New, improved CPD recording system

In the sixth article on the new professional body, Lyndon Braddick, workstream lead for professional development and education, describes the Royal Pharmaceutical Society’s new improved version of its continuing professional development recording system.

Recent member feedback indicates that, although everyone is participating in continuing professional development, it is considered that too much time and effort is needed to record activities. The Royal Pharmaceutical Society has listened to members’ concerns and, in response, has improved the online recording system, making it simpler and quicker to create CPD records.

What’s new?
The new structure makes it easier and quicker to navigate the CPD system. Requesting a password and entering the system will be simpler via a new login page and, once in, users will also see fewer fields since several are now optional. This is an improvement on the current system because users will only be presented with the mandatory fields for completion. The optional fields remain hidden unless chosen via the “optional fields” tab. For example, unless “competencies” are specifically selected, they will not be visible. Another improvement is that if pharmacists do choose to use “competencies” they will only be presented with the standard list, making them more relevant to individual practice. Where competencies have been used in earlier records they will be retained.

Text changes have simplified the system’s language and users can now begin recording at any part of the CPD cycle (see Figure). If they want a quick record of something they have already learnt, they simply go to “action” and fill in just four main fields to make a record. It should be noted that, for good practice, users will need to start at “reflection” when creating some records, but even then there is only the minimum number of fields to complete. The latest version of the new CPD system can be viewed at www.uptodate.org.uk. Anyone with technical problems with the website can contact the technical helpdesk (tel 01225 383663, e-mail helpdesk@coacs.com).

CPD—everyday pharmacy practice
We hope that, as a result of improvements to the online recording system, CPD will be less likely to be seen as a chore, but become a straightforward, integral part of everyday working life. CPD is a means for pharmacists and pharmacy technicians to advance themselves as professionals, to support their career progression and to demonstrate that they continue to learn and develop. It is about learning something new and putting that learning into practice. It is also now a mandatory requirement in order to stay on the Society’s practising register, either as a pharmacy technician or as a pharmacist, and in future is likely to be an important component of revalidation.

CPD is not just about structured learning, attending learning events and courses. People are also participating in CPD when they prepare answers to queries, support peers, deal with situations or problems in the workplace, carry out audits, etc.

A document, “Your 5-minute guide to continuing professional development”, has been produced that covers what CPD is, its advantages, and some useful tips for people to develop their own CPD. The guide can be found at www.pharmacyplb.org/ProfessionalDevelopmentAndEducation.aspx.

Calling in records
Following the publication of the CPD standards earlier this year, the call-in and review of CPD records is due to begin at the end of July. The standards can be found at www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/coepsgcpd.pdf.

The CPD support team has had a number of queries about what people should do if their records are called in.

In response, we have produced some answers to the frequently asked questions; these can be found at www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/cpdpfaqs.pdf. Those with further questions can contact the CPD support team (tel 020 7572 2540, e-mail cpd@rpsgb.org).

The Society’s CPD facilitators are available to support groups of 12 or more people. Facilitators can help everyone from those who have not yet made a record to those who are unsure if their records will meet the required standards.

Requests for a facilitator to attend a local meeting can be made by filling in the request form at www.rpsgb.org/pdfs/cpdpfacrequ form.pdf.

CPD weekend workshops
The Society is running two types of CPD support workshops in collaboration with the Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education throughout July and September 2009: (i) help for those who have not yet used the CPD system or want help using online recording; and (ii) support for those who are confident recording CPD, but want to ensure the content is correct. These workshops are for all practising pharmacists and technicians in England (on the practising register) in any sector (including industry) and also for preregistration pharmacist trainees. The workshops are facilitated by a local CPPE tutor and a Society CPD facilitator. Details are at www.cppe.ac.uk. We are also working with colleagues in Wales and Scotland to see how we can offer similar CPD support to members.

In the future
As the new professional body develops there are other services and support we would like to offer members around CPD. These include:

- Informal review and feedback on CPD records before they are submitted to the regulator
- A robust system to accredit events and materials
- CPD webinars and teleseminars focusing on specific areas of pharmacy practice
- Online tutorials, case studies, reviewer checklists and support tools

Get involved
If you would like to get involved in the development of the professional body then please go to www.pharmacyplb.org and click on “Get involved”.

www.pjonline.com