

How do we recognise Continuing Education within a Continuing Professional Development system that is reflective and outcomes-focussed? A case study from Irish Pharmacy.

Sarah Drumm, Catriona Bradley

Irish Institute of Pharmacy, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, Dublin

Background

The Pharmacy Act 2007¹ requires that all pharmacists registered in Ireland must engage in continuing professional development (CPD). The Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (PSI; the pharmacy regulator) commissioned a Review of International CPD models (2010) in order to develop a CPD system informed by best international practice and experience.² This resulted in the establishment of the Irish Institute of Pharmacy (IOP) in 2013 to develop, implement and manage this CPD system.

CPD was subsequently defined in the statutory instrument as being “systematic, self-directed, needs-based and outcomes-focussed, based on a process of continual learning and development with application in... professional practice”.³ This poster describes the main components of the resulting CPD system, and describes how continuing education (CE) is recognised within this system.

Methods

The IOP established a CPD system in Ireland for pharmacists comprising four key elements.²

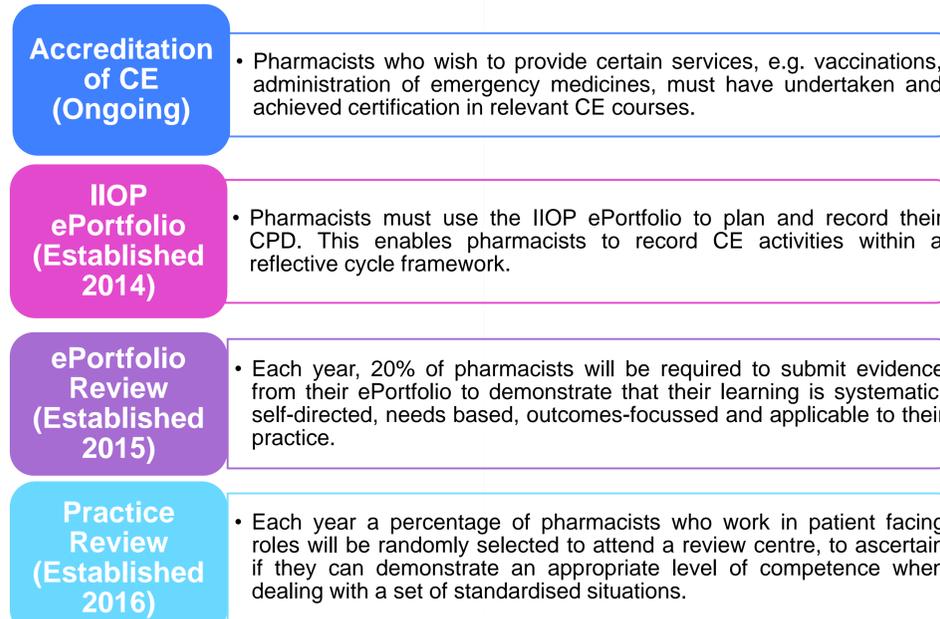


Figure 1: Elements of CPD system

Accreditation of CE

The IOP procures CE training programmes through a work plan funded by the Department of Health and the PSI. The programmes are subject to an accreditation process facilitated by the IOP. Pharmacists are not required to gather certificates for CPD purposes but certificates are mandatory for some service delivery e.g. administering vaccines and emergency medicines. Completion rates are substantially higher for these CE programmes.

IOP ePortfolio

The CPD system for pharmacists is based on reflective practice allowing them to:

- Reflect on individual experience to identify learnings
- Look at ways to improve their knowledge, skills, behaviours or attitudes (i.e. competence).

The emphasis is on influencing the behaviours expected of a competent pharmacist as detailed in the PSI Core Competency Framework.³

The CPD system recognises a wide variety of learning activities from formal CE to on-the-job learning. The ePortfolio allows pharmacists to record their CE activities in the form of a 5-stage CPD cycle. It has been fully operational since March 2015.

ePortfolio Review

The first ePortfolio Review was undertaken in 2016. Evidence of engagement with CPD was submitted online through the IOP portal. The Standards for the ePortfolio Review were agreed by a group of pharmacists from a range of practice backgrounds and incorporate:

- legislative requirements
- what would reasonably and practically indicate appropriate CPD engagement.



Figure 2: CPD Cycle

Practice Review

The practice review process comprises two elements:

- Clinical Knowledge Review (CKR)
- Standardised Pharmacy Interaction (SPI)

In April 2018, sixty-five pharmacists participated in the first practice review, and sixty-six participated in October 2018.

Results – summarised in Figure 3

Accreditation of CE: Thousands of pharmacists have completed and achieved certification in CE courses accredited by the IOP.

ePortfolio Review: Almost 3,000 pharmacists have been selected for review since 2016. Results for the 2017/18 review show a high level of engagement.

Practice Review: Feedback from the April practice review was largely positive, with participants commenting that it gave them confidence in their abilities.

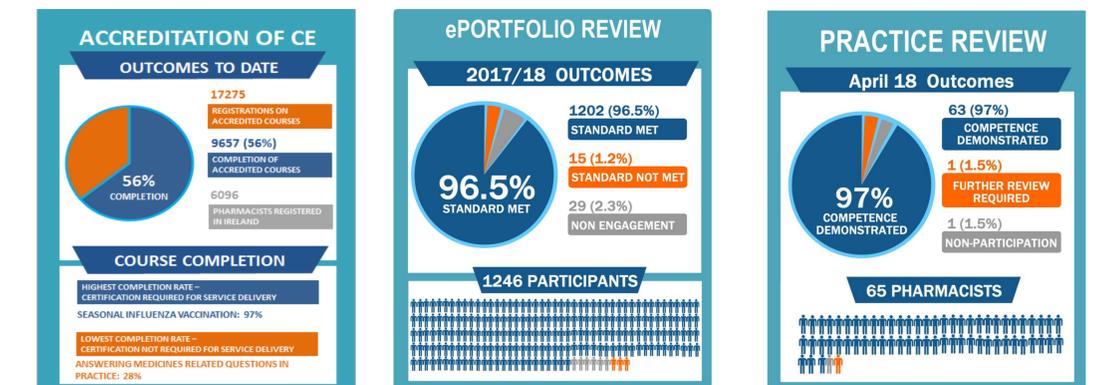


Figure 3: Results from CPD system

Conclusion

The CPD system for pharmacists in Ireland comprises different elements. The system, in its entirety, focuses on outputs (impact on practice) rather than inputs (CPD points) whilst recognising the importance of high quality CE in shaping pharmacy practice in Ireland.

References

- ¹<http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2007/act/20/enacted/en/html>
- ²Review of International CPD Models Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland, June 2010
- ³Statutory Instrument S.I. No. 553 of 2015: Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland (Continuing Professional Development) Rules 2015. <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2015/si/553/made/en/print>
- ⁴https://www.thepsi.ie/libraries/publications/psi_core_competency_framework_for_pharmacists.sflb.ashx