

## **Phasing out of the paper CPD portfolio**

### **Questions and answers**

#### **Why are you discontinuing with the CPD paper portfolio? I have used it for many years and feel comfortable using it**

There are a few reasons why we have taken this decision. The paper portfolio is becoming outdated and most of our sister medical Royal Colleges only offer an electronic version. We had always planned to phase out the paper portfolio but waited until we could improve the functionality of the online portfolio to ensure it was easier to use.

In addition, more people are now using the online CPD portfolio than the paper version.

Another major reason to switch is the impending start of medical revalidation. In practical terms, the collection of supporting information for revalidation will only be feasible electronically and not on paper.

We do understand it will be a major change for some members, but we have thoroughly tested the new online system with CPD users before launching it and we're confident that you will find the online portfolio intuitive and user-friendly.

#### **I've tried the online portfolio but I can enter activities faster by writing them down**

We have specifically designed the interface to be easy to navigate. Entering a new activity consists of selecting from drop-down boxes and typing into text fields. This should not take long and should become easier and quicker as you enter more activities.

A big advantage is that the software will automatically assign each activity to the category you choose (Clinical, Academic, Professional) and keep a running total for each category. This means that when you send your annual return to us, you simply have to click 'Submit', instead of adding up all the activities, completing an annual return form and posting it to the College.

#### **Can I still make a CPD return on paper even after the paper version is discontinued?**

No, I'm afraid you cannot do this. Once the paper version has been discontinued, all CPD returns must be received electronically via the online portfolio in order to be recorded on our database. Any returns received for the CPD year 2013/2014 not submitted via the online CPD portfolio will not be processed.

#### **I cannot access my online portfolio because I've forgotten my username and password**

In order to access your online CPD portfolio, you will need to sign in to the College website using your main email address and College password. Your main email address is the one that we have on the College database, which we use to contact you. If you have more than one email address, please contact us to check which one we are using.



If you've forgotten your password, you can have this sent to you automatically by clicking the 'Retrieve your password' link, in much the same way that most other websites operate when a user forgets their log-in details.

### **I've never registered to use the College website before – how do I do this?**

Go to the home page on the College website ([www.rcpath.org](http://www.rcpath.org)) and click the blue 'Register' button at the top-right corner of [www.rcpath.org](http://www.rcpath.org), then follow the instructions.

### **I tried to use the online portfolio before but always found it confusing**

The online portfolio is now on a new website platform and we've improved the way it looks and operates. For example, if you wish to find and amend an entry, there is a calendar view (similar to the one in Microsoft Outlook) with all the activities displayed by date. You just need to click on the entry and can then amend it.

We've written a user guide to help you use the online portfolio. The guide shows you how to view your portfolio, enter various CPD activities, search and edit an entry, and submit your CPD return.

We also plan to include a video tutorial on the College website – a short film that will show you how to use the various functions of the online portfolio.

### **I prefer to keep a paper copy of my portfolio**

You can still print out your portfolio if you wish. With the online version, you can even specify what you wish to print: for example; a single day, a specific month or a whole CPD year.

### **What else can the online CPD portfolio do that my paper portfolio cannot?**

The online CPD portfolio has many advantages.

For example, it allows you to enter a CPD activity wherever you have access to a computer. You don't have to wait until you get home or until you get to your office to enter activities. Simply log in to any available computer and enter the activity, wherever you are. This means that you can record your CPD at any time and keep your portfolio up to date, avoiding the problem of entering many activities in one go.

There's no chance of your portfolio being lost, damaged or destroyed, as some paper portfolios have been due to house or departmental moves.

The online portfolio also keeps a running total of all the activities you have entered, so there is no need to add everything up when making an annual return. This will save you time.

You can also upload supporting information for CPD activities via the online CPD portfolio.

We hope to introduce more features too, for example, an application to enable users to enter CPD activities via smartphone applications, so you can enter the details of a symposium you attended on your iPhone, Blackberry or Android when travelling back home on the train.

### **Just how safe is the online portfolio?**

The online portfolio is placed on a secure server at a different location from the College, and information is backed up and kept safe.

### **Can I contact someone if I need further help?**

Of course – we are happy to help. Please contact a member of the CPD Department on 020 7451 6732/6735 or [cpd@rcpath.org](mailto:cpd@rcpath.org)