

The PDP and the PLP

Background

There is a lack of consensus as to the scope and content of a PDP and a PLP.

Everyone agrees that the PDP stems from GP Appraisal, and that the PLP is a separate document. Personal **Development** Plan does suggest a document with breadth, and perhaps a longer time-scale than a **Learning** Plan, which implies action and outcomes.

1. There is time in Appraisal to visit and discuss very broad, medium term developmental needs and wishes. There is only a relatively short time available for developing a PDP in the GP appraisal process; the PDP is therefore slightly limited in its scope.
2. The PLP is the detailed action plan of the PDP often with additional learning needs, and there is a role for the Deanery in supporting GPs to develop this and in using it to encourage good educational practice.
3. There should be a Clinical Governance encouragement for GPs to submit their PLP to the Deanery Education team (and pay £60 for feedback and monitoring).

The way forward

The **PDP** should include all aspects of self-development (clinical, professional and personal). These should be medium term aims (up to 3 years). Some of these aims might not be learning.

Though the PDP will list a broad set of aims, these will be visited only in general terms in Appraisal and stated briefly on the template.

The **PLP** will tease out the broad learning aims of the PDP into clear short-term (12 months) objectives, leading, ultimately, to the achievement of clearly-defined steps toward an ultimate goal.

The role of the Deanery team is to facilitate the process of turning the PDP aims into objectives, and, where possible, to facilitate these objectives being met.

The Personal Learning Plan and the Personal Development Plan: What is the difference?

The Personal Development Plan

- Arises from Appraisal. It forms part of Appraisal form 4, and is completed as part of the Appraisal process.

- It focuses on personal, professional and clinical needs, and usually includes plans relevant to the needs of the practice(s), and/or the PCT and/or the DoH.
- It asks for the actions intended to
 - maintain skills and the level of service to patients
 - develop or acquire new skills
 - change or improve existing practice (with regard to local and national requirements)
- The PDP is a reflective document. The doctor should take time to reflect on the current situation and his/her future needs before committing these thoughts to paper.

The Personal Learning Plan

- A personal document which details learning needs and objectives of importance to the doctor. These may or may not link into the requirements of the practice/PCT/DoH.
- Learning needs may be personal, professional and/or clinical.
- Producing a PLP is an opportunity to reflect on correlations and balance between personal and professional needs and interests.
- The production of a PLP is required of all GPs as part of a learning portfolio leading to Revalidation. In addition, all GP Registrars must now have an active PLP, which is also a prerequisite for entry onto the HPE scheme.
- PLP – based learning facilitates good educational practice, notably by clarifying learning objectives and methods and by encouraging reflection on the learning process, with the consequent opportunity to develop self-awareness about the best way to learn for the individual concerned.
- Feedback on the PLP is available from the GP Education team, which can help to maximise its effectiveness, and advise future Plans. This feedback focuses on the process rather than the intended outcomes of learning

The PLP and the PDP are complementary. Together, they allow those responsible for organising and facilitating GP Postgraduate Educational activities to plan future support and activities effectively.

Appraisers and the General Practice Education team (GPEs) need to have a common understanding of this process and, as much as possible, to liaise in order to make the 2 stages work meaningfully together.