



Continuing Professional Development Scheme

The importance of CPD

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the term used to describe the learning activities professionals engage in to maintain, develop and enhance their abilities and understanding. CPD helps members keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date, and ensures that the appropriate standard of their qualifications is maintained. Furthermore, it contributes to their professional sense of direction as a herbal practitioner. Undertaking CPD helps build their confidence and credibility, allows them to showcase their achievements and equips them with tools to cope positively with change. By identifying and responding to learning needs and areas of practice that would benefit from further development, members are also contributing to standards across the profession.

CPD in the Institute

Our CPD scheme aims to reflect the wide range of experience of our members, the differing ways that they practice, and their individual preferences. When approaching CPD, your choice of development activities should be relevant to your work as a herbalist, both now and in the future.

Our scheme focusses on:

- identifying areas for development
- ways to address these areas and how you anticipate your activity will benefit you
- evaluating and reflecting on the benefits of your learning activity for you, your practice and your patients or other people that you work with

The standards for continuing professional development

As a practising member of the Institute you should:

1. keep an up-to-date and accurate record of your CPD activities in whatever format is most convenient for you
2. record a range of CPD activities relevant to your needs for current or future practice
3. demonstrate that you have reflected on, planned, actioned and evaluated your development needs
4. consider how your CPD activity will have an impact on your practice and/or patients or any other work that you undertake as a herbalist

You may wish to create a personal development plan and structure your CPD activities around it. Our standards are chosen to give you the flexibility to plan your own CPD in a way that suits your work, your learning needs, your preferences, and the time and resources available to you.

What counts as CPD?

The Institute defines CPD as *"Any learning experience that can be used for the maintenance, improvement and broadening of knowledge and skills to ensure that any member is able to practise effectively, safely and legally within their evolving scope of practice. It may include both personal and professional development."*

This could include:

- conferences - attending or giving presentations



- e-learning CPD modules
- formal education, lectures, seminars, courses
- teaching
- mentoring
- peer support groups
- organising specialist groups
- reading books, journals or internet articles
- supervising or undertaking research
- TV and radio programmes
- workshops
- supervision
- work shadowing
- writing articles or papers
- case studies
- higher education (Postgraduate diploma, MSc, MPhil or PhD)
- keeping a reflective journal

If you are ever unsure of whether an activity could be CPD, then please just ask for further guidance.

How much CPD is required?

As well as taking part in formal learning opportunities, you will already be undertaking significant CPD activity in your everyday work. Researching conditions and their herbal management, reading articles and taking part in case discussions with colleagues can all count towards effective CPD.

We would suggest that all members identify at least two distinct areas or topics to be explored in their professional development each year, and can demonstrate that the appropriate educational needs have been properly addressed.

Although it is often difficult to quantify the amount of time involved, we suggest that your record of CPD activity should represent at least 20 hours of engagement with a variety of learning activities relevant to your development needs, although you do not need to record the time spent on each activity unless you wish to.

Recording your CPD:

You should record your CPD in a way that suits you. However you choose to record it, you should seek to ensure that you show:

- how you identified your learning needs and decided on what CPD activities to undertake
- the different types of learning activity you have undertaken
- how your learning has benefitted or could benefit your practice/patients/students/colleagues or others that you work with

The institute does provide a template for recording your CPD, however you do not need to use this if you have your own way of recording it.



Auditing:

To monitor outcomes of our CPD scheme, each year we undertake an audit of a random sample of member CPD records. If you are selected for audit, we will contact you and give you around six weeks to send us a copy of your CPD records.

We will then get in touch with you with the results of the audit, which may be that:

- your CPD record meets the Institute standards, or
- we need some more information from you, or
- your CPD record does not appear to meet our standards

Our approach to CPD audit will be facilitative and supportive. If you fail to meet some of the standards, we will tell you why and ask you to review and resubmit your record.

When an issue around evidencing proper engagement with CPD to the expected standard cannot be resolved after discussion, or concerns are identified about false or misleading information being included in a CPD record, the Institute may, as a last resort, need to consider taking steps to suspend or remove membership of the Institute.

In summary, our CPD scheme encourages members to continue to maintain and develop their professional skills and experience in ways that are appropriate to their identified developmental needs as herbal practitioners. By documenting their learning activities and considering their relevance and impact on their work as herbalists, members are demonstrating their commitment to engage with the professional ideals and standards of the National Institute of Medical Herbalists.

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