Keeping up appearances

Training your staff might be a bind, but it is an essential part of making sure your business becomes, and remains, successful, says Jane Armitage.

Since August 1 2008, the General Dental Council (GDC) requires all dental care professionals (DCPs), whose name was on the GDC register on or after July 31 2008, to undertake a programme of continuing professional development (CPD). This is so DCPs keep up to date with current practices and procedures, and also to make sure that best practice is observed and maintained. This is a compulsory requirement for any registered DCP.

The current legislation states that 150 hours of CPD has to be undertaken within a five-year period. Fifty of those hours have to be verifiable by a third party.

Verifiable CPD may only be classed as verifiable, providing it has met the educational criteria requested by the GDC. Within these, 20 hours must be undertaken in the core subjects:
- Medical Emergencies (10 hours per CPD cycle)
- Disinfection and Contamination (five hours per CPD cycle)
- Radiography & Radiation Protection (five hours per CPD cycle)

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- Clear anticipated outcomes
- Concise educational aims and objectives
- An evaluation feedback form

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A CPD folder for the coming year, which includes a study of non-verifiable CPD is saved.

Verifiable CPD is saved.

Gaining new knowledge

Training receptionists and practice managers is another useful course, but is not compulsory. First Aid is a requirement for managers to take their assessment every three years, but must be retaken before expiry of certification. This is usually a three-day course, and it’s a good idea to have two qualified members, which is helpful for holidays and time off. Fire shall training is another useful course, but it is not compulsory.

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Managing risk

Health and safety/risk assessment in the dental practice are both essential factors that we all should be more aware of. Courses for both can be held house via an appropriate trainer. An insight to legislation concerning Health & Safety in my opinion is a valuable training area for all dental team members.

First Aid is a requirement and each dental practice must have its own qualified first aider. These certificates last for three years, but must be retaken before expiry of certification. This is usually a three-day course, and it’s a good idea to have two qualified members, which is useful for holidays and time off. Fire shall training is another useful course, but it is not compulsory.

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Although this is not compulsory, it provides development. The majority of our staff, including the nurses, have taken courses on customer care, while senior receptionists have learned about leadership.

Care nurse co-ordinator is the path that one of our oral health educators has taken. From a financial aspect, this is the role that has created revenue. The private income increased by 50 per cent in the first six months. Both oral health educators have taken the Fluoride Application Course.

About the author

Jane Armitage is a qualified practice manager and has almost 40 years’ industry experience. She is currently a practice manager for Thompson & Thomas, and holds a Vocational Assessors award. She is also a BDA Good Practice Assessor, BDA Good Practice Regional Consultant, and has a BDA Certificate of Merit for services to the profession. She has her own company, JA Team Training, offering a practice management consultancy service, which includes onsite assistance covering all aspects of practice management with a pathway required for managers to take their qualification in dental practice management. To get in touch, contact 0114 254 5546.