

CPD requirements and the impact of COVID-19 for Physicians

The below guidance is for Physicians. Physician Associates should refer [here](#) for the latest COVID-19 guidance for Physician Associates including CPD requirements.

We are aware that some physicians will have had some of their CPD activity for 2019/20 cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the pandemic has had a significant impact on the provision of CPD for the 2020/21 year.

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 view of the COVID-19 pandemic, **we are waiving all numerical CPD credit targets for 2019/20 and 2020/21**. We will support a flexible approach to CPD requirements for these years. 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.

Information for appraisers

We have added a statement to the annual CPD certificates alerting appraisers to our advice on CPD credits during the pandemic.

Live Streaming and Webinars

During pandemic, we understand that you may not be able to tune-in to a live streamed event or webinar as a result of clinical pressures. Therefore, if you view an archived version of a Federation approved live-streamed event or live webinar within four weeks of it being broadcast you can still claim it as approved external CPD. You can use the approval code provided for the live event for up to four weeks after the event date. The number of credits will be the same as for the live event or webinar.

Distance Learning

For the 2020/21 CPD year there will be no limit to the number of external credits that can be claimed for distance learning. In addition to the maximum of 10 approved distance learning credits you may add under the 'Add Approved Entry' tab, you may also add unlisted distance learning under the 'Add Self-Certified Entry' tab under the 'Distance Learning' sub-section. You will need to add them as an 'External Self-Certified Distance Learning, Clinical or Non-Clinical'. Reading articles in online journals and e-libraries that are not approved should still be recorded as personal self-certified distance learning. Online mandatory training required by your employer should still be recorded as internal CPD.

E-platforms and E-libraries

We have recently started approving e-libraries and e-platforms for external CPD. These large e-learning resources may be visited on multiple occasions. After you revisit an e-library or e-platform, we advise that you update the first entry for that resource in your CPD Diary for the year in question. Select the title of that resource, then the 'Reflections' tab to add additional reflections and adjust the number of credits. The maximum character count is just over 1000 per question and all text will appear on your Reflection Report. At present if you record more than 10 external approved distance learning credits, the additional credits will appear as personal credits. Work is in progress to address this to allow unlimited external approved distance learning credits.