

Contents

Message from the President.....	2
The Purpose of CPDP	3
Participation.....	3
Confidentiality	3
Overview of the Program	3
Recording of Activities	4
Annual Submission	4
Website Submission	4
Audit Substantiation Requirements	5
Information for Users of Palm PDAs	6
How to Use the Guidelines	6

Message from the President

In 1993 the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia undertook to develop a method of documenting continuing medical education activities, for the professional benefit of the Fellows of the College.

Version 1 of the Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP) Diary was officially launched in September 1996 and distributed to Fellows on a voluntary basis from January 1997. Based on feedback from Fellows, an improved Version 2 of the Diary was released in January 1999. Unfortunately the electronic version was plagued with technical problems, so in 2001 the CPDP Subcommittee developed the simplified Continuing Professional Development Program which is currently in use.

Since that time, registering authorities, employers, indemnifiers and other external bodies are increasingly seeking proof of participation in appropriate professional development. Fellows have therefore sought further guidance from the College regarding a suitable CPD program for their individual practice. To assist Fellows in meeting increasing external demands, the Board of Education has developed the Guidelines presented in this booklet. In October 2002, Council approved the introduction of this expansion of the RCPA Continuing Professional Development Program, for implementation in the year January - December 2003 and initial submission in January 2004.

While a high degree of flexibility has been maintained in the recording of activities, the inclusion of a substantial individual quality component reflects the changing environment in which pathologists, and all medical practitioners, now practise. The Program comprises a range of activities, such that pathologists in all fields of practice should be able to meet the recommended requirements. However, your suggestions for additional activities will always be appreciated.

I commend the RCPA Continuing Professional Development Program to all Fellows.



Vince Caruso
President
October 2003

RCPA CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (CPDP)

The Purpose of CPDP

Participation in the RCPA Continuing Professional Development Program (CPDP) provides evidence of continuing medical education and of the maintenance of professional standards in the practice of pathology. Activities undertaken for continuing professional development (CPD) should reflect the Fellow's practice profile.

Participation

- The program is open to all Fellows and Affiliates of the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia.
- The College requires Fellows in active practice to participate in CPDP.
- For Fellows with dual fellowships, the other College's program will be acceptable as long as it takes into account the laboratory activity within the Fellow's practice profile. Documentary evidence of participation (as provided by the alternate college) must be submitted to the RCPA on an annual basis.
- Fellows working part time are required to complete the full number of hours.
- Fellows who do not participate in a suitable program will not be able to act as supervisors or examiners, or serve on major committees of the College.

Confidentiality

Any information you provide regarding your CPDP is strictly confidential to the College. However, it may be necessary for information to be provided to Fellows of the College who are charged with auditing CPD and revalidation. The College will manage your personal information in accordance with its Privacy Policy. If you would like to access any information we hold about you or obtain a copy of our Privacy Policy please contact our Privacy Officer on + 61 2 8356 5858.

Overview of the Program

CPDP is an hours based program requiring a minimum of 500 hours of continuing medical education and professional development activities to be undertaken over a 5 year cycle, with a maximum of 125 hours to be accredited in any one year.

You do not need to register for the Program as it is assumed that all Fellows will be participating.

Guidelines provided in this booklet indicate the type of activities which may be undertaken. These are listed in the major areas of:

- A. Group activities and meetings
- B. Personal study
- C. Quality activities

A minimum of 20 hours per annum including at least two different types of activity are to be undertaken in each of the above areas.

The guidelines are not exclusive or prescriptive. They offer suggestions for the range of activities that may be included in an appropriate, individually oriented continuing professional development program. The guidelines aim to encourage a more creative and educationally sound approach, rather than simply meeting minimum requirements. Fellows are encouraged to submit additional activities, which with the approval of the Board of Education, may be added to the list over time.

At the beginning of each calendar year, you will be asked (via *Pathology Today*) to submit a summary of your CPDP hours. Some time after the submission date the College will send you a Certificate of Participation stating:

- the hours which have been accredited under the requirements of the program (maximum 125 hours per annum), and
- the actual hours submitted.

You can provide a copy of this Certificate to your registering authority.

Recording of Activities

Any activity which has an impact on your professional development, ie updates/expands your knowledge or enhances your practice, may be recorded. Activities can be recorded in any way you choose. The College has developed a simple Excel spreadsheet (see Appendix I) which can be downloaded from the website for your convenience. This is by no means the only way to record your CPD. It is however, expected that you keep an organised record of your activities for substantiation in the event of an audit. Documentation, eg meeting programs, should be kept with your records.

The minimum data that you should be recording is:

- Date of the activity
- Topic or title of the activity
- Category to which the activity belongs (you can use the coding system in the guidelines)
- Number of effective hours (ie hours of actual benefit).

In addition, you are strongly encouraged to record the following details:

- Reference (eg journal articles, websites) or source of the activity (eg meeting organiser)
- Brief synopsis.

This will help you to follow up useful activities, and provide the substantiation needed for audit purposes.

To easily add your total hours on the Excel spreadsheet, the number format to use for your entries is **hh:mm:ss**

Annual Submission

You need to submit a summary of your CPDP hours in February of each year for activities undertaken in the previous calendar year. The College will remind you of the date and submission requirements through *Pathology Today* and on the College website.

The Summary of Continuing Professional Development form (see Appendix II) is all you need to submit at this time. It is available on the website and will be distributed with *Pathology Today* at the end of each year. The hours you submit will be entered against your record in the College's membership system.

In March/April the College will forward to you a Certificate of Participation.

Website Submission

You may also submit your annual summary via the RCPA website as follows:

- Go to www.rcpa.edu.au
- Log on to the Members' Home Page

- Go to My RCPA on the side menu bar and click on My CPD.
- Click on “CPD activities”.
- Complete the boxes as shown by tabbing through.
- Click the Submit button.
- Once your CPD has been submitted, a screen will appear advising you that the process has been completed – “CPDP activity created successfully”.

Annual Submission: CPDP

The screen below allows you to enter your own CPD submission for the previous calendar year. A certificate of participation will be sent to you after the dosing date.

Activity Type: CPDP
 Date Entered: 21/10/2003 (dd/mm/yyyy)
 Year ending 31 December: 2002
 Meeting Hrs: 36
 Personal Hrs: 54
 Please specify participation in other colleges CPD Programs: RACP (Mops)
 Quality Hours: 35
 Total Hours: 125

This box can be left empty if you are only participating in the RCPA CPD Program

Tab through to this box to total your hours automatically

Audit Substantiation Requirements

A random audit of all submissions will be undertaken each year. The audit will be targeted to a major area each year. Audit in one year does not free participants from subsequent audits.

In anticipation of an audit you are strongly encouraged to maintain a diary of activities using the College’s Record of Continuing Professional Development or your own preferred recording tool. In addition, appropriate supporting documents should be submitted.

Substantiation requirements for specific activities are indicated in the guidelines but, in general, the following types of documents would be suitable for relevant activities:

- Program, record of attendance or copy of receipt from meetings attended
- Copies of diary entries or evidence of attendance for inservice education
- Confirmation letters for lectures to be given
- References for journal readings, web searches, databases
- Reports or evaluations of projects or learning plans
- Result notification or copy of certificate of formal education
- Copy of abstract for presentations or journal articles
- Copy of timetable for lecture series
- Notes of quality activities.

You will be asked to ensure that documents provided do not contain any identifiable confidential material.

If you are participating in another College's program, you will still be subject to random audit for your laboratory component of CPD. You will be required to submit your CPD information in the RCPA activities format (ie allocated to three categories as per the Annual Summary), along with any supporting documentation. The purpose of this is to ensure that the alternate program addresses laboratory medicine.

Please note that for confidentiality purposes, any detailed records submitted to the College will only be retained for the current 12 months. You must keep your own copies of all documentation.

Information for Users of Palm PDAs

Please note that these hints have come from Fellows.
College staff cannot provide any assistance with these applications.

For PalmOS PDAs, the new version of the Palm Desktop includes the Expense database application, which can easily be adapted to provide the necessary categories for CPD recording. This is free to users of Palms.

For those who are technologically inclined, it is possible to develop a small, very simple database for use on a Palm PDA that enables recording of all the information required on the *Record of Continuing Professional Development*. The database platform is called *HanDBase* and is available for a modest fee over the internet. This then accepts a large number of applets that are freely distributed. The program also includes a PC desktop application so that information can be entered either on the Palm or on a desktop. Please refer to www.ddhsoftware.com

There is also a program called *DocumentsToGo* that allows Excel spreadsheets (and Word documents) to be shared between a desktop and a Palm PDA. It is also available via the internet at www.dataviz.com.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

How to Use the Guidelines

As you record each of your CPD activities, consider which area (meetings, personal study or quality) and then which activity is most applicable. You may find that your activity could fit into more than one category, eg a clinico-pathological meeting may also have a strong quality focus. On the other hand, you may find that your activity is not specifically listed. You do not need to be exact, just use your judgment on the closest fit.

If you regularly undertake an activity that is not on the list, the Board of Education is happy to consider adding further activities. Please email your suggestions to the CPDP Administrator at cpdp@rcpa.edu.au.

Where activities have been specified to have a limited number of hours accredited, eg 2 hours to prepare a one hour lecture, this condition has been specified for the purpose of equity. Background research for such a presentation may be included under the previous activity heading (Item 21).

Over the course of the year, you should monitor your activities to identify whether you are meeting the recommended conditions for:

- at least 20 hours in each of the three major areas and
- at least two different types of activity in each of those areas.

Why have these conditions been included in the guidelines?

You may currently prefer to learn through reading journals or attending conferences, for example, or you may work in a regional area or a smaller practice, where you do not have ready access to a variety of educational or professional development activities. While research has not directly linked CPD with competence, it is widely believed that greater practice improvement arises from more individualised and active forms of CPD. The College is therefore encouraging Fellows to take a wider view of CPD.

In addition, the guidelines have been prepared with a view to the future demands of revalidation, which is likely to include a mandatory form of CPD, including quality activities.

A code for each activity has been included for ease of recording.

SECTION A: Group Activities/Meetings

A	GROUP ACTIVITIES/ MEETINGS	NOTES	SUBSTANTIATION
CODE	Minimum 20 hours per annum Activities to be undertaken in at least 2 categories in this section		
1	Practice based professional development or educational activities		Record entry of topic, date & duration
2	Multi-disciplinary clinical meetings, grand rounds, clinico-pathological correlations		Record entry of date & duration
3	Small group learning/journal club		Record entry of topic, date & duration
4	Local, national or international conferences, courses, seminars, workshops and forums	It is recommended Fellows attend at least 2 special society/College meetings in a 5 year cycle. * Refer to the criteria below for acceptable meetings.	Certificate of attendance or copy of tax invoice
5	Participation on committees related to clinical governance	Drug, biosafety, ethics, infection control etc	Committee terms of reference; record of meeting times (this should not include agendas or minutes of meetings)
6	Other	Specify	

* Category 4:

Acceptable meetings are those which:

- Are organised by a medical college, special society, health or educational institution, or other recognised body.
- Have education, skills development or professional practice improvement as their primary purpose.
- Are ethically and professionally based.
- Include topics relevant to the Fellow's practice of pathology.

SECTION B: Personal Study

B	PERSONAL STUDY	NOTES	SUBSTANTIATION
CODE	Minimum 20 hours per annum Activities to be undertaken in at least 2 categories of this section		
21	Journal and text book reading or internet literature search undertaken in day to day practice, or in preparation for teaching, presentations or publications.	Only the period of actual learning should be included.	Record of date & duration Statement of topic or reference
22	Teaching/lecture preparation	Maximum 2 hours per hour of presentation accredited	Confirmation letter or notices for lectures to be given
23	Presentation or poster at a scientific meeting	Maximum 3 hours per presentation accredited.	Confirmation letter
24	Reviewing articles or scientific papers, grant applications	Internationally recognised journals or research grants. Maximum 1 hour per article/paper/application accredited.	Letter of request
25	Publications – journal articles, chapters or monographs	Maximum 3 hours per paper/chapter accredited.	Reference
26	Writing Assessment Modules		Copy of module
27	Implementation of a learning plan/project	* Refer to the explanation below.	Copy of plan
28	Web based or similar learning / self assessment programs		Copy of program or an outline
29	Laboratory visit for development of skills, techniques or management	Maximum 6 hours per day accredited.	Letter of arrangement
30	Slide reviews, in preparation for Meetings		Statement of topic & duration
31	Formal study - tertiary courses, education programs, distance learning, eg management programs	Recognised educational institution. Relevant for the practice of pathology.	Confirmation of enrolment or results
32	Other	Specify	

* Category 27:

A learning plan or project involves the identification of a specific and substantial learning need and the development of a plan to meet that need. Eg, the plan for learning a new laboratory technique may include literature search, visiting another laboratory for skill acquisition, and a quality assurance activity to assess your performance of the new skill.

SECTION C: Quality Activities

C	QUALITY ACTIVITIES	NOTES	SUBSTANTIATION
CODE	Minimum 20 hours per annum Activities to be undertaken in at least 2 categories of this section		
51	Participation as an RCPA Examiner		Letter of invitation
52	Participation in quality activities, including QAP or self-assessment programs		Confirmation from Department head of participation
53	Development of a QA activity		Non-confidential notes of activity
54	Laboratory visit for benchmarking purposes.		Confirmation of arrangements
55	Membership of a QA committee		Terms of reference, date & duration Record of meeting times
56	Participation in peer review or laboratory audit, including NATA inspections and ACHS surveys		Meeting schedule
57	Participation in national quality activities, eg National Institute of Clinical Studies, Australian Patient Safety and Quality Foundation		Correspondence from the organisation
58	Participation in incident monitoring, eg Key Incident Monitoring and Management System		Non-confidential notes of activity
59	Clinical or case audit, including slide review		Record of topic & duration
60	Preparation for expert witness or presentation of forensic evidence in court		Correspondence from the requestor
61	Other	Specify	

SUMMARY OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For the Year Ending 31 December 200 _____

Full Name: _____ **RCPA Id No.** _____

If you are participating in another College's program, please specify: _____

Please specify your discipline and main areas of practice:

Type of Activity	Hours	Total Hours
Meetings		
Personal Study		
Quality Activities		

*I certify that the information provided is a true and accurate record of my continuing professional development activities undertaken during the year ended 31 December 20 _____
I understand that my detailed records may be requested for a random audit.*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Any information you provide is strictly confidential to the College. However, it may be necessary for the College to provide information on your continuing professional development to College committees and Fellows of the College who are involved with CPD and revalidation. The College will manage your personal information in accordance with its Privacy Policy. If you would like to access any information we hold about you or obtain a copy of our Privacy Policy please contact our Privacy Officer on + 61 2 8356 5858. PLEASE SIGN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ONLY

I hereby consent to the RCPA providing relevant and necessary information as above.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

I DO NOT consent to the RCPA providing relevant and necessary information as above.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please return this form to the College by 28 February for your CPDP in the previous calendar year.
Fax to: +61 2 8356 5828 Email to: cpdp@rcpa.edu.au
Mail to: 207 Albion Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010