

Can you believe it?

The word on the street is that the prospect of compulsory continuing professional development from 2005 is making many pharmacists anxious. Some pharmacists — particularly those who only work a few hours per week — are seriously contemplating whether or not to continue to practise (*PJ*, 4 December, p805). That is not to say that they do not appreciate the value of CPD and why it protects them, their patients and the public. Rather, it seems that undertaking it is an effort too far.

All may not be lost, however. A member of *The Journal* staff recently attended a branch meeting and encountered some pharmacists who were concerned enough about CPD to spend a late night in west London where a Society CPD facilitator was speaking. (CPD p855). At the end of the evening, although not all fears were allayed, there did seem to be some change of attitude to undertaking CPD.

Although it would be too unlikely to believe that pharmacists in this group found the session “fun”, it clearly was less intimidating than they expected and more enjoyable than they imagined. One of the reasons for this is that the facilitation was more interactive than they had anticipated. However, only time will tell whether or not completing the appropriate paperwork (or rather electronic work) individually will be equally agreeable.

And one branch meeting does not, of course, make a Society but it is quite likely that other pharmacists who attend meetings with CPD facilitators come away with similar positive outlooks. So if you have any doubts about the best way to approach CPD — try to attend a local CPD meeting. You may even come away pleasantly surprised.

At last! The Charter has been sealed

It is almost an anticlimax but after the comings and goings with the draft Charter, and just over a year after the Council petitioned the Privy Council, the new Charter was sealed and brought into force on 7 December (p863). And what a year it has been. No — what a three years it has been.

The modernisation steering group was established at the beginning of 2002. A great deal of hard work was done in the first year of its existence, marking out the territory and the mechanisms that the Council, and ultimately the membership, would have to accept needed to be modernised. Some mistakes were made along the way and, with the wonders of hindsight, those closely involved in the process might wish that some things had been handled differently at various stages. It is important to acknowledge the contribution made by members of Council in 2002 and 2003 who had the interests of the membership as close to their hearts as much as current members (albeit expressed in a different way).

The modernisation process is not yet over, of course. Consultation on the legislation that will be enshrined in Section 60 of the Health Act 1999 will start in the early part of 2005. Let us hope that the process is as smooth as it possibly can be.

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