactions with surgical colleagues as I have a greater understanding of the treatment options they can offer and when they might be useful*
- I feel I will be better able to contribute to the IBD MDT and the combined medical-surgical IBD clinic*

Did you identify any further learning or developmental needs either for yourself or others in your department

- I need to ensure that the clinical nurse specialists are aware of the new treatments available*
- We need to consider writing a patient information sheet about the new treatments*
- I need further information on the use of fibrin glue for perianal fistulae as this was mentioned in the talks but I need a greater understanding of its role in clinical practice*

B. Activity - Attendance at talk about the introduction of PACES 2023

What key learning have you gained from this activity?

1. *I gained a full understanding of the new carousel that will be used in the PACES 2023 examination*
2. *I understand what I would need to do to host the new form of PACES*

Does this relate to your PDP for the year?

Yes – in that I planned to update my skills in examining and training (of trainees)

What impact will your learning have on your practice, colleagues, organisation? -

- *I now feel confident that I can host the new form of PACES which will benefit the trainees and the college*
- *I will be better placed to give advice and teaching for my trainees who are planning to sit PACES*

Did you identify any further learning or developmental needs either for yourself or others in your department

- *I will need to disseminate what I have learned to my consultant colleagues who are also involved in PACES and preparing trainees for the exam*
- *I need to include what I have learned in the teaching sessions I provide for the trainees who are planning to sit PACES*