



Documenting Professional Learning Projects

Self-directed learning in CPD is more than retrieval of data or quickly looking up a single fact in daily practice. Not only is it too onerous and time consuming to record every reference accessed or each peer consulted, but a simple accumulation of facts does not demonstrate a commitment to professional development, the effort to maintain competency, or the accomplishment of new skill.

In the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Cycle, practitioners may record self-directed learning by completing a **Documentation B Sheet**. Each Documentation B sheet creates a “Professional Learning Project (PLP).” In a PLP, practitioners direct their own professional development, linking a specific learning objective to multiple, diverse educational opportunities that will provide you with ample information to resolve practice questions. Making a complete record of your Professional Learning Project contributes to your own development resources and professional library.

There are four steps to complete a self-directed **PLP Documentation B Sheet** that summarizes your Personal Learning Project:

Step 1: *Formulate a specific learning objective and record it on your Planning Tool.*

Complex questions for investigation can be either long-term learning goals that you plan to explore, or emerging learning needs that you discover in the course of practice.

Step 2: *Seek appropriate information from many sources*

To establish a PLP, practitioners choose to investigate several learning resources, activities, and/or references. The multiplicity of activities allows the practitioner to compare conclusions, confirm and validate knowledge, and critically appraise applications to one’s own practice.

Activities/resources/educational opportunities could include: journal articles, texts, medical literature reviews; discussion with colleagues; group CHE events; practice audits; audio/videotape/DVD/web-based courses; internet searches; e-learning self-assessment programs; teaching interactions, client education; traineeships; preceptorships; consultations; tutorials; systematic reviews of clinical practice guidelines.

Step 3: *Record and evaluate the information.*

Critically appraise the research you have completed. Using a PLP Documentation Sheet B to record the variety of resources explored in the PLP creates a personal professional library or index of references. By consolidating the learning, you are constructing information that is relevant to your practice and creating a system that will let you easily retrieve information in the future.

Step 4: *Make a practice decision*

A PLP is completed by taking the time for practice reflection and determining what, if any, application for change or refinement in practice may be appropriate.