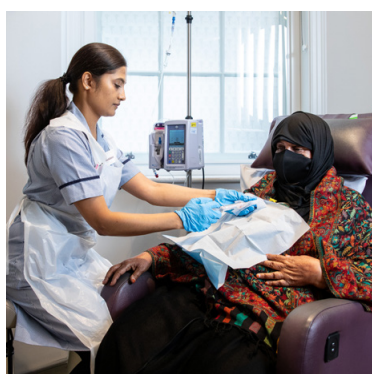


# Continuing Professional Development Toolkit in Action: Delivering safe and effective care

Guidance for RCN staff and RCN representatives



This publication is due for review in October 2028. To provide feedback on its contents or on your experience of using the publication, please email [publications.feedback@rcn.org.uk](mailto:publications.feedback@rcn.org.uk)

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This document has been designed in collaboration with our members to ensure it meets most accessibility standards. However, if this does not fit your requirements, please contact [corporate.communications@rcn.org.uk](mailto:corporate.communications@rcn.org.uk)

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## Aim

To lobby government(s) to place a duty on **all** employers to provide protected time, contractual, fully funded continuous professional development (CPD) to deliver safe and effective care. This is aimed at all employers whatever setting and will require direct negotiating with some employers outside the NHS.

Nursing staff have continuously raised concerns about access to CPD, as well as the lack of parity with the approach taken for medical staff. As the workforce crisis has grown across the UK, nursing staff find it challenging to get approval to take time to undertake CPD.

This leads to challenges for individuals when revalidating or meeting national framework standards in the case of health care support workers and can pose risks for patient/client safety and staff morale. Lack of access to development opportunities can make it difficult to obtain a promotion or progress towards career goals.

Offering opportunities for career development and CPD can help retain staff within the organisation by supporting their growth, development and advancement. This in turn provides continuity of care and a safe, up-to-date practitioner to deliver or lead safe and effective patient/client care on behalf of the employer.

The following table is guidance to support RCN staff and representatives who are negotiating with employers. The accompanying report aimed at employers - *Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Toolkit in Action - Delivering safe and effective care: Aimed at all employers, in all settings* - will support with the background and rationale.

## How to use the table

The table is there for you to use when lobbying employers or governments. We recognise it will be a journey for each of the health organisations you work with.

With each of the goals, please rate whether you have met the goal, partially met or are working towards the goal with the employer and/or government.

Goal	Government	Employer	Date
	Met / Partially Met/ Working towards	Met / Partially Met/ Working towards	
<p><i>Example:</i> Protected learning time is secured via lobbying government(s) or negotiations with employers using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the NHS Scotland Agreement as an exemplar/model</li> <li>• the RCN Nursing Workforce Standard 6</li> <li>• the RCN Employment Standard 6.</li> </ul>		Partially met	7 November 2025
That the most senior nurse within organisations is given the accountability and financial resources for nursing staff to deliver safe and effective care, which is fully funded for CPD activity.			
Protected learning time is secured via lobbying government(s) or negotiations with employers using the <i>NHS Scotland Agreement</i> as an exemplar/model. See also: RCN Nursing Workforce Standard 6 and the RCN Employment Standard 6.			
That the most senior nurse within organisations formally reports annually to their executive board on the provision of CPD for nursing and on the delivery of safe and effective care.			
That the most senior nurse within the organisation ensures that CPD is commensurate with the RCN Nursing Workforce Standards 6 and 7 and that regular audits are undertaken to inform the board at the annual review.			
That the most senior nurse and their teams within the organisation aims to retain nursing staff and encourage career progression by embracing fully the RCN Nursing Workforce Standards 6 and 7.			

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