

Continuing Professional Development

The aim of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme is to ensure that registered dental care providers (DCPs) maintain a commitment to education that promotes high professional standards and enhances public safety. We are already nine-months into the first two-year cycle of the scheme. Check the Board's website (www.dentprac.vic.gov.au) for a list of approved activities. Alternatively, contact your professional association.

This article is intended to answer some common questions about the scheme. If, after reading it, you still need more information, feel free to telephone the Board on 9694 9900 or by email to office@dentprac.vic.gov.au

Requirements

What are the compulsory elements of the scheme?

You must:

- Maintain your own CPD records
- Make a declaration when renewing your registration that you are complying with the CPD Code of Practice. This declaration will be made in the same way, and at the same time, as other declarations that already form part of the renewal process (i.e. about professional indemnity insurance, criminal and civil matters etc). If you are not practising, and therefore do not wish to participate in the CPD activities, you will need to say so in writing, and agree to a condition being put on your registration.
- Produce evidence when requested by the Board
- Attend:
 - A total of 40 hours CPD activity for dentists and specialists
 - A total of 30 hours CPD activity for dental prosthetists, dental hygienists and dental therapists
- Within that total of hours, complete not less than three hours of infection control activity in every two-year period. There is no upper limit on the amount of infection control you can claim.
- Within the total hours, complete not less than two hours of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training in every two-year period. You may only claim credit for a maximum of four hours of CPR training in every two-year period.
- Attend scientific based activities (including infection control and CPR) that make up 80% of your total hours, that is 32 hours per two-year period for dentists and specialists and 24 hours per two-year period for other DCPs (the remaining 20% can also be scientific, or they can be non-scientific topics, such as practice management, dento-legal matters etc).

When do I need to send in copies of my certificates and advise the Board of how many hours I have undertaken?

You don't. The Board may wish to see them if you are subject to an allegation of unprofessional conduct or chosen at random to be audited. Apart from those circumstances, the onus is on you to keep your own records for at least six years from the date of attendance, in the same way that you keep taxation records. A sample log sheet can be downloaded from the CPD section of the Board's website. If you choose to use it, you should keep your CPD attendance certificates to support the information on your log sheet.

I attended an activity that was held overseas, but my certificate does not meet the criteria set out by the Board. I have contacted the provider to request a certificate that includes: name of attendee, name of provider, name of activity, date, time and location of activity, course identifier (where relevant) and the number of scientific or non-scientific hours to be credited, but have not been successful. Does this mean I can not count those hours?

The Board would like DCPs to make every effort to contact the provider to obtain a certificate that meets the Board's criteria.

As there is a tendency for most overseas programs to offer some form of verification in line with their own CPD programs, DCPs attending would need to comply with the local procedures. You may be asked to illustrate that you have done so if audited at the end of the two-year cycle. If there is no method of verification then activities may be approved at the Board's discretion. The Board has been informed that some DCPs have designed their own 'certificate' in line with the Board's criteria, which they have then asked the provider to sign at the end of the activity.

Hours

I'm registered as a Dental Hygienist and as a Dental Therapist. Does that mean I need to complete 60 hours of CPD Credit?

If you are registered in more than one area, e.g. Hygienist and Therapist, you only need to complete the higher of the two CPD criteria. Since Hygienists and Therapists are both required to complete 30 hours of CPD credit in any two-year cycle, you would only need to complete 30 hours.

I only work part time – are my CPD hours pro-rata?

No. Regardless of whether you practise one day a year or three days a week, the only time CPD hours are pro-rata is if you are registered part way through the CPD cycle, e.g. if you are a dentist registered in the 3rd quarter of the second year, you would need to undertake five hours of CPD activity before the end of the fixed cycle. This is to recognise that it would be extremely difficult for a DCP to acquire the required number of hours in three months.

Continuing Professional Development

The Board believes that if you are practising, patients are entitled to expect the same level of knowledge base whether you are full time or part time. Therefore, there is no pro rata based on whether you work full time or part time.

If I accumulate 60 hours of CPD credit am I able to roll over the additional hours into the next two-year cycle?

No. The program operates on fixed two year cycles, and you will be required to attend 40 hours of CPD during the next cycle. The hours required by the Code of Practice represent the bare minimum requirement, and it is to be expected that many practitioners will attend a far greater number of hours of CPD than this minimum.

Why are applications approved 'up to' x number of hours?

Although an activity is approved for "up to x hours", you can only count the hours that you actually attended, and have been verified by the provider. Breaks and recreational activities do not attract CPD credit.

I am currently overseas. Am I still required to comply with the CPD program?

If you are practising interstate or overseas, are on maternity leave, or simply taking time out away from practising, you may complete a notification advising that you have ceased practising dentistry in Victoria. This can be downloaded from the Board's website under 'Application Forms'. A condition will then be placed on your registration, recording the fact that you are not currently practising and exempting you from the CPD program. To have the condition lifted, you would need to write and advise the Board in advance that you were resuming practice. Your CPD obligations would then resume.

Finding approved activities

How do I know if the event I attended is approved for CPD credit?

All activities approved by the Board for CPD credit are listed on the website: <http://www.dentprac.vic.gov.au> You can browse through all of the approved activities, or use the date finding facility to locate a particular activity. If you can't see the event listed on the website, then either contact the Board or submit your own application to have an activity approved by using the online form (Form 2). If the event was run by an approved Educational Activity Provider (EAP), then you should contact that provider directly. All approved EAPs have access to the website to record their activities.

I would like to attend an event that the University of Melbourne is holding - do I need to make an application to the Board to have it approved?

Because the University of Melbourne is an approved EAP, all you need to do is contact the University to see if CPD credit will be awarded. Alternatively, a full list of approved EAPs can be found on the website, together with a list of activities that they have already approved.

I would like to attend a CPR course, but I cannot find it listed as approved on your website. Do I need to apply for approval?

So long as the provider is...

- accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA), or its equivalent body in another state or territory of Australia, to deliver CPR training; or
- a member of the Australian Resuscitation Council; or
- accredited by a member of the Australian Resuscitation Council to deliver CPR training

...then you do not need to make a submission for approval to the Board. As there are so many providers of CPR the Board has decided it will not accept submissions for activities nor advertise them on the website. However as long as they fit into one of the above three categories and you obtain a certificate that meets the Board's criteria, then you will receive CPD credit for attending the activity.

I am a registered Specialist; do I have to attend CPD activities limited to my area of speciality?

No, but practitioners are encouraged to reflect further on their own practices to identify areas in which they can derive maximum benefit from CPD.

I live in rural Victoria – what CPD activities are available to me?

As the program progresses, we are pleased to advise that there is an increasing variety of ways to obtain CPD credit and a wider range being offered to all registrants, including conferences, home study, researching and writing publications, presentations/ lectures to DCPs, online learning, learning journals, study groups etc. Your professional association should also be able to offer you a wide range of activities or suggestions.

Australian Dental Association Vic Branch

Tel: 9826 8318

Email: adavbinfo@adavb.com.au

Web: www.adavb.com.au

Dental Hygienists Association of Australia Inc (Vic Branch)

Tel: 0418 336 119

Email: dhaavicinc@yahoo.com.au

Continuing Professional Development

Victorian Dental Therapist Association Inc

Tel: 0421976764

Email: info@vdta.org.au

Web: www.vdta.org.au

Dental Prosthetists Association of Victoria

Tel: 9746 9899

Email: admin@dpavic.com.au

Web: www.dpavic.com.au

Submitting applications

How do I submit an application for approval?

Go to the website

<http://www.dentprac.vic.gov.au/cpdapplication.asp> and choose the most relevant form.

Complete **FORM 1** if you are an **organization or individual wishing to deliver** an educational activity to registered DCPs.

Complete **FORM 2** if you are a **practitioner who has attended an activity** that is not on the list of approved activities and has not been delivered by an approved provider.

Complete **FORM 3** if you are a practitioner seeking approval for an activity such as **publishing a journal article, delivering a lecture**.

Answer the questions and submit your application online. An email will be sent back to you with the details of your application, and a tracking number. This number should be referred to when sending in supporting information, or checking on the progress of your application.

When submitting an application it is useful to provide supporting documentation such as a program or course outline to assist with the assessment of the application. Further documentation can be faxed, emailed or sent through after you have submitted your application online, but please ensure you refer to the tracking number so the two can be matched.

If you do not have access to the online facility, application forms are available by contacting the Board staff, but for ease and speed online applications are preferred.

You will be emailed confirmation of the outcome of your application usually within 1-4 weeks of receiving it, depending on whether more information is required, and when the Committee is next due to meet.

I will be giving a presentation as part of a conference aimed at dental care providers. How many hours of CPD credit may I apply for?

The first time a lecture is given, you will be credited with the presentation time plus an equal amount of preparation time. Subsequent deliveries of the same lecture will be given credit for presentation time only. So, if you are presenting a one-hour lecture, you would

attract two hours of credit the first time it is given, and one hour for each subsequent lecture.

If an event has been approved by the DPBV or an EAP then there is no need to make a separate submission for lecturing at it. However, you should still obtain a certificate from the course provider. A copy of the programme with details of your lectures could be used as 'evidence of attendance'. If the event has not been approved, you should apply online using Form 3. If this is the first time you are applying, and would like to claim the 2:1 credit, it is useful to specify that you are applying for credit for both delivering and preparing the lecture.

I give lectures to and sometimes examine ADC candidates – can I claim CPD credit for this?

Formal lectures to undergraduate students and formal lectures and seminars to postgraduate students and overseas trained dentists may attract CPD credit. However, time spent as an ADC examiner will not attract CPD credit. Similarly, clinical supervision and demonstrating to undergraduates or overseas trained dentists does not attract CPD credit.

I have researched and written a journal article that will be published in a peer reviewed journal. Am I able to claim for all of the preparation hours as well as time spent actually writing the article, which total approximately 100 hours?

While the Board is aware that a lot more time goes into preparing and publishing an article, it feels it does not fit within the spirit of the CPD program to award a DCP the full two-year requirement of hours for researching and writing a single article. Therefore, the Board has agreed that a maximum of 10 hours credit will be awarded for articles printed in peer reviewed scientific journals. Articles printed in newsletters may attract credit, and will be considered upon submission. Only published articles would be considered for approval. The publishing date would be accepted as the date of the activity.

Getting more information

- **Website:**
<http://www.dentprac.vic.gov.au/cpdactivity.asp>.
There you will find the code of practice, background information, approved activities, approved EAPs, online application for approval of activities, sample logs
- **For specific queries** that are not answered on website:
 - ❖ **Email:** office@dentprac.vic.gov.au
 - ❖ **☎ 03 9694 9900**