



Continuing Professional Development Guidelines

12 October 2011

Introduction

The Osteopathy Board of Australia (OBA) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) guidelines were adapted from guidelines developed by the General Osteopathic Council in the United Kingdom. The Board expects the guidelines will evolve over time. The OBA will take note of any new or evolving CPD approaches and audit requirements and will work with all stakeholders to modify and update the guidelines as appropriate.

Continuing Professional Development is undertaken with the aim of maintaining and enhancing your professional work.

It is a pathway to forming knowledge, the basis of future development and career progression. Identifying strengths and weaknesses, CPD is about dedicating the time to look at where you are, where you want to be and how you are going to get there.

It is an important part of professional life to continue to learn and develop, to maintain and enhance professional standards of practice. This is especially important for healthcare professionals whose actions may have direct consequences for their patients.

This guideline has been developed by the Osteopathy Board of Australia under section 39 of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act* (National Law) as in force in each state and territory. The guideline supplements the requirements set out in the Board's Continuing Professional Development registration standard. Under section 41 of the National Law, guidelines are admissible in proceedings under this Law as evidence of what constitutes professional conduct or practice for the health profession.

Who needs to use these guidelines?

These guidelines are developed to provide guidance to registered health practitioners or those seeking to become registered health practitioners in the osteopathy profession. It applies to all registered osteopaths, except those with non-practising registration, and in some circumstances, osteopaths with limited registration. These guidelines do not apply to students.

Here we provide an outline of the CPD scheme and guidance on meeting the requirements. Although it is extremely difficult to produce succinct guidelines that address everyone's concerns, the OBA hopes this document will help you in making CPD an integral and valued aspect of your professional work as an osteopath.

If you have any queries about these guidelines, please email an [online enquiry form](#) from the AHPRA website and select 'Board matters' from the drop down menu, or phone 1300 419 495 to speak to AHPRA staff in your state or territory.

Executive summary

The Board is phasing in its CPD requirements. Osteopaths who apply for registration or apply to renew after 1 July 2012, will have to sign a declaration that they met the CPD requirements in the previous 12 months and comply with the requirements.

When they apply to renew their registration each year, osteopaths will have to sign a declaration of compliance with CPD for the previous 12 months (ie from 1 December to 30 November).

In effect, when *most* osteopaths apply to renew their registration by 30 November 2012, it will be the first time that they will have to declare that they have met the Board's CPD requirements in the previous 12 months (ie from 1 December 2011 to 30 November 2012). This CPD requirement is: 25 hours CPD, including four hours undertaking mandatory topics approved by the Board; plus a current senior first aid certificate.

The Board may refuse to renew registration if an osteopath has not met the CPD requirements. From 2012, the Board will also conduct a random annual audit of CPD compliance on a sample of registered osteopaths.

Osteopaths must maintain an up-to-date portfolio of CPD activities undertaken – a CPD Record Folder – and the portfolio must be retained for three years. All activities included in the CPD Record Folder must be fully described, so that the type of activity, the subject/topic of the activity, the purpose and number of hours are clearly evident to any reviewer.

Osteopaths do not have to be a member of a professional body to meet the Board's CPD requirements. They can provide their own portfolio that provides evidence of self-directed CPD undertaken. Alternatively, an osteopath may choose to be a member of a professional body and meet the Board's CPD requirements by completing the professional body's courses and programs. It is recommended that at least eight hours is spent learning with others.

There are two aspects to CPD which are specific to the osteopathy profession and must be undertaken each year, as required by the Board.

Firstly, osteopaths must maintain a current first aid certificate at the minimum standard of a Senior First Aid (level 2) certificate or equivalent which is updated every three years, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months. This is a stand-alone annual requirement and does not count towards the total of 25 hours of CPD learning.

Secondly, in each CPD cycle of 12 months, osteopaths will be required to complete a minimum of four hours related to one or more of the following mandatory topics:

- Osteopathy Board of Australia registration standards, codes and guidelines and overview of the National Law
- risk management
- record keeping
- informed consent
- effective communication
- professional boundaries
- confidentiality and privacy.

The Board may grant an exemption to the CPD requirements when there is compelling evidence that exceptional circumstances have created a significant obstacle to the osteopath's ability to complete the Board's CPD requirements. The Board will consider each case individually, on merit and may allow a full or partial exemption.

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01 What is continuing professional development?

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is a term used to describe activities undertaken to maintain, enhance and develop existing knowledge and skills after completing a professional qualification.

For the purpose of the Osteopathy Board of Australia (OBA), CPD is defined as any learning undertaken by an osteopath – such as lectures, seminars, courses, practical sessions, individual study or other activities – that can reasonably be expected to advance their professional development or contribute to the development of osteopathy. An important aspect is that this learning should be applied to your professional work.

We all have different backgrounds and learning experiences, and you are best placed to identify your own professional strengths and weaknesses, knowledge and skills gaps, and short- and long-term goals. You are also the best person to decide how to address these through setting your own professional aims and objectives. CPD offers an opportunity to take time to look at where you are currently in your professional life, where you want to be in the future, and how you are going to achieve this.

1.1 Why should I undertake CPD?

Benefits for patients:

- Improvement in the quality of the osteopathic care provided, arising from the continuing enhancement of the osteopath's knowledge and skills
- Reassurance that the osteopath is keeping up to date with practice
- Increasing confidence in the professional abilities of the osteopath, leading to improved patient/practitioner relationships.

Benefits for you:

- Greater esteem for the profession in the eyes of the public and other healthcare professionals, leading to an increase in patient numbers both directly or by referral
- An opportunity to focus on and plan your career
- Evidence of continuing competence and key achievements
- Development of new knowledge and skills
- Improved professional relationships with osteopathic colleagues and other professionals
- Increased job satisfaction
- Greater awareness of developments in the field of osteopathy.

Benefits for the osteopathic profession:

- Greater sense of professional awareness
- Potential improvement in the cohesion of the profession
- A demonstration to the public that osteopaths take seriously the enhancement of quality and safety in patient care.

02 CPD – the key points

A brief summary of the key points of the CPD process is provided below.

2.1 Ensure you are aware of your CPD requirements

The Board's CPD registration standard requires all registered osteopaths (except those with non-practising registration, and in some circumstances osteopaths with limited registration) to undertake the following CPD activities:

- a) a minimum of 25 hours of CPD in each annual registration period including a mandatory CPD activity approved by the Board and
- b) a nationally recognised course in first aid, resulting in the maintenance of a current first aid certificate at the minimum standard of a Senior First Aid (level 2) certificate or equivalent to be updated every three years, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months.

These guidelines do not apply to students.

Applicants who are registered part-way through a registration period must complete six hours of CPD for every three months of registration remaining in the registration period, plus maintain a current Senior First Aid (level 2) certificate or equivalent, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months.

2.2 You must complete your CPD requirement in the specified period

If you suspect you will be unable to meet these requirements for any good reason, you should contact the OBA as soon as possible for advice. Any request for a reduction or waiver of CPD requirements must be submitted in writing. These requests are considered on an individual basis and you should not assume that reduction or waiver is automatic.

2.3 Ensure you keep a record of your CPD activities, in your CPD Record Folder

All osteopaths must maintain an up-to-date record folder of CPD activities undertaken. The record folder must be retained for three years.

2.4 Complete your annual declaration of compliance

When applying for re-registration at each renewal date from 30 November 2012, osteopaths will be required to sign a declaration that confirms that they have complied with the CPD registration standard for the preceding 12 months.

2.5 CPD is a requirement of your registration

Under section 128 of the National Law, failure to comply with the CPD requirements as stated in the registration standard may constitute behaviour for which health, conduct or performance action may be taken.

If the Board finds, through declaration or audit, that an osteopath has not met the CPD requirements, it may:

- require the osteopath to undergo an assessment and/or
- require the osteopath to undertake further CPD or supervised practice, and/or
- impose conditions on the osteopath's registration, and/or
- instigate disciplinary proceedings.

An osteopath who knowingly makes a false declaration may be considered by the Board to have engaged in unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct and, as such, may be managed by the Board through the disciplinary mechanisms available under the National Law. These mechanisms include sanctions ranging from cautioning or reprimanding the registrant to cancellation of the practitioner's registration by a tribunal.

2.6 You may be requested by the OBA to submit a copy of the evidence contained in your CPD Record Folder

Audited practitioners will be required to submit to the Board evidence of their compliance with the Continuing Professional Development registration standard.

03 The CPD requirements

3.1 Who is required to undertake CPD?

All registered osteopaths (except those with non-practising registration and in some circumstances osteopaths with limited registration) must undertake CPD. These guidelines do not apply to students. It is important that you maintain and enhance your professional work as an osteopath, whether or not you are in full-time practice.

3.2 Who is exempt from the CPD Requirements?

The Board may grant an exemption from the CPD requirements in exceptional circumstances such as extended illness or bereavement.

Osteopaths seeking exemption must apply in writing as soon as they realise they have issues meeting the CPD registration standard, and provide valid supporting documentation with their application. All applications for exemptions will be determined on a case by case basis.

3.3 How much CPD am I required to complete?

The Board's Continuing Professional Development registration standard requires all registered osteopaths (except those with non-practising registration and in some circumstances osteopaths with limited registration) to undertake the following CPD activities to comply with the Board's CPD registration standard:

- a) a minimum of 25 hours of CPD in each annual registration period including a mandatory CPD activity approved by the Board and
- b) a course in first aid, resulting in the maintenance of a current first aid certificate at the minimum standard of a Senior First Aid (level 2) certificate or equivalent to be updated every three years, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months.

These guidelines do not apply to students.

Applicants who are registered partway through a registration period must complete six hours of CPD for every three months of registration remaining in the registration period, plus maintain a current Senior First Aid (level 2) certificate or equivalent, with the CPR component being updated every 12 months.

The mandatory CPD activity approved by the Board is that a minimum of four hours of your CPD must be related to one or more of the mandatory topics determined by the Board.

3.4 What activities are acceptable for CPD?

Mandatory topics

In accordance with information collated by the Australian Osteopathic Association, which is consistent with the experience of the previous state and territory osteopaths registration boards, the claims and complaints experience in osteopathy over a five year period to 2011 was generally as follows:

- 28% relate to injury exacerbation
- 6.5% relate to allegations of cervical injuries
- 6% relate to alleged fractures, primarily of the ribs
- 4% relate to inappropriate conduct
- 4% relate to breaches of privacy
- 8% relate to registration board matters leading to a civil claim

Other claims included a range of issues including general dissatisfaction with care, misleading advertising, falls from equipment and allegations of negligent treatment.

A common theme running through many of the complaint and claims matters is the issue of inadequacy of communication at various levels, including pre-care and history taking, and in record

keeping. Accordingly, these inadequacies frequently result in problems of informed consent to treatment.

In each CPD cycle of 12 months, osteopaths will be required to complete a minimum of four hours related to one or more of the following mandatory topics:

- Osteopathy Board of Australia registration standards, codes and guidelines and overview of the National Law
- risk management
- record keeping
- informed consent
- effective communication
- professional boundaries
- confidentiality and privacy.

From time to time the Board will review these topics and may adjust this list as a result.

Providers offering CPD relating to these mandatory topics will be expected to identify learning objectives and provide a method of external or self-assessment. The structure, content and learning objectives of educational programs relating to mandatory topics will be determined by the CPD provider. The Osteopathy Board of Australia does not accredit CPD providers or courses.

Other CPD

All CPD undertaken should be relevant to your professional work as an osteopath. The responsibility to choose CPD that is beneficial to your practice lies with you. Use your professional judgement to decide what is appropriate. The OBA may audit your compliance with the CPD registration standard to ensure you meet those requirements.

It is recommended that a minimum of eight hours of your CPD fall within the category *Learning with others*. There is no minimum requirement for *Learning by oneself*, which means that you may choose to complete the full 25 hours with the mandatory activity plus activities that fall within the category *Learning with others*.

To this end, you are encouraged to spend some time identifying your own aims and objectives for CPD. You may wish to address areas of relative weakness in your professional work as an osteopath, or enhance existing skills, pursue career goals or professional interests, and/or contribute to activities intended to benefit the profession as a whole. Please refer to Section 4.1 *Reviewing, reflecting and identifying your CPD learning needs*, page 13 for further details.

You may find it useful to focus on issues which are commonly the subject of notifications, such as informed consent and communication.

The CPD scheme allows flexibility to choose from a wide range of CPD activities, but it is important that these are suited to your needs. Table 1 on page 9 offers examples of CPD activities you may wish to consider.

The different forms which the recommended format of *Learning with others* can take are very wide and include: courses; lectures, discussion/seminar groups and conferences; being coached or mentored by another health professional; and peer group reviews.

The CPD scheme for osteopaths is flexible, but in claiming CPD hours you should consider the following:

Hours claimed

The number of hours you claim for CPD activities should be reasonable. The OBA may ask for evidence of the length of the activity if the hours claimed for an activity appears to be exaggerated or unreasonable, such as excessive hours claimed for reading a brief article. It is not acceptable to include travel time to and from a course in CPD hours claimed.

Level of CPD activity

Consider carefully the level of a CPD activity you plan to undertake. Do not select activities that are unlikely to consolidate or enhance your existing knowledge and skills. When *Learning with others*, the knowledge level of the other person/people involved in the interaction should be appropriate for the activity being completed. For example, if you discuss anatomy with a patient who does not possess anatomical knowledge, this is likely to be a very limited learning and development opportunity for you.

Similarly, when using reference materials such as books, scientific papers, journals, websites, etc., consider the appropriateness of the level and the audience that they are aimed at.

Proportion and range of CPD activities

Consider the proportion and range of the CPD activities you undertake. Ultimately the purpose of CPD is to maintain and improve your professional ability as an osteopath. While there are a wide range of skills that help you to achieve this, the main focus of your CPD should be osteopathy. Therefore, you should try to ensure a balance with other activities within a registration year and over the period of a number of years. For example, if you undertake a course in record-keeping in a registration year, you should try to balance this with something that focuses more on an osteopathic skill.

CPD is also meant to help develop an osteopath as a whole across the range of their professional work, so continual focus on one narrow aspect of practice every year will not meet the purpose of the registration standard.

Table 1 – Examples of CPD activities

The information in the following table is a guide and is not intended to be a definitive list.

Table 1 – Examples of CPD activities

CPD Activity	Description	Learning category	Examples of evidence for your CPD Record folder
Structured osteopathic training courses	Osteopathic training that benefits your professional practice	With others	Certificate or other proof of attendance, study notes
Structured non-osteopathic training courses	Training in non-osteopathic subjects that will advance your professional work as an osteopath	With others	Certificate or other proof of attendance, study notes
Lectures	Attending lectures related to your professional work as an osteopath	With others	Proof of attendance, lecture notes
Group or practice meetings	Discussion focused on a specific area of practice with clinical relevance	With others	A declaration of attendance or meeting notes signed by you
Higher education	Further qualifications such as Bachelor of Science, Masters of Science, PhD or post-graduate diploma	With others or by oneself	You need to indicate how specific sections of your course of study advance your professional work as an osteopath. Study notes, research and other material produced in relation to this course should be included in your CPD Record Folder.
Teaching/mentoring/ Tutorials	Production of educational materials such as lesson plans and lecture notes, which have advanced your own professional work as an osteopath, group discussion	By oneself or with others	Copy of educational materials produced. Record of discussions
Publishing	Production of a publication in relation to your professional work as an osteopath	By oneself or with others	Copy of article, paper, journal, book
Distance learning	Learning delivered using means such as correspondence, television, telephone, email, internet, webcast, webinars etc	By oneself or with others	Certificate or other proof of completion, study notes
Reading and reviewing publications	Reading and reviewing articles, papers, journals and books in relation to your professional work as an osteopath	By oneself	Review of text, summary notes or evidence of practical application
Internet research	Research conducted via the internet in relation to your professional work as an osteopath	By oneself	Review of text, summary notes or evidence of practical application

3.5 How to decide whether a CPD activity is acceptable

Even with the best CPD schemes, there will be some uncertainty as to what is considered an acceptable activity. In this section we offer some specific examples that may help you in planning your future CPD.

Delivery or enhancement of skills

If the activity simply involves the delivery of your professional knowledge and skills in your work as an osteopath, for example treating patients or delivering a lecture, this will not be acceptable for CPD purposes. If the activity is deliberately chosen to enhance or develop your professional knowledge and skills this is likely to be acceptable as CPD.

Time spent planning and recording CPD

The time you spend selecting, planning and recording your CPD does not count towards your annual requirement of 25 hours. Nor will the time spent compiling your CPD Record Folder and completing your *CPD Annual Declaration*.

Teaching and/or research

Teaching within the osteopathic arena will not automatically count towards CPD and will depend on the type of development involved. Direct development – through discussion and debate with colleagues, the sourcing and preparation of new lecture material, teacher training programmes and involvement in research – constitutes an appropriate form of CPD.

Indirect learning – for example, the development of communication and educational skills arising from the repetitive practice of delivering lectures, tutoring and mentoring – does not fulfil the purpose of this scheme and will not be accepted as CPD.

This type of learning can be said to arise also from osteopathic practice, where the continued and repetitive delivery of osteopathic treatment might be said to improve osteopathic skills in a similar way. Nevertheless, this form of development is not sufficient to qualify as CPD.

It is important to be clear about the purpose and time spent on teaching and/or research activities. Ill-defined claims for CPD hours, for example assuming that a certain percentage of your teaching hours must count towards CPD, will not be sufficient.

Long-term study

If you are currently undertaking a formal course of long-term study, for example, a Masters of Science (MSc) programme, you may count your study hours towards your CPD requirement. You must however demonstrate how your study has been beneficial to the maintenance and development of your professional work as an osteopath. When recording such activities in your *CPD Record Folder*, you should identify specific areas of your study that count towards your CPD and list them separately, including the number of hours spent on each area.

Reading and research undertaken by oneself

While the scheme is flexible enough to allow the inclusion of private study, such as reading articles and research papers, these should be clearly focused activities. Ill-defined claims are not acceptable. When including reading and research activities within your programme of CPD, you are expected to explain your aim and the value of this to your professional development. The level of the activity is also important to consider. For example, *Osteo Life* (the newsletter of the Australian Osteopathic Association) is not primarily a CPD journal; therefore it would not be acceptable to claim CPD hours for reading it each month, without referencing the appropriate articles that would count towards your CPD.

You should also bear in mind that some form of evidence is required for your CPD Record Folder. This could be notes taken during research, a written evaluation of reading material (using the *Evaluating your CPD activities* form, for example – see Section 7) or a list of reference material that you have read.

Promotional and business activities

You may claim CPD hours for activities related to the development of business and promotional skills relevant to your work as an osteopath. However, the act of promoting your business itself would not be considered CPD. For example, while a course on the use of advertising for small businesses could count as CPD, the time spent in designing and placing advertisements for your business would not qualify. Similarly, business activities such as staff interviews, typing up patient records, conducting staff appraisal, meetings with accountants, etc. are regarded as part of your daily work and do not qualify as CPD.

Professional or personal development?

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between those activities undertaken for personal development and those that are primarily professional development. Ask yourself whether you are undertaking the activity *primarily* to enhance your professional development and to benefit your practice and patients – or is the link more tenuous? For example, personal exercise/fitness classes, meditation classes, driving lessons and language courses would not be considered acceptable for professional development.

Social and recreational occasions

You will need to consider very carefully whether a social/recreational occasion adequately fulfils the appropriate level of learning and development activity for CPD purposes. If you do include such occasions, you will need to state clearly what learning you gained from the experience and claim only a reasonable number of hours. Vague claims, such as *'general discussion with osteopathic colleagues at professional association social event'* or *'observing from an osteopathic perspective my child playing football'* and similar, are not considered acceptable for CPD purposes.

Undertaking CPD for more than one healthcare profession

If you are registered in two professions and undertake CPD activities to meet the requirements of another healthcare profession, such as medicine, this may count towards your osteopathic CPD requirement so long as you can demonstrate that you are meeting the requirements for both professions and that these activities are beneficial to the maintenance and development of your professional work as an osteopath.

OBA Conditional Practice Order

If the OBA has imposed conditions on your registration that stipulates the participation in specific activities to enhance your practice, you will be able to count the hours spent in these towards your CPD requirement.

3.6 Accreditation of CPD activities

The OBA does not accredit CPD activities, such as training courses and lectures. The OBA's view is that accrediting CPD is complex and resource intensive and has the effect of limiting the range of available training and significantly raising attendance costs.

As a general guide when selecting CPD activities such as training courses and lectures, you might consider the following points:

- Is the activity relevant to your professional work as an osteopath?

- Does the activity have clear learning aims and objectives that meet your own requirements?
- The standards, qualifications and reputation of the training provider
- The qualifications, background and reputation of the speaker or lecturer
- The cost of the activity and whether it represents a good investment in your practise
- How is the quality of the activity monitored? Are you invited to provide feedback in order that the activity can be improved in the future?

3.7 What evidence of CPD must I provide?

All osteopaths will be expected to provide evidence that they have met their annual CPD requirements. This will include an annual declaration of compliance and the maintenance of a CPD Record Folder.

All activities included in the *CPD Record Folder* must be fully described, so that the type of activity (eg. course, reading, etc.) and the subject/topic of the activity is clearly evident to any reviewer. The OBA will not accept vague references on the form with regard to activities. There should be a clear purpose to the activity, and the number of hours spent should be clearly specified. For example, it would not be sufficient for osteopaths to simply claim two hours per year for reading *Osteo Life* (the newsletter of the Australian Osteopathic Association). The OBA requires reference to specific articles that have helped to inform practice. Similarly, practice meetings should have a clear purpose and a reasonable number of hours for each occasion should be clearly specified on the form.

It is not necessary to detail all of the CPD you complete during your registration year. Although most osteopaths will exceed the minimum requirement for CPD, the OBA only requires that practitioners declare that the minimum requirement has been met (25 hours of CPD that includes four hours of the mandatory topics).

CPD Record Folder

This is your main record of CPD and should be maintained in a suitably organised manner, in an electronic or paper format. Records should be in chronological order and easily accessible should the OBA wish to see them or should they be required for audit.

Each year, the OBA will sample a number of CPD Record Folders to verify that there was a sound basis for your annual declaration of compliance with CPD requirements. If requested, you will need to provide either an electronic or paper copy of your folder – information on how to do this will be provided by the OBA at the time.

The OBA may request to view your CPD Record Folder for up to three years after completion. Therefore, you will need to retain your CPD records for a minimum of three years.

It is important that you retain detailed notes for any activity you are including in your *CPD Record Folder* where verification is not straightforward, in case your folder is requested. For example, for group/practice meetings you will need to produce the minutes/notes of the meeting or produce a certificate listing all the topics covered, signed by the attendees.

Complying with the Board's CPD registration standard is not intended to be onerous in terms of administration. You will simply have to retain notes and evidence of CPD and submit the *CPD Declaration of compliance* once a year when you renew your annual registration.

Other forms included in the CPD Guidelines are there to guide you through the process from reviewing your CPD learning needs, through planning and evaluation. While it is strongly recommended that you make use of these forms, it is not compulsory. If you wish to use your own methods/documentation for recording the relevance of CPD activities then you may do so.

3.8 Deferral or waiver of the requirements

The OBA has the power to defer or waive CPD requirements under special circumstances. If your situation prevents you from completing your CPD requirement, you must contact the OBA at the earliest opportunity to inform us of this. Each case will be considered on an individual basis.

Bereavement, divorce and maternity leave are examples of circumstances that may prevent you from meeting your CPD requirements. All circumstances will be considered on their individual merit.

04 Managing your CPD?

To ensure that CPD successfully contributes to effective professional learning and development, learning activities should ideally be:

- planned on the basis of an identified learning need
- prioritised
- relevant to the individual osteopath
- related to osteopathic professional standards and
- realistic and achievable.

A structured approach to managing your CPD is advised, and a suggested method which may help you to achieve this is outlined below.

4.1 Reviewing, reflecting and identifying your CPD learning needs

Where am I now?

Before you embark on any CPD, take time to consider the stage you are at in your professional life. Consider the following questions:

- Where am I now in my professional life and what have I already achieved?
- What are my strengths and what areas do I need to develop further?
- What challenges in my professional work as an osteopath have I found difficult and not fully addressed?
- What development of my knowledge and skills would enhance my practise as an osteopath for the benefit of my patients?
- What learning activities are ongoing and what progress has been made?
- What previous CPD learning needs are to be reinforced or advanced?

Where do I want to be?

You should also consider your aims and objectives for the future:

- What areas of interest would I like to pursue further?
- What aspirations do I have for my career and what direction should I take?
- What areas of learning are vital for my career progression?

Ideas for answering these questions

Answering these questions will help you to identify your learning needs that can be addressed through CPD. It is important to be open and honest when reviewing and reflecting on your professional practice as an osteopath, so that the CPD you undertake is meaningful.

Some suggested ideas that may help you to answer these questions are provided below:

Reviewing OBA code of conduct in relation to:

- effective communication
- confidentiality and privacy
- informed consent
- adverse events and open disclosure
- professional boundaries.

Experience in professional osteopathic practice:

- a particular clinical problem or questions presented by a patient
- a treatment that went particularly well
- a feeling that some osteopathic treatment techniques could be better applied
- difficulty in communicating with a patient
- practice audit.

Interaction with others:

- discussion with osteopathic colleagues, other healthcare practitioner colleagues, students and friends

- participation in practice meetings, conferences or working groups
- teaching activities
- an appraisal from an employer
- peer review of aspects of your professional osteopathic practice.

Research and learning:

- reading a clinical journal or textbook
- reflection after completing a research project that generates new 'questions' you wish to explore
- watching a television programme about a healthcare issue that would usefully be followed up with more detailed research
- internet research into clinical problems or sources of patient advice.

Previous CPD activity:

If you have previously completed CPD then you should also reflect on past activities and how successful they have been in meeting your CPD aims. This will enable you to determine what progress you have made and which learning needs might be taken forward, with any necessary modification, to the new CPD period.

These will help you to reflect on areas of professional work as an osteopath where you may need to refresh or further develop your knowledge and skills.

Further considerations

In determining your learning needs it is important to be honest with yourself and open to new challenges. You should consider particularly how your patients are likely to benefit from how you choose to enhance your knowledge and skills.

Consider also the proportion of different activities that contribute to your professional work as an osteopath. These might fall into:

- clinical osteopathic practice
- educational activities, e.g. teaching, research, examining, publishing, mentoring, supervising including of overseas qualified osteopaths and
- non-clinical activities, e.g. practice management, IT activities, committee work, representing the profession, writing, book reviews.

Identify learning needs across a range of different areas of your professional work as an osteopath. The main focus should be on osteopathy, so you need to achieve a balance with other relevant CPD.

The osteopathic profession exists to care for patients. This should be reflected in prioritising your learning needs and your choice of CPD activity. It is also worth reflecting on what factors identify you as an osteopath. This may produce many different answers but will ultimately be important for the identity of the osteopathic profession as a whole and should underpin decisions regarding your choice of CPD activity.

It may be helpful to make notes on your thoughts when reviewing your CPD learning needs. In this way you can refer to these throughout your registration year, and in subsequent years, to evaluate your progress towards meeting longer-term goals. You may choose to use the *Reviewing your CPD learning needs* form, an example of which is provided in Appendix A.

4.2 Planning your CPD

If you find that you have identified several areas of practice where you feel further development would be beneficial (i.e. your learning needs), you should try to prioritise them. This will help you to plan whether the learning need should be addressed immediately or at some point in the future, in other registration years.

Setting learning objectives

You will then be ready to decide exactly what you hope to achieve, by setting learning objectives for each of your learning needs.

For example: if you have identified that you are unsure about some aspects of clinical neurological testing (a learning need), you could set a learning objective of: 'I will be able to perform a quick, relevant and complete neurological examination to evaluate patients presenting with headache'.

Your learning objectives need to be realistic and achievable. You may be familiar with the term *SMART*, an acronym which describes the key attributes for producing a successful learning objective:

Specific

What exactly do I wish to learn?

Measurable

How will I know when I have achieved my learning objective?

Achievable

Have I been realistic in terms of time, cost and support constraints?

Relevant

Is the objective really relevant to my identified learning needs to advance my professional development as an osteopath?

Timed

What deadlines should I set for achieving the objective?

You may find SMART a useful way to plan your objectives for CPD.

Prioritising learning

You should prioritise your learning objectives. This will enable you to plan short-, medium and long-term learning activities. For example, some CPD, such as improved case history recording, could be completed by attending a one-day seminar. Others, such as a Masters degree, may take several years. Bearing in mind that you will need to comply with the OBA's CPD registration standard each year, you should look to break up these long-term learning needs into more manageable objectives for CPD purposes. Taking the example of the Masters degree, you could break this into smaller objectives relating to the degree's published modules, which could be completed over a shorter period and contribute to your CPD returns for a given year.

Set a time by which you should have completed each learning objective. This will help you to monitor your progress throughout the CPD year, as well as reviewing how realistic and achievable the objective is.

Selecting CPD activities

Consider what types of learning activity would best address a particular objective, as well as your personal circumstances. If you are located in a remote area, you may wish to place more emphasis on activities such as distance learning, e.g. on-line courses and e-mail correspondence with other healthcare practitioners. It is recommended that at least eight hours of CPD activity must fall into the category *Learning with others*.

Refer to page 9, Table 1, for examples of CPD learning activities in each of the categories.

Focus on the quality of learning activities, not just on the quantity. The activities should inspire you, relate to your professional work as an osteopath, and meet the targets you have identified for your learning needs.

The level of the activity should be carefully considered. Activities should not be selected if they are unlikely to consolidate or enhance existing knowledge. Along similar lines, when *Learning with others*, the knowledge level of the person involved in the interaction should be appropriate for the activity being completed.

Similarly, when using reference materials such as books, scientific papers, journals, websites, etc., consider the appropriateness of the level and the audience that it is aimed at. Remember that your plan should be realistic and achievable, and compatible with the other important commitments in your life. Setting yourself unattainable goals or undertaking excessive amounts of CPD may be detrimental to your morale, your private life and your practice.

Other questions to consider:

- What activities will suit the way you learn?
- What new learning activity have you not tried before?
- What resources and opportunities are available?

When planning your learning activities, you may wish to use the *Planning your CPD* form, an example of which is provided in Appendix B.

4.3 Undertaking your CPD

Once you have clearly identified your objectives, and have made a plan for the desired learning activities, you can put the plan into action. It will help keep CPD manageable if you try to follow the deadline you set for each objective. Keep notes and evidence of CPD activities completed, to form part of your CPD Record Folder. This will help you to reflect on what you have achieved and how successfully this addressed your original identified learning needs.

4.4 Evaluating your progress

Having implemented your plan of action, consider whether you have achieved your original learning objectives. The CPD activities may have succeeded in achieving your objectives; alternatively, you may find that only some of your aims were achieved, or that the activities did not help at all. This evaluation will allow you to re-assess your current situation and help plan for future CPD based on your experiences.

When evaluating your learning activities, you may wish to use the *Evaluating your CPD activities* form, an example of which is provided in Appendix C.

4.5 Unplanned or 'opportunistic' learning

This is learning that was not planned, but resulted from an activity that taught you a valuable lesson. For example, you attend a practice meeting or a teaching faculty meeting where you learn a new osteopathic technique that improves your treatment approach for particular patients; or you read a professional journal that enhances your understanding of a clinical scenario. You can record this activity, using the *Evaluating your CPD activities* form or in a written format of your choice.

05 CPD Resources

Below are some suggested sources for information on osteopathic CPD:

- The Australian Osteopathic Association www.osteopathic.com.au
- The Chiropractic and Osteopathic College of Australasia www.coca.com.au
- OsteoProfessionalCPD www.osteoprofessional.com

There are other providers of osteopathy CPD and osteopaths should investigate their own sources.

06 Feedback

The Board has established a CPD process that it believes is fair and flexible and able to adapt to your lifestyle and development needs. However, we realise that in practice you may encounter difficulties with the process or you may identify areas for improvement. The OBA encourages you to send us your comments and suggestions.

07 Example CPD forms

The following appendices give examples of completed CPD recording forms.

Appendix A

Reviewing your CPD learning needs form – example

Appendix B

Planning your CPD form – example

Appendix C

Evaluating your CPD activities form – example

Appendix D

CPD Annual Summary Form – example

These forms can be downloaded from the OBA's website: www.osteopathyboard.gov.au

Reviewing your CPD learning needs form – example

Name	CPD year	Registration ID	Signature	Date
Jennifer Naismith	1/12/2011 – 30/11/2012	xx	<i>Jennifer Naismith</i>	18/11/2011

Achievements in my professional work as an osteopath are: *(you may wish to summarise here and also attach your most recent CV)*

Running a successful practice and being a good employer for other osteopaths
 Clinic Tutor at Victoria University osteopathic program
 External examiner at the Southern Cross University osteopathic program
 Postgraduate diploma in paediatrics at RMIT University
 Regional coordinator for the Geelong Group of Osteopaths

Areas of strength in my professional work as an osteopath are:

Communication with, and being empathetic with, patients
 Treatment of sports injuries
 Good HVLA thrust technique
 Being a fair and considerate employer
 Enthusiastic tutor

Areas for development in my professional work as an osteopath are:

Use of computers in practice
 Research – knowledge of doing research and also in keeping up to date
 Updating knowledge for a range of problems, especially headache and spondylolisthesis
 Greater awareness of medico-legal issues affecting osteopathic practice

What are my short, medium and long term learning needs, and how are these relevant to my professional work as an osteopath?

Become more computer literate – to help practice efficiency
 Improve approach to patients presenting with headache – to improve confidence in my treatment in this area
 Pursue interest in treating children with coordination difficulties – long-term interest
 Update knowledge on informed consent – needs regular updating
 Learn more about spondylolisthesis – seen three patients recently with this and want to enhance my knowledge and skills in this area
 Get more involved in research – start slowly to see how things go and then look at the possibility of getting a research degree such as a Masters of Science

Planning your CPD form – example

Name	CPD year	Registration ID	Signature	Date
Jennifer Naismith	1/12/2011 – 30/11/2012	xx	<i>Jennifer Naismith</i>	18/11/2011

Identified learning need	My learning objective	Planned learning activity	Estimated CPD hours		Target completion date
			Learning by oneself	Learning with others	
Update knowledge on Osteopathy Board of Australia guidelines and risk management	Learn the most recent information on record keeping, informed consent and patient communication	Osteopathy Board of Australia mandatory CPD topics at Chiropractic and Osteopathic College of Australasia seminar		4	December 2011
Become more computer literate	Learn to use Microsoft Word efficiently to write patients' letters quickly	Take computer course in Microsoft Word	5		January 2012
Improve approach to patients presenting with headache	Improve my case history taking and clinical neurological examination for patients presenting with headache so notes are comprehensive and more efficient	Australian Osteopathic Association seminar		4	March 2012
Pursue interest in treating children with coordination difficulties	Get an introduction to the overall factors involved in treating children with coordination difficulties	Observe an osteopath experienced in this work (Deborah Carter)		2	May 2012
Update knowledge on informed consent	Learn the most recent information on informed consent particularly in relation to the treatment of children	Online e-learning course or reading latest information from relevant publications	2		July 2012
Learn more about spondylolisthesis	Update my knowledge and skills in the diagnosis, clinical examination and treatment of spondylolisthesis and for referral options	Study group, reading textbooks and journals	2	2	July 2012

Evaluating your CPD activities form – example

Name	CPD year	Registration ID	Signature	Date
Jennifer Naismith	1/12/2011 – 30/11/2012	xx	<i>Jennifer Naismith</i>	18/11/2011

Provider: N/A	Number of CPD hours claimed for this activity: 2
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Learning activity was planned/unplanned (<i>delete as appropriate</i>)
Description of activity Local group meeting with three other osteopaths – Helen Dale, Craig Easton, Suneesha Sondhi. Topic – treatment of spondylolisthesis Case presentations and sharing of treatment approach.
My learning objective related to this activity (<i>n/a if activity was unplanned</i>) Update my knowledge and skills in the diagnosis, clinical examination and treatment of spondylolisthesis and referral options.
What experience did I gain from this? (<i>What did I get out of it? What went well? What would have improved my learning?</i>) Discussion with group refreshed my clinical knowledge and diagnosis, and identified sources of recent research on spondylolisthesis. One of the group had contact with a local neurosurgeon with an interest in this area who was amenable to communicating with local osteopaths. Learned new treatment techniques that could be applied to the lumbar spine using minimal force. It was good to be able to share knowledge with colleagues in an open way and to be able to admit not knowing all the answers. The group aspect seemed to enhance the osteopathic practical approach that would have been lacking if I had just studied this area on my own.
How have I applied this to my professional work as an osteopath? My interest was generated by having three patients with spondylolisthesis in the last four months. This learning has helped my management of them. I have discussed one patient's problem with the local neurosurgeon. This has also helped my work as a Clinic Tutor at the Victoria University osteopathic program. Overall, I feel more confident managing the treatment of patients with this condition.
What further learning do I need in this area? This activity identified recent research papers on spondylolisthesis which I will obtain and read.

CPD annual summary form – example

Name	CPD year		Total CPD hours completed	Total CPD hours for learning with others	Signature	Date
	Start date:	End date:				
Jennifer Naismith	1/12/2011	30/11/2012	25	15	<i>Jennifer Naismith</i>	18/11/2011

Details of learning activity <i>Please provide information on the activity undertaken, the type of activity ie personal research, course etc, along with venue details if relevant</i>	Completion dates of activity <i>Must be within date range of above CPD period</i>	Number of CPD hours claimed		Relevance to professional work as an osteopath <i>Please provide a very brief overview (in less than 50 words as a guide) of how this activity is relevant to your professional development as an osteopath</i>
		<i>Learning by oneself</i>	<i>Learning with others</i>	
Subject/topic Mandatory CPD topics (,record keeping, informed consent and patient communication) Type of activity Course Venue Rydges Hotel, Melbourne	10/12/11		4	This course updated my understanding of what is required with regard to record keeping, patient communication and informed consent.
Subject/topic Treatment of spondylolisthesis Type of activity Group meeting with 3 other osteopaths Venue Local practice	15/3/2012		2	Discussion with group refreshed my clinical knowledge and diagnosis and identified sources of recent research on spondylolisthesis and also a local neurosurgeon with an interest in this area. Learned new treatment techniques
Subject/topic Computer course (Microsoft Word) Type of activity Distance learning via internet/CD-ROM Venue ICT Learning Solutions Sydney	February – April 2012	5		This course helped me to improve the efficiency of my communication with GPs by shortening the time taken to write letters about patients

Subject/topic Whose headache? Neurological assessment of headache Type of activity Course Venue RMIT University Melbourne	20/5/2012		4	This has improved my ability to rapidly assess my patients presenting with headache in terms of case history taking, clinical examination methods and in deciding when it is best to refer for further evaluation
Subject/topic Case presentations for patients' treatment Type of activity Practice meeting Venue My practice	14/6/2012		3	Learned from experience of colleagues where I was having difficulties with a particular patient's treatment relating to neck and arm pain. Able to share my experience in helping colleagues with particular difficulties in treating patients
Subject/topic Cauda equina and polymyalgia rheumatica Type of activity Reading and research Venue IJOM and internet research	17/9/2012	2		An article in the International Journal of Osteopathic Medicine (IJOM) about cauda equina and a colleague who had difficulty diagnosing polymyalgia rheumatic highlighted the need for me to refresh my knowledge in both areas
Subject/topic Treating children with coordination difficulties Type of activity Shadowing colleague (Deborah Carter) Venue Deborah Carter's practice	16/10/2012		2	This is an area of practice I plan to develop further and I learned valuable case history taking and practical treatment skills from Deborah who is very experienced in this field
Subject/topic The value of osteopathic treatment in treating infantile colic Type of activity Critique of a research paper for manual therapy journal Venue My practice	18/11/2012	3		Needed to review the process of critiquing scientific papers and apply to this particular paper. Has enhanced my ability to be more discriminating in seeking a rationale for choice of treatment