

## CPD diary: independent pharmacist gears up for everything

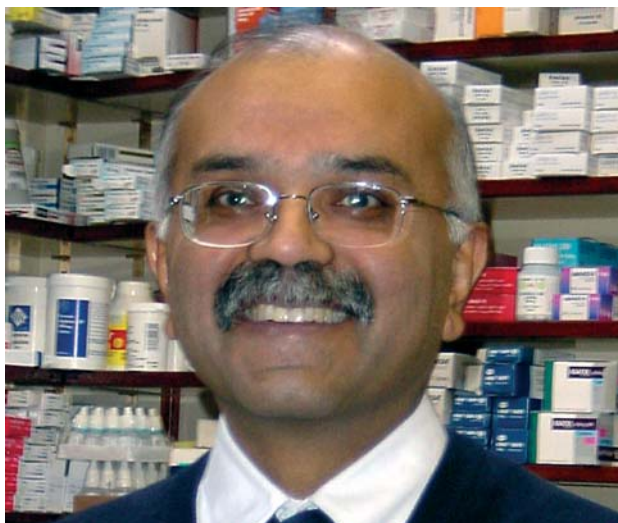
**Ramesh Patel is an independent community pharmacist in Hounslow, Middlesex, and has been on the Register for 29 years. Mr Patel works a busy six-day week (9am to 7pm) and has three children, one of whom is also a pharmacist.**

**A**n example of CPD that I have done recently is to go to an update on the new contract, organised by Hounslow PCT. These meetings are held every two or three months in a room at a local college and run from 7 to 9pm. We are usually given at least a month's notice, so it is easy to plan to get away from the pharmacy on time. The meetings are always well attended and you get to catch up with other local pharmacists.

My pharmacy is taking part in a repeat dispensing pilot and at the last PCT meeting I found out how other participants were doing and what kind of responses they had been getting. The meetings are interesting — you get to know what is happening within the trust and what the people who run the PCT are thinking. So it is useful for tendering for new services. We plan to gear up for everything on offer and already supply emergency hormonal contraception on a patient group directive. It is worth finding time to attend because it makes me better informed and, therefore, a better pharmacist. It also makes us better remunerated.

I have not yet got round to recording using the Society's "Plan and record" system but have been keeping notes of the CPD I have done. I know I have to start using it now. I do not think I will use the website however, because I am not so comfortable with typing.

If you would like to share an example of your CPD contact Lin-Nam Wang (tel: 020 7572 2413 or email: Lin-Nam.Wang@pharmj.org.uk).



When I first qualified there were no formal CPD or continuing education options — no training materials or courses and no recording as such. In those days, we did not even put the names of drugs on labels and hardly anyone asked about side effects or how a drug worked. But now people expect much more from pharmacists and responsibility has shifted. One of my daughters, Anita, is also a pharmacist. For her, the CPD cycle comes easily but for me it is not so natural. However, I know that now it is the only way to stay in the profession. Anita inspires me. For example, recently we went to a Centre for Pharmacy Postgraduate Education workshop together. Pharmacists my age should not be frightened of CPD but take the bull by the horns.