Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Practical Handbook

The British Reflexology Association

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1. Introduction

The British Reflexology Association (B.R.A.) produced the first edition of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Handbook for its members in June 2008. The second edition, produced in October 2009, included only a few minor changes and these changes were mainly in response to feedback received from members whilst still keeping the document as simple and comprehensive as possible. This third edition, produced in May 2014, shows alterations to the number of the required hours annually.

2. What is CPD?

Professionals of all walks of life today are faced with the challenge of improving their skills, knowledge and competence throughout their working lives. Standing still is not an option. The best and most professional practitioners are normally those who continually try to enhance their abilities to benefit their patients’ needs, as well as their own. CPD is not a new concept and is a fact of life already for several professions including doctors, nurses, osteopaths, engineers, lawyers all of whom must undertake CPD. Many complementary therapy organisations now also require CPD to be undertaken.

When you start thinking about it, it is not unreasonable that people offering a service are asked to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date to better serve their customers. Consequently it is absolutely not unreasonable that we, as reflexologists, are asked a similar request.

CPD in our context refers to any type of learning that occurs throughout your professional life. Most of us probably already do some anyway:

- Looking things up when we come across new symptoms we know little about
- Investigating patient medications and their potential side-effects
- Asking for advice from one of our colleagues
- Reflecting on what works or does not for certain conditions
- Attending lectures

A more extensive list will be given later in the handbook but CPD can basically encompass any learning from any and all activities that support your work as a reflexologist. The major difference compared to what you may have been doing before is that this learning needs to be recorded and hopefully planned to glean maximum benefits from the exercise.
3. What are the benefits of CPD?

- CPD can help us experience different, new or broader approaches to a subject you think you know well.
- It can help us glean other people’s experience on specialised subjects.
- Learn new and complementary skills to the ones we already possess: for instance by attending lectures on other or new forms of treatment (e.g. attending a lecture or taking a course on Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), on ear reflexology, face reflexology, etc.)
- It can help us gain more professional self-esteem and assurance because we would have investigated a particular topic that we did not know much about or have taken more in-depth courses on a given topic.
- It may promote networking with other reflexologists within and outside the B.R.A. Working alone can get lonely and get to you sometimes; attending lectures is a way to get out of our practices and to meet and interact with new and old friends.
- We may be able to improve our own practice by spending some CPD time on personal reflection: this can lead to more efficient and happier ways of working, to a more structured approach to further development and learning, etc.
- CPD could lead to greater respect from the medical profession, knowing that, like them, we spend some time on reflection and on learning new skills. This could perhaps and eventually lead to more referral from them.
- Your individual CPD could contribute to the development of the profession as a whole and could help improve the status of reflexology if you come across as competent.
- The above list is by no means exhaustive. Let us know if you can think of more that we can include to this list.

4. When does our CPD scheme start?

The B.R.A. CPD scheme was entirely voluntary for the first year to give some time to our members to get used to the idea and think about how they would organise themselves. At the AGM in May 2009, it was announced that CPD would become mandatory.

5. Who is required to take part in CPD?

CPD needs to be carried out by all fully registered B.R.A. members: members working full-time, part-time and members who live outside the UK.
Student members are not required to do CPD until they become fully qualified and join the full membership.
Non practising Honorary Fellow Members and Associate members do not need to participate in CPD.
6. What counts as CPD?

There are many more activities than the ones listed below but our list should give you a good idea of what can be recorded in your learning log (see Record Keeping chapter for explanation). The system is very flexible. At the end of the day, the only person knowing exactly what is relevant is YOU!

Courses/ Lectures / Group Activities:
- Attending lecture days
- Attending regional meetings
- Attending small group meetings
- Conferences
- Recorded conversations with colleagues on specific topics
- Distant learning
- First aid courses
- Learning other therapies
- Learning relevant business skills
- Networking meetings
- Practitioner exchanges
- Practitioner meetings
- Reading journal articles
- Teaching / Counselling

Personal experience:
- Feedback from other practitioners, from supervisors
- Speaking with other reflexologists about specific subjects
- Shadowing other reflexologists or practitioners of other therapies
- Recorded reflection on your practice, like a diary
- Correspondence with patients or health professionals
- Video assessments of consultations
- Writing diaries or journals
- Mentoring support
- Spending time on case/patient research: books, magazines, internet
- Structured reading
- Multi-disciplinary learning group

Quality Assurance:
- Audits of your practice or a colleague’s
- Patient satisfaction surveys
- Supervision or mentoring sessions
- Observing/shadowing colleagues or mentors

12 hours of CPD must be completed each membership year. From 2017 the requirement to attend a minimum of one full day lecture over a two year period has been removed. However we hope you will still want to attend BRA Lecture Days and meetings to obtain CPD points or to attend lectures organised by other groups. To encourage support of BRA events, an additional 2 CPD points will be awarded to those attending BRA lecture days and will count towards the CPD requirements for BRA membership.
7. Record keeping

Our members will be keeping and maintaining their own records either at their home or at their workplace. Their records will comprise their CPD log sheet (see log sheet example in appendices) as well as any other written evidence showing that the appropriate amount of work has been put in (see CPD Supportive Data - section 9). At the end of each year, when you renew your membership, you will be asked to tick a box confirming that you have either done your CPD requirement for the two-year period or that you are in the process of doing it.

8. How to fill in your CPD log sheet?

The log sheet form has been kept as simple as possible on purpose. All you need to do is to fill in:
- The CPD activity date
- The title and brief details of the activity
- The practical learning outcome of the activity
- The duration in hours

At the end of each sheet work out the total amount of time spent on the different activities.

9. CPD supportive data

Each CPD activity needs to be supported by as much evidence as possible and available. Evidence can be as simple as attendance certificates but it could also consist of a statement signed by a colleague, tutor, supervisor, etc. stating that they have participated in your CPD efforts and that they corroborate the stated amount of time spent on that CPD activity.

Naturally, it will be difficult to present evidence for some activities but that is also alright. You simply need to document and briefly explain those activities in accordance to the criteria explained in this booklet.

10. Non-compliance

This programme is very simple and does not require that much time or effort during the year. Consequently, all members should be able to meet the requirements. The B.R.A. will be running its own annual audits on a statistically valid sample of the membership.

Failure to meet the standard may lead to exclusion of the M.B.R.A. status but obviously the B.R.A. would then try and work with the member in question to ensure that he or she meets the requirements and consideration will be given to extenuating circumstances. False or fraudulent declarations may also result in a similar exclusion.
11. Personal Development Plan:

A personal development plan is an interesting exercise to go through in order to ascertain your learning and development gaps, so that you can apply a more logical and structured approach to your CPD training:

11. a. Areas that need development:

Being objective about oneself is difficult but it is important that we all identify what we are good at and where we need to further develop our skills. There are several methods to identify our needs:
- You can use patient questionnaires that you regularly give out to your patients
- You can spend some time doing some introspection about your work and practice
- Go through past notes and identify gaps in your knowledge

Another useful approach is to prepare a check-list of points of how you think a perfect session should be and for one clinic every fortnight or every month, write down anything that happened that you could not answer or that you found difficult to answer. You can either write as you go along or spend ten minutes or so at the end of the session, before your next patient, making notes. The list could look something like:
- Strengths:
  o Handled a very angry patient well
  o Patient was saying how happy she was that her skin was getting better since she has been having reflexology
- Weaknesses:
  o Patient mentioned Crohn’s disease, I had heard of it but was not so sure what it was
  o Patient asked me if I knew of exercises to relax tension in shoulder blades but I could not think of any at the time
  o I spent 10 more minutes than planned with the patient with no good reason.
- Opportunities:
  o All the different gaps that I identified in the weaknesses box.
  o Analysis of how I could do things differently: explain more clearly or different ways, be more patient, etc.

11.b. Action plan:

Once you have identified your needs, the next step is to put together a plan that will include the following:
- List your learning needs
- Identify how you are going to meet those needs: training, conferences, reading a book, working with others, etc.
- Evaluate the outcome: patient survey, test, feedback, etc.
Make sure you are realistic. People often underestimate the time it takes to learn new skills or to change behaviour.

11.c. Learning:

The actual learning is probably the most straightforward step of the plan. You have identified your learning needs, have made the steps to identify how you are going to fill the learning gaps and now you are actually putting them into practice by going to a conference, reading an article about a specific subject, looking up specific illnesses or diseases in specialised or general books, etc.

11.d. Evaluation:

A very important step of the CPD process is the evaluation. When you write your action plan, you should spend some time thinking on how you are going to evaluate what you have learnt. It is probably best to perform the evaluation straight after you have spent your time learning: record what you have learnt, how it is going to benefit your daily practice and your patients.

12. Frequently Asked Questions about CPD:

- I have been practising for a long time. I don’t really need more training, do I?
  Irrespective of how many years you have been practising, everybody will have to do CPD. In any case, you may find it useful as you will learn new things that may make your day-to-day practice even more interesting than it already is.

- What if I discovered after a particular learning intention that I have learned different things to what I intended?
  This is perfectly acceptable as the main objective of CPD is continuous development and learning. Your CPD plan is meant to be flexible, not rigid. Record what you have learned - there may be something to be learned too about how to plan your CPD. It would be useful to also write down why you think you learned something different to the original intention.

- I think that this whole process is cumbersome and not necessary at all!
  Unfortunately, we need a consistent approach to CPD for everyone because if it is not this system, another one, maybe even more paper oriented, will be imposed on us. If you start thinking on how to best put the CPD into practice, you’ll come to realise that the basic structure of the plan is flexible. Besides, any feedback you may have whilst doing CPD may help future versions.

- I don’t have time for this. Why should I do it!
  We understand that CPD may seem difficult and will look like more paperwork for everyone. Please remember that CPD is coming and that
any system enforced upon the BRA will involve some ways of recording and proving that you have done the CPD. As the scheme progresses and you get more used to it, it will take less time to perform. You could even try and do it with some colleagues, this might make it more enjoyable. You will need to put time aside to get the most out of CPD.

- What records do I need to keep?
CPD is largely self-administering. You will need to keep any personal development plan that you used to determine what your CPD would be for the year ahead together with a copy of any courses you may have attended and your completed CPD learning log. The day CPD becomes compulsory, you may be audited and will have to show your logs and records to the auditor.

- What if I am a multi-therapist? Can I use CPD from one of my other therapies?
If you can show this is relevant to your day-to-day reflexology practice, there is no reason in theory why you could not use the training from another therapy. However be careful that the link is not too tenuous.

- I am a part-time reflexologist, why should I do this CPD?
CPD is about filling the necessary need to continually develop our skills. We understand that a lot of our members probably practise reflexology on a part-time basis and that’s why the CPD activities have been set up to cause a minimum amount of disturbance. Almost half the allocated amount of CPD hours can be done at home without incurring any expenses and without having to go anywhere special.

- May I attend courses run by any reflexology organisation?
The answer is YES. The BRA currently runs 4 lecture days a year and 3 of them are in London which we appreciate can be difficult and expensive to attend for some of our members. You can attend any course on reflexology with any other organisation. Make sure you ask them for an attendance certificate and that you record how many hours the course was as other organisations may have a different way of accounting for CPD.

- I am a newly qualified practitioner: where do I start?
The challenges of CPD will be different for you than for your more experienced colleagues. Finance may be an issue but it is worth bearing in mind that starting and sustaining your business is part of CPD, as well as integrating all you have learned so far into the treatment of your patients.
APPENDICES
# APPENDIX 1 - CPD LEARNING LOG EXAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY TITLE</th>
<th>BENEFITS TO MY DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
<th>ACCRUED TIME</th>
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Sheet Total: __________ hours

Year-to-Date Total: __________ hours
### APPENDIX 2 – COMPLETED LOG SHEET EXAMPLE

#### B.R.A. MEMBER: John SMITH, 2008 CPD

<table>
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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>BENEFITS TO MY DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
<th>ACCRUED TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16/02/2008</td>
<td>B.R.A. Spring Lecture Day: “Ear Reflexology”</td>
<td>The topic looked interesting and complementary to my normal reflexology practice. I did not know anything about the subject. I collected a fair amount of charts and gleaned lots of practical pointers that I will be able to use in my day-to-day practice, mainly with muscular skeletal problems</td>
<td>5.5 hours</td>
<td>5.5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18/03/2008</td>
<td>First Aid Course</td>
<td>Had to renew my first aid certificate and did a St John Ambulance one day course in Brentwood. My last refresher was 3 years ago and I had forgotten a fair amount of the basic first aid steps. Hopefully I won’t have to use it but I have to do those refreshers regularly.</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
<td>11.5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>04/04/2008</td>
<td>Internet research</td>
<td>A patient asked me if reflexology could treat “Plantar Fasciitis”. I had heard of it but was not sure of what this was. I spent 30 minutes on the internet researching the subject and found a wealth of information, including some useful calf stretches that can be incorporated in a normal treatment for plantar fasciitis sufferers.</td>
<td>0.5 hours</td>
<td>12.0 hours</td>
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**Sheet Total:** 12 hours  
**Year-to-Date Total:** 12 hours
### BENEFITS TO MY DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICE

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<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
<th>ACCRUED TIME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17/05/2008</td>
<td>B.R.A. AGM/Lecture Day: “Facial Reflexology”</td>
<td>I attended the B.R.A. AGM/Lecture day. The topic of facial reflexology was even more interesting than I thought. The theory was fairly simple to understand and we did a lot of practical exercises. I got a lot out of the lecture, more than I expected and will be able to use it in my practice. The course inspired me to take the full training course in the topic.</td>
<td>5.5 hours</td>
<td>5.5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>02/06/2008</td>
<td>Regional CAM group</td>
<td>Met up for our quarterly complementary therapists networking group. We spoke mainly about massage and the different techniques that everyone knew to perform deep tissue massage, especially around the neck and the rhomboids area. There were a few sports massage therapists attending the meeting.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>7.5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>19/07/2008</td>
<td>Practitioner exchange</td>
<td>I swapped a treatment with X. I explained to her the B.R.A. sequence and some of the other techniques that I’ve picked up on several other post-graduate trainings and she explained to me her technique. She focuses a lot on visualisation, which is not something I have done in the past. It was interesting but not sure I want to incorporate her technique into my regular practice.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
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Sheet Total: 9.5 hours  
Year-to-Date Total: 21.5 hours
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<th>DATE</th>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>BENEFITS TO MY DAY-TO-DAY PRACTICE</th>
<th>TIME SPENT</th>
<th>ACCRUED TIME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/09/2008</td>
<td>Exel Complementary therapies exhibition</td>
<td>I agreed to go to EXCEL to support the Association Chairman and to help her explain to the visitors what reflexology was about and its benefits. I thought it was useful to me personally as I normally don't like to push myself and my services. All the better if it can raise reflexology profile. I also gave a few tasters.</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/10/2008</td>
<td>B.R.A. Autumn Lecture Day: 'Introduction to EFT'</td>
<td>I booked this lecture a long time ago after having investigated what EFT was about. A lot of my colleagues had been mentioning it, which got me curious. I learned a lot of practical details and received a first level certificate at the end.</td>
<td>5.5 hours</td>
<td>8.5 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>01/12/2008</td>
<td>Tutoring</td>
<td>A newly trained reflexologist asked if she could shadow me for a few hours and speak to me about setting up her practice. I found that her questions forced me to think about why I do things the way I do them and how I go about marketing my own services</td>
<td>2.5 hours</td>
<td>11 hours</td>
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Sheet Total: 11 hours  
Year-to-Date Total: 31.5 hours
## Appendix 3 – Self-Assessment

<table>
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<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>What are my strengths?</td>
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<td>What are my weaknesses?</td>
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<td>Where do I need to develop?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What could I do to improve?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Are there any courses to help me? Action plan:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Where do I want to be in 1, 3 and 5 years time?</td>
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