

CPD requirements and the impact of COVID-19

We wish to offer clarification and reassurance regarding the CPD credit requirements in the current climate. We are aware that some of you will be in the unfortunate position of having had your CPD activity cancelled or postponed due to the developing COVID-19 situation as we reach the end of the 2019/20 CPD year. In addition, the situation for the next CPD year, 2020/21, is now looking uncertain.

With regard to the usual CPD rules, we should like to emphasise the following:

- The Federation annual credit requirements (50 overall with 25 external) are recommendations only. The GMC as the regulator does not require a fixed number of CPD credits.
- Within the Federation guidelines if there is a shortfall in one year this can normally be addressed in other years as long as the 5 year recommendations are met (250 over the 5 years, half external)

However, in the face of the current COVID-19 pandemic, we propose varying these requirements. **We are waiving all numerical CPD credit targets.** We will support a flexible approach to CPD requirements for the remainder of the current CPD year and, in addition, for the next CPD year. Of greater importance than the number of credits obtained will be that Physicians show evidence of engagement with the CPD process and with reflection. This will of course be judged by appraisers, but we hope that appraisers will very much take this statement into account when assessing CPD.

No requirement to 'make up' credits

We should also like to emphasise that there will not be a requirement to 'make up' credits relating to the time of the pandemic in future years.

Personal credits

The diary allows physicians to record as many personal credits as they wish and the overall total is included on the annual CPD certificate but only 10 personal credits can count towards the usual recommended total of 50. As stated above the requirement for 50 credits has been waived for the 2019-20 and the 2020-21 diary years, but for technical IT reasons it is difficult to arrange a temporary change to reflect this in the CPD system as the 'rule' is embedded in the system in a number of ways. However, we are requesting that appraisers acknowledge the extent and value of both personal CPD and distance learning during the 2 CPD years in question.

Work in progress

We have a number of other initiatives designed to help colleagues during this difficult time. These include the following:

- We are adding an additional statement to the annual CPD certificates alerting appraisers to our advice during the pandemic and advising them that physicians may make more use of distance learning and personal CPD during this time.
- We are working to increase availability and approval of various forms of distance learning including streamed events, webinars and more e-learning options.

We will endeavour to fast-track COVID-19 applications for approval.