Guidelines on continuing professional development

1. Introduction

Patients or clients have the right to expect that chiropractors will provide services in a competent and contemporary manner that meets best practice standards. Accordingly, the provisions of s.39(1)(c) of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009* (the National Law) and the standards for registration approved by the Board under the National Law deem that all chiropractors (unless otherwise exempted) must engage in continuing professional development (CPD) as described by these guidelines to maintain, continue, enhance and extend their current competence and continue their professional development. Chiropractors need to be able to demonstrate that they are maintaining currency of knowledge, developments and skills related to their profession. This applies in all areas of health professional services – clinical, education, management/leadership and research.

2. CPD

2.1 Definition

Continuing professional development (CPD) is an interactive process by which chiropractors can maintain, enhance and extend their knowledge, expertise and competence throughout their careers and in line with the changing needs of clients and society.

In this context, it is important to recognise that people learn in many varied and different ways and CPD may include formal and informal learning activities.

2.2 What is effective CPD?

The literature suggests that effective CPD for health professionals is that which emphasises active learning and focuses on activities that have been demonstrated to result in behaviour change and subsequent improved clinical practice. Effective CPD requires active participation in learning throughout a health professional's career.

An increasing number of randomised controlled trials and systematic reviews of CPD have demonstrated that CPD can assist to produce changes in practitioner behaviour, improve competence and result in better patient outcomes. It is important to note that activities that engage and provide an opportunity to practise skills can produce changes in professional practice and encourage improved health outcomes, whereas didactic sessions, conferences and courses that do not include active participation do not appear to be effective in changing a practitioner's performance.

Research also suggests a growing link between evaluation, learning and enhanced patient or client care and service quality, with the majority of learning resulting from experience in practice rather than solely from attendance at formal courses. Knowledge and skills from formal activities have been found to have little effect on enhancing practice unless they are linked to experiential, practice-based learning.

2.3 What counts as CPD?

It is important that CPD is linked to the needs of the community to whom the chiropractor is providing services. All learning activities which help a chiropractor maintain competence and improve the quality of health care should be accepted as CPD. Learning occurs through a wide variety of formal and informal activities.

Formal learning activities are activities that relate to clinical matters that contribute to the maintenance and development of clinical competencies and clinical practice. The expectation is that these activities will contribute to minimising risk, improving safety of patients or clients and better health outcomes. Hours claimed as formal learning activities must be directed toward these clinical matters.

Formal learning activities may refer to:

- Distance education modules and online learning (should include an examination or assessment component)
- Conferences, forums, seminars and workshops
- Undertaking research and presentation of work (for example papers for publication, major conference posters, and official submissions). These need to be substantive, reference and evidence-based.
- Making health-related presentations of new or substantively reviewed material (for example research presentations, poster presentations, lectures, seminar presentations)
- Tertiary and other accredited courses
- Accreditation activities (inspection teams and evaluation of institutional/team reports).

Informal and incidental learning activities may refer to:

- self-study — reference materials, journals, etc.
- clinical case discussion with other health professionals/colleagues
- quality assurance activities such as practice accreditation
- research
- clinical supervision of students and practitioners.
- clinical supervision/mentoring of students or practitioners.

If chiropractors seek to rely on hours for formal learning, they need to assure themselves that an activity and its quantum of hours has been assessed and approved by a Board-approved body for this purpose. It is expected that formal learning activities promote an active learning, participation and evaluation component.

Attending lectures, conferences and courses remains an important aspect of lifelong learning but it is important to realise that the majority of learning occurs from experience in day-to-day practice. For experienced professionals, learning in the clinical setting through activities such as reading cases and discussion with colleagues will often be an important source of CPD. While this learning may count towards a chiropractor's CPD and should be recorded, a combination of informal learning and attendance at formal learning activities is required in any CPD program.

All chiropractors must participate in formal learning activities that are relevant to their practice. However, formal CPD activities such as lectures, courses and conferences have little effect on enhancing practice unless they include active learning and participation to relate the content to the chiropractor's professional practice. Chiropractors should ensure they reflect consciously on the relevance of formal learning activities to their practice to optimise the effect on their practice.

2.4 An ideal CPD program (features and benefits)

Chiropractors will learn best when they are motivated and their CPD:

- is highly self directed – each person is responsible personally for deciding on what CPD activities he or she wants to do
- is based on an individual learning plan and the learning needs that the individual has identified for himself or herself
- builds on an individual's existing knowledge and experience
- links an individual's learning and practice
- includes evaluation of the effect of an individual's learning on his or her practice
- involves a personal review of an individual's learning plan in response to his or her experience
- involves material that can be quickly integrated into his or her practice
- contains some sort of structured review or assessment.

2.5 How do I record my CPD?

It is required that chiropractors maintain a personal portfolio to record their CPD. A personal portfolio should include:

- a personal collection of evidence of ongoing development
- a record or log of reflection and evaluation of informal and incidental learning
- a record of attendance at formal learning activities
- other important supporting documents or other evidence
- an 'hours taken' value ascribed to each learning activity
- a curriculum vitae (CV) including a copy of case notes and forms used in clinic
- a reflection on the things learned and the value of the activity
- if in tertiary study, provide enrolment or course assessment notices.
- evidence of research and /or presentation of work.

If a chiropractor is required to provide the Board with evidence of his or her CPD, the personal portfolio will demonstrate how he or she has completed the requisite number of hours satisfactorily.

3. Requirements

Requirement 3.1

All chiropractors except if registered as a student or a non-practising registrant) must engage in at least the minimum level of CPD activity throughout a period of registration (which is generally 12 months). Pro rata adjustment may apply for chiropractors who obtain initial registration partway through the year. Chiropractors must engage in CPD activities from July 2010. The Board will require chiropractors to declare compliance with the CPD registration standard on renewal of registration after their first full year of registration under the national scheme (i.e November 2011) and from this time the CPD assessment year will be the same as the registration year (December to November). The Board will conduct audits of practitioner's compliance with the CPD requirements after twelve months operation of the National Law.

Requirement 3.2

The minimum level of activity will be at least 25 hours over a 12 month registration period. That 25-hour total must

comprise at least 12.5 hours of activities that are classed as formal learning activities. The balance may be either formal or informal learning activities; see Section 2.3 What counts as CPD? in these guidelines.

Requirement 3.3

The Board reserves the right to vary the CPD requirements from time to time. Sufficient notice will be given to ensure there is sufficient time to manage the variation.

Requirement 3.4

The Board requires that chiropractors must hold a current a Level 2 or Senior First Aid certificate or equivalent, in addition to the required CPD hours.

Requirement 3.5

All chiropractors must keep a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate their compliance with this CPD requirement, including evidence of formal CPD requirements.

Requirement 3.6

As part of renewal of registration, all chiropractors must declare (annually at time of renewal) as to their compliance with the CPD requirements during the previous 12 months. This requirement will apply for any renewal of registration from 1 December 2011.

Requirement 3.7

The Board may, at any time, by written notice require a chiropractor to provide to the Board evidence of his or her CPD activities. A chiropractor must comply with such a written notice or explain the failure to comply within 28 days.

Requirement 3.8

Failure to demonstrate evidence of adequate CPD activity or failure to comply with the provisions of requirement 3.7 of these guidelines will result in action being taken by the Board, which may include but is not limited to panel hearings, conditions of registration or refusal of registration.

Requirement 3.9

The Board will conduct periodic audits to determine compliance with the National Law and relevant registration standards. As statutory documents, records of CPD must be kept for at least seven (7) years after the activity is completed within 28 days.

Requirement 3.10

The Board may grant an exemption from the CPD requirements in exceptional circumstances. These include ill health, bereavement or other such circumstances. Such an exemption must be requested and granted before the annual declaration about CPD activities. Pro rata adjustment for CPD may apply for chiropractors who practise for part of the year

4. Sample CPD learning Activity Log

Below is a summary of all of the learning I have undertaken this year, with others and on my own	Hours of formal learning allocated (min 12.5 hrs)	Hours of informal learning	Total number of hours (min. 25 hrs)	Date

I confirm that this summary sheet is a fair and true representation of my activities in relation to this CPD year. I have spent _____ hours engaging in formal learning activities in this CPD year and _____ hours engaging in informal learning activities.

Signature: Date:

Name:

NOTE- In addition to the completed activity log (a certificate of formal learning activity from the Board's approved body(s) will suffice for only formal learning activities), please provide copies where applicable of any other evidence, for example receipt to verify participation in the CPD activities