Continuing Professional Development Systems for Medical Physicists

Howell Round

University of Waikato
New Zealand
What is CPD?

• CPD is the planned acquisition of knowledge, experience and skills (both technical and personal) required for professional practice throughout ones working life

EFOMP Policy Statement No. 10
What is difference between CPD and Continuing Education

CPD = Continuing Education
+ mentoring, teaching and examining
+ research publication and refereeing
+ professional contribution
+ initiating new techniques / commissioning equipment
Why do CPD?

- CPD is an ethical and moral obligation for each medical physicist throughout their professional career in order to maintain the highest possible professional standards

  EFOMP Policy Statement No. 10

- May be required by government or professional body for renewal of licensing or certification

- To ensure employers keep their staff up-to-date with current practice.
Countries with Formal CPD Schemes

Australia
New Zealand
Hong Kong
Japan
South Korea
Taiwan
USA
Canada
South Africa
UK

Austria
Belgium
Czech Republic
Denmark
Finland
France
Germany
Greece

Italy
Netherlands
Norway
Romania
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions/Countries without Formal CPD Schemes</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>Most of Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td>Most of Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Former USSR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

But there is general move towards implementing CPD

Difficult to implement if there are too few physicists
Who should decide how CPD much is necessary and what constitutes relevant CPD?

• Primarily the professional society

• May be a government requirement - but usually it is consistent with what most professional societies would recommend
Who should administer it?

• Usually a national professional medical physics organization operating independently

• Can be a government body (e.g. South Africa)

• Can be a national medical physics organization acting for the government (e.g. Italy)

• If required by government, often done as part of a comprehensive health professionals scheme
Types of schemes

• Points-based

‘Quality, not quantity’-based (e.g. UK system)
How much CPD is required

• In UK, not well defined

• With points-based systems, roughly a minimum of 4 – 8 days per year (averaged over 3 – 5 years)

• 24 hours/2 years in 2 USA states

• Needs to be a mix of activities
Over what period?

- Typically 5 years
- Shortest is 2 years (2 USA states)
- Longest is 10 years (ABR [USA])
- India is considering 10 years
Making it relevant to everyone

Needs change as

• Career develops
• Responsibilities change
• Move into/out of clinical responsibilities
What about remote physicists?

• May need to relax some requirements (e.g. may be allowed to accumulate higher number of points in some categories)

• May be granted extra points for attending a conference or local meeting
Leaving and re-entering the profession

• What if leave profession for a few years (e.g. family commitments)?

• May have to relax some requirements (e.g. allow a different mix of activities)
Some unique requirements

• **South Africa**: 2 pts per year (out of 50) must be in professional ethics

• **Florida**: 2 hrs on prevention of medical errors

• **Aids** (somewhere in USA)
Auditing

• Can be time consuming and costly

• Needs to be reasonably robust, but ultimately relies on integrity of physicists

• Do we need to ‘internationalize’ it?
Who should pay for administration?

- Government
- Employer
- Professional society
- User
A good system will be

• Flexible
• Relevant
• Robust
• Require minimal administration
• Meet the needs of the physicists
• Not be unreasonably achievable by a physicist
• Supported by the medical physicists
• Of benefit to the physicists as well as the community
THANK YOU