S
ince August 1 2008, the Gen-
eral Dental Council (GDC) re-
quires all dental care pro-
essionals (DCPs), whose name
was on the GDC register on or
after July 31 2008, to undertake a
programme of continuing profes-
sional development (CPD). This
is so DCPs keep up to date with
current practices and procedures,
and also to make sure that best
practice is observed and main-
tained. This is a compulsory re-
quirement for any registered DCP.

The current legislation states
that 150 hours of CPD has to be
undertaken within a five-year pe-
eriod. Fifty of those hours have to
be verifiable by a third party.

Verifiable CPD may only be
classed as verifiable, pro-
viding it has met the educa-
tional criteria requested by the
GDC. Within these, 20 hours
must be undertaken in the core
subjects:
• Medical Emergencies (10
hours per CPD cycle)
• Disinfection and Contamina-
tion (five hours per CPD cycle)
• Radiography & Radiation Pro-
duction (five hours per CPD cycle)
• Dental Emergencies (10
hours per CPD cycle)

Verifiable CPD can be gained
from other forms of learning ac-
tivity providing the following
criteria are met:
• Clear anticipated outcomes
• Concise educational aims and
objectives
• An evaluation feedback form

Verifiable CPD is saved as
proof of two of the core subjects,
which fulfills the criteria set by
the GDC to enable the practice
to issue verifiable certificates
for the time duration specific to
the training.

During this day, we will also
hold our annual appraisals at
which point a Personal De-
velopment Plan is produced. I
then ask for evidence of CPD
for the past year and give them
a CPD folder for the coming
year, which includes a study
folder containing verifiable
CPD with multiple choice an-
swers a chart to record verifi-
able and non-verifiable CPD,
ensuring that all their evidence
of non-verifiable CPD is saved.

This I feel is a win-win
situation. The practice knows
that the requirements are be-
ing met, plus the DCP gains
the appropriate hours, and can
rest assured they have fulfilled
the criteria.

I aim to hold this training
day as near to August 1 as pos-
sible, my reasons being all
staff are aware of the training
day and will have been asked
to produce evidence that their
GDC renewal for registration
has been paid for the coming
year.

Gaining new knowledge
Dental receptionists and prac-
tice managers are not required
to complete CPD; however, for
a person to develop, it is still im-
portant to gain new knowledge.
Our receptionists collect their
own CPD and record articles
they have read on subjects rel-
evant to their position.

Although this is not com-
pulsory, it provides develop-
ment. The majority of our staff,
including the nurses, have tak-
en courses on customer care,
while senior receptionists have
learned about leadership.
Care nurse co-ordinator is
the path that one of our oral
health educators has taken.
From a financial aspect, this is
the role that has created rev-
ence. The private income in-
creased by 50 per cent in the
first six months. Both oral health
educators have taken the Flu-
oride Application Course.

First Aid is a require-
ment for any registered DCP.

Knowledge is a valuable asset for all members of your practice.

Managing risk
Health and safety/risk assess-
ment in the dental practice are
both essential factors that we
all should be more aware of.
Courses for both can be held
house via an appropriate
trainer. An insight to legisla-
tion concerning Health & Safe-
ty in my opinion is a valuable
training area for all dental team
members.

First Aid is a require-
ment and each dental practice must
have its own qualified first
aider. These certificates last
for three years, but must be
retaken before expiry of certifi-
cation. This is usually a three-
day course, and it’s a good idea
to have two qualified members,
which will allow for holidays
and time off. Fire ma shall train-
ing is another useful course, but
it is not compulsory.

I went down the Diploma in
Dental Practice Management
route, followed by a further two
diplomas continuing to gain the
assessors award. It might be
a bind but team training is an
essential part to ensure a
successful business.

About the author

Jane Armitage is
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site assistance covering all aspects
of practice management with a partner
if required for managers to take their
qualification in dental practice man-
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