



## National Laboratory Engagement Group

### Continued Professional Development

#### **Interest - From our desired future state:**

CPD and training are recognised as:

- An integral component in the effective delivery of quality pathology services
- Being achievable with minimal disruption to work life balance
- Adding value to both medical laboratory staff and the employer.

The parties want professional development that is:

- A shared responsibility, delivering mutual benefit
- Valued as work time
- Maintaining and updating the professional competencies of staff in a planned and predictable way
- Acknowledging of the employer's limited resources.

The parties shall develop an approach to CPD that is:

- Nationally and departmentally consistent and equitable
- Beyond a point gathering exercise
- Encompasses networking at CPD activities and web based e-learning.

#### **Issues identified from a number of surveys to staff and management:**

- Lack of a laboratory specific CPD policy
- Where a CPD policy exists, lack of awareness of that Policy and where it is located.
- Lack of knowledge about the process for applying to attend a CPD event.
- Lack of transparency in the request process, leading to confusion and a general feeling the process may not be fair and equitable.
- Variations in individual DHB's and NZBS in allocation of funds for CPD events.
- Lowered value to the employer due to inconsistencies in sharing information learnt from a CPD event.
- Time spent performing CPD activities is inconsistently recognised between employers.
- Some CPD activities are indicated as having a markedly reduced benefit (measured against the ability to enhance the employee's skills in work they currently perform or are about to perform in the future).



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### **Barriers to providing best CPD practice:**

- Limited resources of employer
- Inadequate staffing levels to release staff to attend events.
- Inappropriate application of the resources available

### **The way forward:**

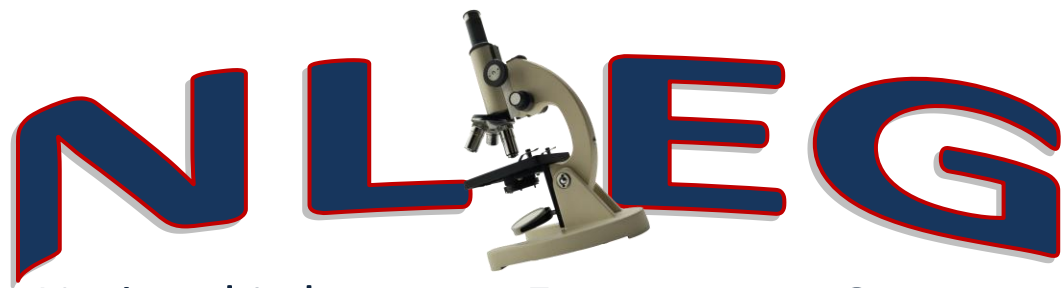
To generate a working CPD policy that is fair and transparent and consistently managed.

#### Gains for the Employer:

- An employee who is more skilled and knowledgeable in the work they perform.
- Shared information learnt with co-workers will improve workforce skills/knowledge
- Generate improvement in the amount of benefit CPD provides the organisation in proportion to resources spent.

#### Gains for the Employee:

- Confidence that a fair and transparent process is being applied to CPD event requests within their peer group.
- Has the ability to receive information from events they were unable to attend.



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### **Recommendations:**

Recommendations are for LLEG consideration and action as considered appropriate.

A review of current laboratory CPD policies is recommended to ensure they give adequate opportunity to allow for appropriate CPD involvement from all staff.

#### **Accessible**

The CPD policy should be well advertised and promoted to staff by the employer. It needs to be readily available in a place that is easily accessible to all staff. Furthermore clauses contained therein need to be fair, equitable and clearly defined.

#### **Transparent**

To save dispute in the future, the policy also needs to include specific details of application process, and reimbursement of costs including travel, accommodation and time spent attending activities. Development and use of a single application form that addresses each party's undertakings in relation to the CPD support should form part of the allocation procedure.

#### **Information gathered should be shared**

It is desirable that reporting back be mandatory to the appropriate level of the meeting/event. Presenting back in a way that gives the best value to their organisation appears to be inconsistent in many DHB's and NZBS.

(i) A mechanism of notifying team leaders or management of key changes to current practices should be put in place to allow for a fast, easily accessible and recordable transfer of important information when required.

(ii) Sharing what you have learned with others in your peer group will benefit you, your colleagues and the organisation. Reporting back in Continuing Education Meetings or Departmental Meetings is a formal way of reinforcing and summarising your own CPD experiences to the benefit of your fellow employees, allowing for those unable to attend that particular CPD event to benefit from the information gathered.

#### **Scope of Practice - Selection of appropriate CPD events**

The Medical Sciences Council of New Zealand expects CPD allocation to be merited on the successful completion of learning that maintains or enhances skills in their scope of practice.

NLEG recommends that the best way to achieve this involves participation in CPD events that in the majority are either directly related to the work the employee currently performs, or work they are likely to perform in the future. Deviation from this is likely to provide little value in improving/maintaining ongoing competency.

While attendance at CPD events for topics related to highly specialised areas of laboratory work may be difficult, the NLEG encourages like groups throughout DHB's and the NZBS to pool resources to send staff to appropriate events, with the expectation of sharing the information later between the groups. The same opportunities should also



be considered when weighing the potential benefits of having an attendee at an international meeting that would be potentially useful to multiple DHB or NZBS sites.

Moving forward, CPD needs to be promoted, it also must add value to both the employer and the employee, and needs to be more than a points gathering exercise. It must be easily accessible with clear policies in place, and the activities must be whenever possible relevant to the discipline worked in, with information gathered shared post activity.

### **Advancement of Web Based Learning**

Web based learning currently comprises a number of formats:

- MLS Classroom (NZIMLS) - multi choice series of department's specific questions.
- Viewing pre-recorded presentations in video or PowerPoint and audio format
- Online attendance at live Seminars(Waitemata DHB Webinar)

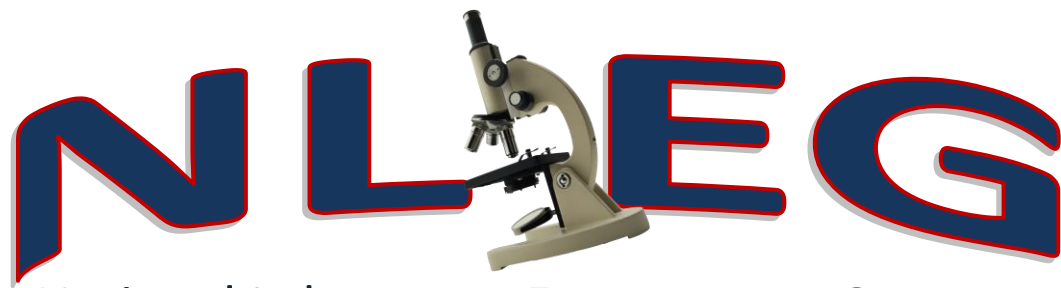
Web based learning continues to expand on a yearly basis with many Laboratories starting to participate and benefit from CPD activities in this format.

While the benefits of physically being at a CPD event (also benefiting from the networking opportunities) cannot be ignored, the increasing use of Web based learning has many potential benefits as attendance at external events is time consuming and costly (event, accommodation, and travel), usually for both the employer and employee. Web based events reduce the time employees are out of the lab, enabling increased attendance at live online events. If viewing pre-recorded events, Web Based Learning allows for a CPD event to take place at the convenience of the organisation and employee.

Feedback from our surveys indicate the majority of DHB's and NZBS sites have access to participate in Web based Learning although the majority of services are participating in one live event each year and do not regularly share their CPD events.

The NLEG wishes to promote Web Based Learning for laboratories. A website containing a database previously recorded CPD events, would provide an excellent platform for workers to select CPD events that will benefit them, and can be viewed at a convenient time. These sites are already in existence in New Zealand Laboratories (E.g. [www.nzice.co.nz](http://www.nzice.co.nz) website supported by Waitemata DHB).

Expansion of such a site to contain a large number of talks split into department categories, containing a small synopsis and pre-allocated CPD point's identification, would allow employees to select and view pre-recorded CPD events that are more specific to their scopes of practice.



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Obtaining permission from people to have their presentations recorded has always been a hurdle in the implementation of the expansion of this option. The NLEG has asked the NZIMLS to consider allocating additional points to an internal CPD talk presenter in recognition of the extra work and the benefit they can bring to the to the profession in sharing their work with a much wider audience.

### **Communication to New Zealand Institute of Medical Laboratory Science**

A submission to the NZIMLS regarding CPD recertification has been made. Key aspects of this communication involved recognition of the institute taking on Technician CPD, and some key points for review that were indicated from our previous surveys.

#### **Summary:**

- Encouraged to continue work on reducing costs for events they are involved in.
- Realising the impact on individuals in regards to work life balance, we recommend the NZIMLS decrease the amount of events held outside normal working hours. This recommendation covers all events.
- NZIMLS Journal Questionnaire rated poorly in survey results for providing benefit for the worker. The point allocation also seemed excessive when compared to other CPD events
- Request of the reasoning behind the variance in the allocation of points for an in-house presentation versus an external presentation
- The NLEG wishes to promote Web Based Learning for laboratories. A database / website containing previously recorded CPD events would provide an excellent platform for workers to select CPD events that will benefit them, and at a convenient time. Would the institute consider allocating additional points to an internal CPD talk presenter if, that was recorded or (recorded again later as a PowerPoint and audio).

### **Additional Data for CPD Policies**

Minimum recommended process for Application of CPD:

- Prior to applying discuss your plan with your Team manager or Professional Leader
- Complete a request form
- Submit completed form to your Team Manager, Professional Leader, or CPD Coordinator
- Attach all supporting documentation e.g. conference/study outline
- The application will be presented to the CPD Committee or other group for consideration
- Applications will be processed within one month of receipt
- Notification should in writing of the outcome. If notification is required sooner (early entry fee reduction etc.) notify your Team Manager or Professional Leader and incorporate this information in the request form.

**An example of a CPD request form for LLEG consideration is attached**