
CPD profile

1.1 Full name: Researcher

1.2 Profession: Speech and language therapist

1.3 Registration number: SL1234

2. Summary of recent work/practice

I am a Research speech and language therapist (SLT) undertaking a full-time MPhil at my local university. I qualified in 1995 and worked as a clinician in the local Trust until the beginning of last year, when I decided to study for a Masters degree. My responsibilities include some teaching on the undergraduate programme, but otherwise I am engaged in full-time research. My Trust is contributing to the funding for my research so I will ultimately need to report to the Trusts' Research and Development Director, as well as to my SLT Manager. My specialist clinical area is cerebral palsy. The research is looking at the effectiveness of a particular therapy approach with school aged children with cerebral palsy. For some time I have felt that as therapists we do not have sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of our work with children with cerebral palsy, and I therefore decided to embark on this project with the support of my colleagues, local Special Interest Group and SLT Manager. I work closely with teaching and therapy colleagues whose work I am evaluating, and have regular meetings with my supervisor in the university.

Total words: 186
(Maximum 500 words)

3. Personal statement

I have been using the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists' (RCSLT) online CPD diary to keep an ongoing record of my CPD activities (Example 1). The diary gives a summary of all the CPD activities I have undertaken since August 2006, and maps these against the HCPC categories, with evidence of the range of CPD activities I have undertaken during the last two years. HCPC requires me to undertake a range of CPD activities, but as I am now doing research I feel that the range of CPD I have undertaken has not been as broad as it was when I was working as a clinician. In particular, I feel that I have not undertaken the same range of professional activities or work based activities as I was able to when I worked as a therapist. However, my professional body have been informed of the change in my work, and I have recorded this in my electronic diary (as required by RCSLT). I hope that Example 1 provides the evidence that I have met HCPC's Standard 1 and 2.

I have selected six CPD activities from my diary, which illustrate how I have met Standards 3 and 4, as they have had a direct impact on the quality of my work and ultimately will be of benefit to my clients. During my studies, my clients have been students, clients involved in my research, and teaching and therapy colleagues.

Course in research methods (Example 2 formal/educational)

I undertook this course at the start of my research programme. I had not undertaken any formal research or research training before other than the research methods course which was part of my undergraduate degree. I therefore welcomed the opportunity to learn more about research methods. The first part of the course covered quantitative methodologies, including parametric and non-parametric statistics, clinical trial methodologies, systematic reviews and power calculations. I also learned how to use a statistical software package called SPSS (version 9), which I initially found very challenging. I have no natural interest in statistics, but for the first time I realised the importance of having a clear understanding of statistical principles in order to create genuine 'evidence based practice'. The second part of the course was on qualitative methods. I found this particularly interesting, as my undergraduate course had not covered these methods in any detail. I also learned how to use a qualitative software package, which I hope to use in my research for analysing video material of interactions. Attending this course has increased my knowledge and I now have an understanding of how to apply software. Both these will allow me to develop as a research practitioner in my field.

Literature review (Example 3 self directed study)

One of the aims of my research to date has been to produce an extensive review of the literature relating to the effectiveness of therapy with children with cerebral palsy. I have spent a large part of my time reading papers on treatment efficacy, and drawing together the findings from research around the world. The majority of studies have been carried out in the US, Australia and Hungary. Although there has not been sufficient data to undertake a systematic review, I have produced a narrative review, which has formed the basis of my research hypothesis. When I started to prepare my lectures for the undergraduate students, I realised that my work on the review had been useful not only in preparing my lectures but also in changing my thinking about best practice in therapy. I was able to share this new knowledge with the students, and I plan to write a descriptive paper, which will highlight the key messages from the review so that I can share this with colleagues in my field.

Student feedback forms (Example 4 quality assurance exercise)

As a member of the university department I agreed to teach my subject area on the undergraduate programme. I had had some experience of working with students on clinical placements and had always enjoyed this work. I had not had an opportunity to undertake any formal teaching before. My Head of

Department provided me with a framework for teaching, and initially observed my classes and provided me with practical feedback on my teaching technique. I was initially inclined to fill the whole teaching hour with didactic teaching, being fearful that I would not be able to answer any questions from the students. Through feedback from my Head of Department, I was able to address this in a constructive way. I also had an opportunity to observe my Head of Department teaching a group of students. We discussed different teaching techniques, and how well they worked students, when to apply which technique and I found this very helpful. I also distributed standard university feedback forms to the students towards the end of my course. The feedback was positive overall, and many students commented that they had benefited from being taught by a therapist who had 'a clinical as well as a research perspective' on her subject area.

Personal Development Plan (PDP) (Example 5 work based activity)

Although this was an optional part of my work at the university, I wanted to continue to use a personal development plan during my time as a research therapist. Many of my learning objectives related to acquiring skills as a researcher, but some linked directly to my work as a therapist and my overarching aim to improve my own practice when I resumed clinical work. I found my Head of Department very helpful in formulating specific objectives around teaching and research skills, and articulating the links between developing the evidence base in my clinical area and working more effectively in the longer term. I also identified a need to remain 'in the loop' as far as academic research in my area was concerned once I resumed my clinical work.

Conference presentation (Example 6 professional activity)

Towards the end of the first phase of the pilot study, my supervisor and I felt that I had gathered sufficient data to present the work at an international conference. Preparing for this presentation took a large amount of time, and it made me aware of how many skills are required in becoming an academic writer. I found I undertook a large amount of reading, both on how to write for an academic audience and how to prepare for the presentation itself. Despite high levels of anxiety, I found presenting my work a positive experience. My paper was well received at the conference and I was introduced to colleagues from other countries working in the same field. I was able to attend several presentations which were highly relevant to my research and to my clinical practice.

Book chapter (Example 7)

Towards the middle of my research, I was asked by a colleague (whom I had met at the conference) whether I would be interested in writing a chapter in her forthcoming book. I was delighted to accept her invitation. This chapter was my first publication, and I was fortunate to receive such excellent support from my colleague, who was an experienced writer. Writing the chapter allowed me to write about the aspects of my work that had changed as a

result of my research. I felt that the research I was undertaking had made a difference to the way I would deliver my service in the future. Having the opportunity to read the current literature, update my knowledge through attending the conference and then to articulate this through the chapter was a significant event in my professional life. My ability to communicate through writing has also improved, and I feel more confident in my skills as a result. Although I have yet to complete my research, I already have evidence that it will impact on my practice in the long term as well as the short term. I hope that my published work will be of benefit to my therapy and teaching colleagues and to students as well as to my own practice.

Total words: 1335
(Maximum 1500 words)

4. Summary of supporting evidence submitted

Evidence number	Brief description of evidence	Number of pages, or description of evidence format	CPD Standards that this evidence relates to
1	RCSLT Online diary record 3.4.06-30.7.08	5 pages	Standard 1,2
2	Course in research methods	2 pages	Standard 3
3	Literature review	10 pages	Standard 4
4	Student feedback forms	3 pages	Standard 3
5	PDP	4 pages	Standard 4
6	Conference presentation	1 page	Standard 3,4
7	Book chapter	20 pages	Standard 3,4