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# Principles for continuing professional development and lifelong learning in health and social care

Prepared by:  
The Interprofessional CPD and Lifelong Learning  
UK Working Group



NEXT



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## DEFINITIONS

### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

The way in which you continue to learn and develop throughout your career. CPD is essential. It adds to your skills, knowledge, professional identity and ways of thinking so that you stay up to date and practise safely and effectively, now and in the future.

### **Lifelong learning**

Formal and informal learning opportunities that allow you to continuously develop and improve the knowledge and skills you need for employment and personal fulfilment.

### **Service user**

Anyone who uses or is affected by your services, for example, patients, clients, carers, families, students, volunteers, staff members or colleagues.

### **Wider system**

Any group or organisation that supports, provides the resources for or governs the health and social care workforce, for example, UK administrations, professional bodies and associations, service user groups, trade unions, other service providers and regulators.

### **Health and social care workforce**

Everyone who works in the health and social care workforce, including in research, education, leadership, management and clinical practice. This covers all sectors and settings, both public and private and across the community.



## INTRODUCTION

The principles outlined in this document have been agreed by the organisations represented within the Interprofessional Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group (Membership list – Appendix A).

This document replaces the 'Joint statement on CPD for health and social care practitioners' published in 2007.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and lifelong learning are necessary for the development of everyone who works in health and social care and for the experience of service users. CPD and lifelong learning support a workforce that is capable of designing, delivering, evaluating and improving high-quality care and services.

The principles set out in this document should be applied across the health and social care workforce in all sectors, to support CPD and lifelong learning. Registered health and social care professionals also have a responsibility to meet the standards of their regulatory or professional body.

### **CPD and lifelong learning are each person's responsibility. Also:**

professional bodies and trade unions have a shared responsibility to promote CPD and lifelong learning to their members and provide guidance to support the highest standards of practice;

employers have a responsibility to support you to take part in CPD and lifelong learning in line with regulatory, professional and UK health and social care system requirements (as well as any statutory and compulsory training requirements); and

the wider system has a responsibility to promote and support fair access to CPD and lifelong learning opportunities as part of planning, developing and investing in a workforce.

***By working together, the benefits will be felt across services and improve care and delivery.***



## THE PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

CPD and lifelong learning drive improvement in how services are delivered and how the workforce is developed. This document sets out five high-level principles for the health and social care workforce across the UK and is designed for individuals, employers and the wider system.

You should use these principles alongside professional and regulatory standards. They are relevant to everybody who works in health and social care, and we encourage all organisations to follow them.

## THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

CPD and lifelong learning should:

- 1 Principle 1:** be each person's responsibility and be made possible and supported by your employer;
- 2 Principle 2:** benefit service users;
- 3 Principle 3:** improve the quality of service delivery;
- 4 Principle 4:** be balanced and relevant to each person's area of practice or employment; and
- 5 Principle 5:** be recorded and show the effect on each person's area of practice.

These principles reflect shared responsibilities for:

**you** to recognise and demonstrate the effect of CPD and lifelong learning on practice (see reference 1 on page 14);

**your employer** (if this applies) to actively invest in people and provide opportunities for CPD and lifelong learning; and

**the wider system** to support the health and social care workforce and improve the safety and quality of services by investing in and developing the workforce.



## THE IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF CPD AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Service users expect individuals and teams to have and use up-to-date knowledge, understanding and skills appropriate to their area of practice.

The health and social care workforce operates in a constantly changing, challenging and complex environment. Developing new knowledge, skills and ways of thinking will help you to accept new and flexible ways of working which are based on evidence, and contribute to improving services. To do this, there needs to be investment in effective, supported and quality CPD and lifelong learning for everybody.

A shared commitment to developing a well-resourced and effective workforce will improve the quality of service delivery, improve outcomes and reduce risk. The table below lists the benefits of CPD and lifelong learning to **you, service users and organisations**.

Encourages a positive learning culture
Improves skills, knowledge, and ways of thinking and working
Makes you feel valued, motivated and confident
Develops your career and helps you to move between sectors and roles
Makes you feel able to drive change and innovation
Means you remain fit to practise and meet regulatory body standards (including codes of conduct)
Keeps you up to date with changing technology and service demands
Improves experience and outcomes
Makes you feel safe and confident in the services provided
Increases satisfaction with services
Contributes to up-to-date and evidence-based services
Influences service development
Improves the quality of service delivery
Supports recruitment, keeping staff, and creating a flexible workforce
Adds to the mix of skills and productivity of staff
Improves performance
Contributes to improving standards of safety



# 1

**Principle 1:** CPD and lifelong learning should be each person's responsibility and be made possible and supported by your employer

You	fi  fi fi
Your employer	fi
The wider system	





2

**Principle 2:** CPD and lifelong learning should benefit service users

You	
Your employer	
The wider system	fi



3

**Principle 3:** CPD and lifelong learning should improve the quality of service delivery

You	
Your employer	
The wider system	fi



4

**Principle 4:** CPD and lifelong learning should be balanced and relevant to each person's area of practice or employment

You	
Your employer	
The wider system	

fl



5

**Principle 5:** CPD and lifelong learning should be recorded and show the effect on each person's area of practice

You	fi
Your employer	
The wider system	



## SUMMARY

This document continues a journey to develop and improve CPD and lifelong learning within the broader health and social care workforce. The principles will help to guide you, your employer and the wider system to encourage a culture of continuous improvement and workforce development for the benefit of those who use our services.

We will evaluate the effect of these principles to continue supporting the health and social care workforce with CPD and lifelong learning.



## REFERENCES

1. Health and Care Professions Council (2015). Our Rules for How Health and Care Professionals Behave. Available at: <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004EE2Ourreulesforhowhealthandcareprofessionalsbehave.pdf> Accessed 29 May 2018.
2. NHS Education for Scotland. (2012). Pillars of Practice. Available at: <http://www.careerframework.nes.scot.nhs.uk/using-the-framework/pillars-of-practice> Accessed 29 May 2018

## FURTHER RESOURCES

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Health & Care Professions Council. (2015). Preventing small problems from becoming big problems in health and care. (2015) London, HCPC. <http://www.hcpc-uk.org/assets/documents/10004A7EPreventingSmallProblemsFromBecomingBigProblemsInHealthAndCare.pdf>

The European Hospital and Healthcare Employers Association - European Public Service Union (2016) Joint Declaration on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Life-Long Learning (LLL) for All Health Workers in the EU. <http://hospeem.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Final-Joint-Declaration-CPDLLL-08.11.2016-EN.pdf>

## APPENDIX A

### - LIST OF ORGANISATIONS ENDORSING THIS RESOURCE



College of Paramedics



Allied Health Professions  
Federation Scotland



The Royal College of Speech  
and Language Therapists

Royal Pharmaceutical Society



College of Operating  
Department Practitioners



British and Irish Orthoptic  
Society



The Society and College of  
Radiographers



The British Psychological  
Society



British Association of Art  
Therapists



Royal College of Nursing



Chartered Society of  
Physiotherapy



UNISON

## APPENDIX A

### - LIST OF ORGANISATIONS ENDORSING THIS RESOURCE



The Royal College of Midwives



The British Association of  
Prosthetists and Orthotists



Institute of Biomedical Science



British Dietetic Association

Association of Clinical  
Scientists



British Association for Music  
Therapy



Unite the union



Royal College of Occupational  
Therapists







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Share your thoughts on how you use these principles with us via Twitter

**#CPDTogether**

**Reference:** Broughton W and Harris G. (2022) (Eds.) on behalf of the Interprofessional CPD and Lifelong Learning UK Working Group. Principles for Continuing Professional Development and Lifelong Learning in Health and Social Care. Bridgwater: College of Paramedics.