

## Frequently asked questions

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1 December 2015

### Continuing professional development (CPD)

**The following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) provide information to help podiatrists and podiatric surgeons to understand the Board's CPD requirements, including the requirements for CPR and keeping a Portfolio.**

#### **Why must the Podiatry Board have a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) registration standard?**

The National Law requires the Podiatry Board of Australia to develop a registration standard about the requirements for continuing professional development (CPD) for registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons. Continuing professional development is a key way for practitioners to maintain the skills and knowledge they need for safe practice. The Board has also developed *Guidelines for continuing professional development* to provide further guidance about the Board's CPD requirements.

#### **Why am I required to undertake CPD?**

The National Law requires registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons to undertake continuing professional development (CPD).

CPD is integral to ongoing registration and aims to ensure that all podiatrists and podiatric surgeons maintain and continually improve their knowledge and skills so they can deliver high quality podiatric services and keep pace with developments that affect their practice. Practitioners are also required to keep supporting evidence of that CPD.

#### **What happens if I fail to meet the requirements for CPD?**

When you renew your registration, you are required to make a declaration as to whether you have completed the Board's CPD requirements. The Board may refuse to renew your registration or impose a condition or conditions on your registration if you have not met the CPD requirements.

The Board will also conduct an annual audit of CPD compliance on a random selection of registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons. If a practitioner has not complied with the Board's CPD requirements, the Board may take action under the National Law, and investigate the matter either through the conduct or performance pathway.

## What type of activities will be acceptable for CPD?

The Board's *Continuing professional development registration standard* states that the CPD you undertake must have a focus on aspects of podiatry practice that are relevant to your area of professional practice and include a range of activities from the categories set out in the Board's *Guidelines for continuing professional development*.

- A minimum of five hours of your CPD must be in an interactive setting with other practitioners, such as face-to-face education. Face-to-face education can include technologies that enable interaction such as Skype or videoconferencing.

The guidelines provide details of the categories; the maximum claimable hours per category; and examples of CPD activities within these categories. The examples for each category are provided as a guide and are not exhaustive.

You are not required to undertake activities from all categories but you must complete activities from at least two categories to meet the Board's CPD requirements.

You have flexibility with regards to what, when, where and how CPD activities may be undertaken. This can include attending podiatry conferences; undertaking online CPD activities; discussing case(s) with health sector peers; and self directed learning such as reviewing relevant research publications or journal articles.

## What if I am a podiatric surgeon or have an endorsement for scheduled medicines?

There are additional CPD requirements for podiatric surgeons and there are also additional CPD requirements for podiatrists and podiatric surgeons with an endorsement for scheduled medicines.

A podiatric surgeon must complete **an additional 20 hours** of CPD per year related to this scope of practice.

Podiatrists and podiatric surgeons with an endorsement for scheduled medicines must complete an **additional 10 hours** of CPD per year related to the use of scheduled medicines in podiatry practice.

See the *Guidelines for Continuing Professional Development* for further information about the categories of CPD and the maximum amount of hours from each category that can be counted towards these additional requirements.

## I only work part-time; why am I required to complete the same amount of CPD as a full time employee?

This is about safety to practise. The Board's role is to make sure all registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons can provide safe and effective podiatry services. All registered practitioners regardless of whether they work full-time, part-time, on a permanent, temporary or casual locum basis are required to meet the Board's CPD requirements. Consumers of podiatry services should have access to qualified health professionals who continue to maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills, regardless of how many hours the podiatrist or podiatric surgeon works in the profession. Standards of podiatry practice should not be reduced depending on how many hours the professional works.

## What if I take a career break from podiatry? Will I still have to do CPD while not at work?

If you are a registered podiatrist or podiatric surgeon, then the CPD requirements, including the requirement for CPR (podiatrists) and advanced life support (podiatric surgeons) must be met.

The CPD requirements do not apply if you have non-practising registration.

You may wish to consider the length of time you will not be practising and whether you should apply for non-practising registration. When returning to practice, however, practitioners must apply for general registration or specialist registration in the case of podiatric surgeons and must meet the Board's Recency of Practice Registration Standard.

When deciding to take a career break, you need to consider whether you wish to:

- maintain general or specialist registration (and complete the CPD requirements), or
- apply for non-practising registration (and consider how to plan to re-enter the profession after the period of absence from practice - see the Recency of Practice Registration Standard), or
- let your registration lapse and consider how to plan to re-enter the profession after the period of absence from practice (see the Board's Recency of Practice Registration Standard)

### **I don't have time to do any CPD on top of my long work hours, do I really have to do this, and how can I fit it in?**

The Board's role is to protect the public. Under the National Law, registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons (except those with non-practising registration) are required to undertake CPD that meets the Board's CPD registration standard. CPD is integral to providing safe and effective podiatry services.

The Board's CPD requirements provide flexibility in that while CPD must be completed from at least two different categories, practitioners have flexibility with regards to what, when, where and how CPD activity may be undertaken. This can include attending podiatry conferences; undertaking online CPD activities; discussing case(s) with health sector peers; and self directed learning such as reviewing relevant research publications or journal articles. The Board encourages you to actively discuss with other health professionals ways to plan and schedule professional development into your routine.

### **I already have to meet CPD requirements of my workplace, so do I now need to do additional CPD?**

If you already participate in professional development activities that have a focus on podiatric practice that is relevant to your area of professional practice as a podiatrist or podiatric surgeon, then as long as these activities meet the requirements of the Board's CPD registration standard and guidelines, you can count these activities as contributing towards the Board's CPD requirements.

### **What CPD records do I need to keep?**

The Board's Guidelines for continuing professional development include information about CPD records, which must include as a minimum:

- A log of CPD activities that records the following details about your CPD activities:
  - date it was completed
  - description of the activity
  - category
  - number of CPD hours claimed, and
  - goal achieved.
- Evidence of CPD activities completed, such as:
  - certificates of attainment / attendance, and
  - notes from self-directed CPD activity such as a literature review, case study or journal articles. It is expected that the notes provide a comprehensive summary of the key points of the review and reflect the learning from the activity.

To assist you with your CPD recordkeeping, the Board has published the following templates that you can use:

- Log of CPD activities, and
- Plan of learning objectives and reflection on learning.

The templates are published on the Board's website under *Policies, codes and guidelines*.

The Board recommends that you keep this documentation in a portfolio that also includes evidence of your training in CPR or advanced life support in the case of podiatric surgeons.

Your portfolio could be paper based or in an electronic form.

This will enable you to retrieve the evidence of your CPD easily if you are audited.

It also provides you with a reference folder for you to use to reflect on your learning and to help you plan for future activities. Your portfolio may also serve as a peer learning tool to assist you to review and discuss your professional development activities with other health professional colleagues.

It is recommended that you schedule a time to regularly review your portfolio to ensure it is current and accurate.

### How long must I keep my CPD records for?

You must keep records of your CPD activities **for at least five years** from the date you completed the CPD. These records must be available for audit or if required by the Board as part of an investigation arising from a notification (complaint).

Each year the Board conducts an audit of randomly selected registered podiatrists and podiatric surgeons and if you can't provide evidence that you have met the Board's Board's CPD requirements, the Board may take action under the National Law, and investigate the matter either through the conduct or performance pathway.

### Why should I do a plan of learning objectives and reflection on learning?

The Board considers that it is important that you put some time into planning your CPD. Each year you should review your practice; identify gaps in your knowledge and skills; and identify your learning needs for the coming year and activities to address these learning needs you. This process is an opportunity for you to:

- a. review best practice standards or evidence-based practice to enable you to evaluate and improve your level of competency, treatment plan or service delivery
- b. work on your limitations or deficits to improve your practice to meet current standards using evidence-based practice or best practice standards, and
- c. work further to develop competency or strengths in areas of particular interest or aptitude.

You should consciously reflect on learning as it relates to your practice as this will improve your competency. This can be done by writing a brief summary of the CPD you have done and assessing your progress against the goals you set for yourself. Reflection on learning can contribute to the learning goals for the coming year as part of the ongoing CPD cycle.

A template that you could use to record your plan of learning objectives and reflection on learning is published on the Board's website under *Policies, codes and guidelines*.

### What happens if I accumulate more than 20 hours per year?

Congratulations, this is great. The 20 hours, (which must include a range of activities from the specified categories) is the minimum requirement for podiatrists and the Board considers it highly likely that podiatrists and podiatric surgeons who are actively involved in ongoing learning and development will exceed the minimum 20 hours per year for podiatrists and 40 hours per year for podiatric surgeons. You cannot 'rollover' any excess hours into the following year.

## **I registered part way through the registration year, how many hours of CPD do I need?**

The requirement will be calculated on a pro rata basis. Information about the Board's pro rata requirements is in the Board's *Guidelines for continuing professional development*.

The proportion you are required to complete will depend on how many months are remaining in the registration period and the type of registration you have.

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For example:

- if you are a podiatrist and you were registered in May (six months into a registration period), then the requirement will be for 10 hours for that registration period (50%). You must also complete training in CPR, management of anaphylaxis and use of an automated external defibrillator as this requirement is excluded from the pro rata arrangements.
- if you are a podiatric surgeon and you were registered in May, you must complete a minimum of 20 hours of CPD for that registration period (50%) and meet the advanced life support requirements.
- if your registration is endorsed for scheduled medicines in May, you must also complete a minimum of five hours of CPD related to the endorsement for that registration period.

## **What is the best way to meet the Board requirements for CPD if I am not a member of my professional body?**

You do not have to be a member of a professional body to meet the Board's CPD requirements. In terms of the types of CPD activities that may be undertaken from the specified categories, the Board has provided some examples (which are not exhaustive). See the *Guidelines for Continuing professional Development*

As long as at least five hours of the CPD is undertaken in an interactive setting with other practitioners, which can include Skype or videoconferencing, there are a variety of ways that you can do your CPD. For example you could undertake online CPD activities; discuss case(s) with health sector peers; undertake an infection control audit of your practice; review relevant research publications or journal articles; or undertaking a course relating to podiatry practice.

Alternatively, you may also choose to be a member of your own professional body and meet the Board's CPD requirements by completing the professional body's courses and programs. This is up to you and does not affect or influence your registration. You may find it more enjoyable and easier to engage in activities through a professional or peer group.

## **Who can deliver the training in CPR and advanced life support?**

Podiatrists must complete training in CPR, management of anaphylaxis and use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). Podiatric surgeons must complete training in advanced life support.

This training must be conducted by either a registered training organisation (RTO) as listed at <http://training.gov.au>, or a hospital and/or health service that provides training that has the same course content and meets the same competencies of a training package delivered by an RTO.

## What evidence do I need to keep of my CPR training?

You must have a current certificate or other evidence of having successfully completed the training, issued by the organisation that delivered the training.

A certificate of attainment is the official acknowledgement from the RTO, hospital or health service that you have completed the course. This certificate must be current and kept by you in your CPD portfolio and provided to the Board if requested for audit or other purposes.

The Board acknowledges that some hospitals or health services may not issue a certificate of attainment and will accept a signed and dated document on official hospital or health service letterhead that provides evidence of having completed the training and attained the required competences.

The certificate or hospital document must include:

- the name of the practitioner who completed the training
- the name of the RTO, hospital or health service
- the name of the course and training package code if applicable, and
- the expiry date or date attained.

## Do I need to do anaphylaxis and automatic external defibrillator (AED) training annually as well as CPR?

The CPR component must be renewed annually and the other requirements (management of anaphylaxis; and the use of an AED) must be renewed at least every three years.

To do this you could undertake training that includes all three components every three years and do a CPR refresher in the years in between. For example:

Year 1 - CPR, anaphylaxis and AED training  
Year 2 - CPR  
Year 3 - CPR  
Year 4 - CPR, anaphylaxis and AED training.

## Why don't the hours spent on my cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training count towards my hours of CPD?

CPR requirements for podiatrists and training in advanced life support for podiatric surgeons are **additional** to the CPD hours to ensure that practitioners invest an adequate minimum number of hours into a varied range of CPD activities.

## Can I get an exemption from the CPD requirements?

The Board may grant an exemption or variation to the Board's requirements for CPD in exceptional circumstances.

The types of exceptional circumstances that may justify the granting of an exemption or variation to the CPD requirements will be limited and would only be considered where there is compelling evidence that the circumstances have created a significant obstacle to your ability to complete the Board's CPD requirements. Each case would be considered on its merits and depending on the particular circumstances, the Board may allow a full or partial exemption.

A written request for exemption due to exceptional circumstances must explain the nature of those circumstances and you would need to provide evidence that your personal circumstances prevented you from undertaking the required CPD.

More information, including the criteria for exemption is set out in a policy published on the Board's website under *Policies, codes and guidelines*.

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