

# Guidelines for Continuous Professional Development

## Introduction

These guidelines have been developed to provide information on meeting the Australian Recreational Therapy Association requirement of continuous professional development (CPD) for full members.

One hour of education equals one CPD hour. This will bring Recreational Therapy in line with other Allied Health professions such as Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, etc.

## What must I do?

To renew your membership each year, members are required to:

1. Complete 20 hours of CPD
  - a. Seeks to improve patient/client outcomes and experiences
  - b. Draws on the best available evidence to inform good practice and decision making
  - c. Continues directly to improving your competence and keeping you up to date
  - d. Builds on your existing knowledge
  - e. Includes a minimum of five hours of CPD in an interactive setting with other practitioners
2. Maintain a portfolio that documents your CPD activities and your reflection on how these CPD activities improved your practice
3. Affiliate and student members are not required to complete 20 hours of CPD.

CPD can be completed in blocks of 15 mins, 30 mins or 45 mins. It doesn't have to be a full hour of education for each activity.

Recording smaller blocks of CPD are displayed as:

15 mins = 0.25hr

30 mins = 0.5 hr

45 mins = 0.75 hr

Each separate activity should be recorded separately, not grouped together.

## **Pro rata requirements**

If you have joined the ARTA part way through the year, you must complete five hours of CPD for every three months of membership.

0-3 months – 5 hours of CPD

3-6 months – 10 hours of CPD

6-9 months – 15 hours of CPD

9-12 months – 20 hours of CPD

## **Why is CPD important?**

Continuous Professional Development is how health practitioners such as Recreational Therapists maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, expertise and competence, and develop the personal and professional qualities required throughout their professional lives. It is an ongoing learning process building on initial education to ensure competence regarding current and future work duties.

Recreational Therapists who are engaged in any form of practice are required to participate regularly in CPD that is relevant to their scope of practice in order to maintain, develop, update and enhance their knowledge, skills and performance to help them deliver appropriate and safe care.

CPD not only increases overall competency, it shows a clear commitment to self-development and professionalism.

## **Benefits of CPD**

Benefits of CPD include:

- It allows individuals to continually upskills regardless of their age, job or level of knowledge
- Prevents practical and academic qualifications from becoming outdated
- Assists individuals in identifying any knowledge gaps
- Can help improve confidence and help individuals prepare for the changes and improvements in health care
- Can help promote a healthy learning environment, which can lead to a more prepared and fulfilled workforce

CPD in health care aims to ensure that both the quality of patient/client care and the depth of the practitioner's knowledge grows over time.

## **Interactive CPD**

Interactive means learning that involves a two-way flow of information and occurs with other practitioners, such as face to face or interactive online platforms. Evidence has shown this facilitates effective learning.

You are required to participate in a minimum of five hours of interactive CPD activities. This assists with effective learning, maintaining connections with other practitioners and contemporary practice.

Interprofessional CPD activities can have added benefits by supporting effective professional practice, which can optimise health services, strengthen health systems and improve health outcomes.

## **Self-reflection and CPD**

Self-reflection is about giving careful thought to your experiences at work to help ongoing improvement in your performance. In the context of CPD it includes thinking about your performance at work and the ways in which you can improve. It also involves thinking critically about the professional development activity you undertake in order to evaluate what you have learnt, its application in your current role and its value to your employer.

CPD Self-reflection includes asking yourself questions about:

- aspects of your work performance that could be improved
- how new knowledge or a skill could be applied in your current role
- who would benefit from you doing so
- what you would need to do differently in order to successfully apply what you have learned
- whether you found anything challenging
- if you have any habits that would need to be changed in order to apply what you have learned

## **CPD Activities**

Learning takes place through a variety of CPD activities. Examples include:

- higher education/accredited courses
- conferences, forum and seminars
- research and presentations of work
- online learning
- continuous quality improvement activities
- participation in committees relevant to your practice
- professional and interprofessional interactions such as complex case reviews, supervision, network meetings

- current or emerging health priority areas such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, and family and domestic violence.

Workplace mandated training such as fire training, WH&S and first aid cannot be counted towards CPD.

## **Record Keeping**

You are required to keep a record and evidence of completed CPD activities, such as:

- certificate of attainment or attendance
- notes from supervision, discussion with colleagues
- self-reflection on your learning from the activity

You are required to keep a record of your CPD activities and portfolio for a period of five years. It must be made available if requested for an audit.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Why should I do CPD?**

CPD is an important aspect of professional practice and a way for you to maintain and upgrade your knowledge and skills. This leads to you being a safer and more effective practitioner, and leading to improved patient outcomes. ARTA requires all full members to complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD each year.

### **2. What if I don't work in clinical practice?**

All full members, with the exceptions of student and affiliate members, must complete the require CPD each year.

### **3. How will the ARTA know that I have met the CPD requirements?**

When renewing your membership, you must complete a CPD record and submit to the ARTA office.

### **4. Should I keep evidence that I have met the requirement?**

Yes, you are required to keep evidence of the CPD you have completed. This includes a portfolio of the documents and records from CPD activities, and your self-reflection on these activities.

**5. Do I need to meet the requirement if I'm taking a break from practice?**

Please refer to the Membership Policy regarding requirements when on and returning from Maternity/Paternity leave.

If you are intending to move back into practice at a later date, you will need to maintain your CPD hours each year to keep your membership active.

**6. I live in a rural area and it is difficult to access CPD opportunities. What should I do?**

CPD can be achieved through a wide range of activities. There are many and varied opportunities for CPD, including ARTA approved CPD activities which have an accessible option for those who may be limited by geography or cost.

**7. Can I claim supervision hours if I am in a management role, or if supervising students?**

For providing supervision to a clinician or student to be eligible as CPD it must:

- Seek to improve patient/client outcomes and experiences
- Contributes directly to improving your competence (performance and behaviour) and keeping you up to date in your chosen scope and practice setting
- Builds upon your existing knowledge

Your CPD portfolio must document your self-reflection on how the supervision has improved your practice.

Supervision provided day to day as a manager/supervisor would not be considered acceptable.

**8. Can I claim CPD hours if I am receiving supervision?**

It is a requirement that you complete a minimum of 5 hours of interactive CPD activities in a year and not just online training. To claim when receiving supervision for CPD it must:

- Seek to improve patient/client outcomes and experiences
- Contributes directly to improving your competence (performance and behaviour) and keeping you up to date in your chosen scope and practice setting
- Builds upon your existing knowledge

You must also document a self-reflection in your CPD portfolio to show how your practice has improved.

**9. Are there exemptions for hours of CPD required if you work part-time?**

No, all members are expected to be undertaking professional development activities and meet the minimum requirements set by the ARTA.

**10. What evidence do I need to maintain as part of my CPD portfolio?**

Evidence of completed CPD activities include:

- Certificates of attendance
- Self-reflection notes from supervision or network meetings
- Documented notes on your learning

**11. Do I need to complete 20 hours of CPD if I joined part-way through the year?**

You will be required to complete a minimum of five CPD hours for every three months of membership.