

## CPD diary: locum pharmacist fulfilling his client's promise

**Marvyn Elton is a locum community pharmacist in Essex. For the past seven years, he has provided a locum service, one day a week, to a large multiple. Mr Elton is also a registered optometrist and runs his own practice. He has written medical articles for *The Journal* and *Optometry Today*. In his spare time, he enjoys karaoke and going to the gym.**

About a year and a half ago, the pharmacy where I work as a locum started to offer free blood testing for diabetes. In order for this service to be available on my shift, I needed to be trained. I set aside time in my schedule and took the opportunity to attend a training day jointly organised by the pharmacy chain and a manufacturer of blood glucose meters. The training took place in a hotel. A talk about diabetes was followed by a demonstration of how to measure blood glucose. Participants then had to practise on each other. Finally, we were all tested for competence — I had to show that I could do the test properly and get accurate results before I was “signed off”.

The training was good. I left thinking I could do the test well and with confidence. I was eager to do my first test, which went fine. So far, I have tested about 20 people (I can test people with signs of possible diabetes as well as those who ask for the test themselves) but none has had a high blood sugar level. The more you practise, the better you get. The test is a capillary blood test and, according to the protocol, patients with a high reading (over 6mmol/L) should be referred to their GP. Doing the training allowed me to meet the requirements of my client (the pharmacy) and to offer more, in terms of health promotion, to patients. I was also keen to develop in this area because I believe that offering testing in pharmacies will give community pharmacists a more clinical focus.

At the moment, I keep records of my continuing professional development in an exercise book, but I plan to transfer



these onto the Royal Pharmaceutical Society's website. It seems simple to go onto the site and fill in the various boxes, but I have not looked at it properly yet because I have lost my password, twice! Fortunately, both times, the Society has sent it to me again.

I only work as a pharmacist one day a week but I believe I should be as competent as a full-time pharmacist — on that one day in the pharmacy, I could encounter anything. I understand why CPD is needed, but it can be difficult if you are doing other things as well. I have two professions so need to do two lots of CPD. To keep on the optometrists register, I need to collect points, which are also recorded on a website. When I hear other pharmacists complain about their CPD, I think they have it relatively easy.