

e-GP: electrifying your learning

The e-GP, e-Learning for General Practice, online resource provides GPs working in the UK NHS with a free programme of interactive e-learning modules. The resource was launched formally in July 2009 and is now being rolled out in a phased manner across the UK. It contains a growing number of modules addressing a broad range of clinical and professional topics, based on the RCGP's curriculum for general practice.¹

The e-GP is being developed as a collaborative educational project between the RCGP and e-Learning for Healthcare (Department of Health).² Currently, around 100 e-learning sessions are accessible through the resource,³ with more being added each month.

SO WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT e-GP?

Unlike many of the established e-learning resources which are aimed at a generic healthcare audience, e-GP is steeped in the context of NHS primary care. The aim is to add value to existing resources and fill gaps in provision. This is reflected in both the content of the e-learning modules and the design of the resource as a whole; for instance, the educational material is delivered in 20–30 minute units, known as 'sessions', to fit in with a GP's busy working pattern. The system keeps a continual track of progress so that if a GP is interrupted part-way through an e-learning session, the system will remember exactly what point was reached and enable the GP to choose whether to pick up from that point or start again.

From a pedagogical perspective, the e-GP resource has been designed to support a 'blended approach'; rather than being an isolated learning experience, it is intended that the modules will be used in conjunction with other methods of learning activity, such as workshops and courses. To ensure the e-learning is relevant, each module is explicitly derived from an RCGP curriculum statement. Much of the e-learning adopts a case-based approach and includes interactive exercises to prompt critical reflection and encourage

application to practice. In other words, the e-learning sessions are designed to 'blend' with the underlying processes required for lifelong learning.

An automated link with the RCGP ePortfolio prompts the learner to record each completed session of learning and, by means of a reflective template, to reflect critically on the learning activity that has occurred and consider if this has revealed further learning priorities. Certified GPs (who are not yet able to use the RCGP ePortfolio) can print off certificates and run activity reports as evidence for annual appraisal.

ENSURING QUALITY, CONSISTENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

The e-GP e-learning sessions are based on national guidelines and created by a team of GP authors, educators, patient representatives, and Instructional Designers (e-learning experts). Members of a number of national organisations are involved in writing the content for specific modules, including the National Patient Safety Agency⁴ and the National Genetics Education and Development Centre,⁵ as well as respected individuals with areas of particular educational expertise, such as Roger Neighbour.⁶

Before being badged by the RCGP, the e-learning content is peer-reviewed by both a clinical editor (with expertise in the topic) and a GP educator. In addition to authority and accuracy of its content, the overall quality of an e-learning resource is determined by a number of additional factors, including consistency, interactivity, and learner engagement.⁷ To ensure consistent high quality, every e-learning session is assessed against agreed project standards by a professional quality assurance team.

Feedback received from learners forms an essential part of the quality improvement process and every session enables the learner to rate their experience and to submit comments, which are anonymised before being analysed by the creative team.

HOW TO ACCESS e-GP E-LEARNING

The e-learning in e-GP is now available free-of-charge to NHS GPs and GP Specialty Trainees. To find out more or sign-up for access, visit www.e-gp.org.

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DOI: 10.3399/bjgp09X453891