

# A Survey of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Graduate Dentists in Europe

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Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is essential for the maintenance of dentists' knowledge and skills, underpinning safe clinical practice. The DentCPD project (part funded by EACEA #509961-LLP-1-2010-1-UK-ERASMUS-EMHE) seeks to harmonise CPD for dental graduates in the EU.

## Methods

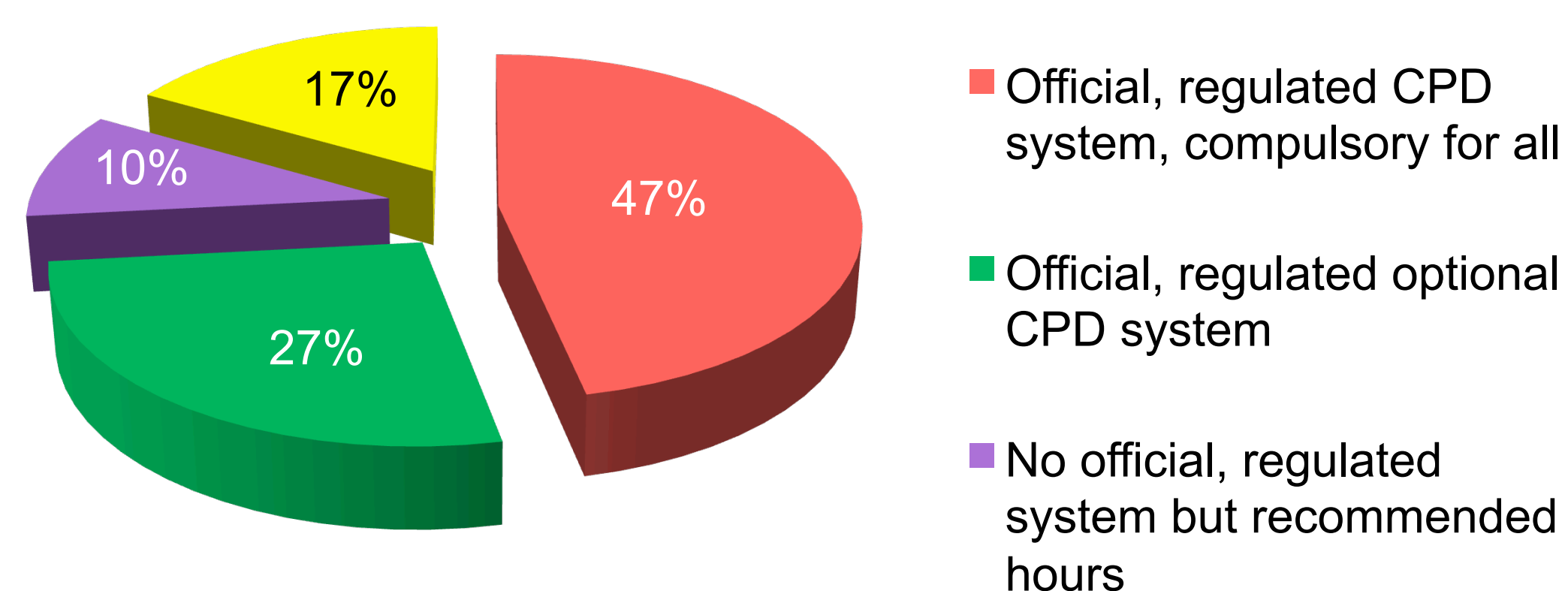
A link to the CPD survey was sent via email to dental educators across Europe and beyond. We aimed to gather responses from all EU countries. The CPD for Graduate Dentists on-line survey gathered data on existing CPD programmes, providers, topics and requirements.

## Results

143 responses were received from 30 out of 31 member states and candidate countries (no responses from Luxembourg). For some countries there were multiple responses and for others, only one.

- ✓ Most EU countries have a system for CPD in place (at least an optional system or recommended number of hours)
- ✓ CPD is compulsory in 47% of the countries.
- ✓ Of the 14 EU countries reporting official compulsory CPD systems, 12 had compulsory CPD topics.

Do you have an official regulated system for CPD in your country?



The most common forms of CPD delivery identified were courses (97%), conferences (83%) and organised seminars (63%).

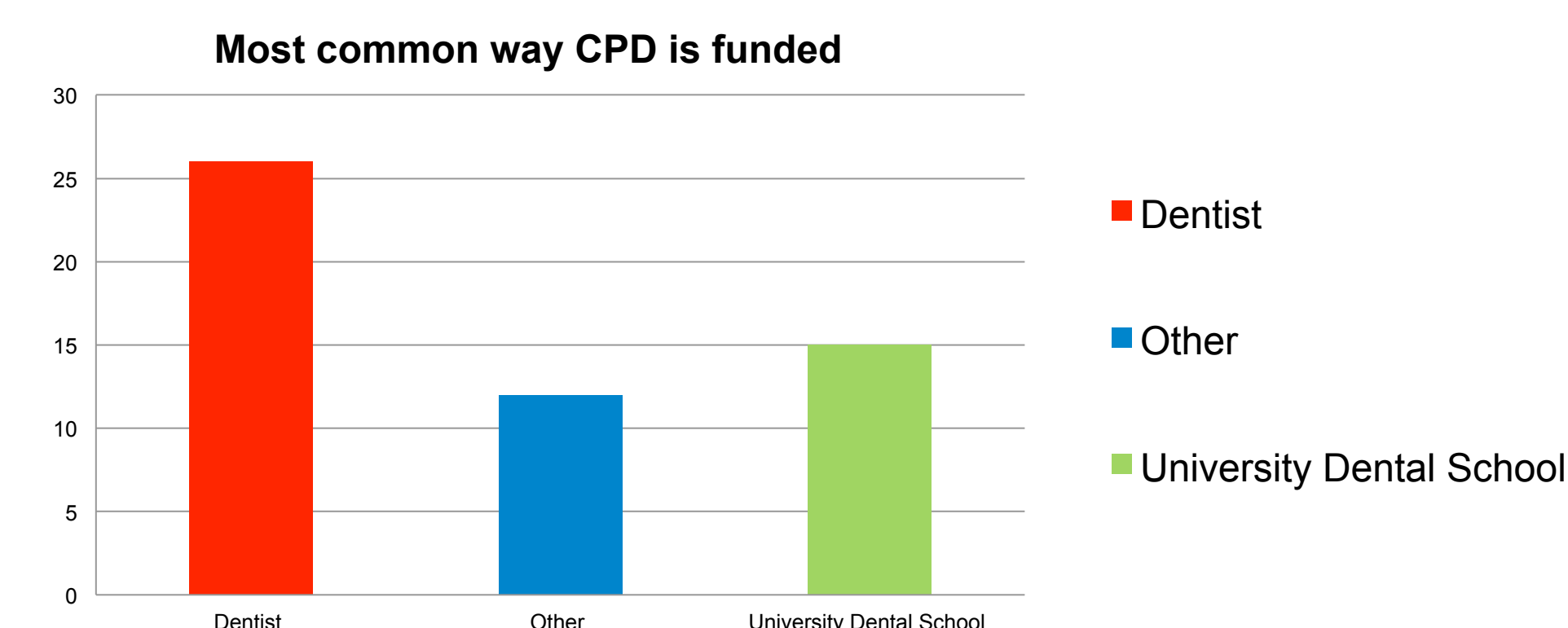
CPD mode	% of 30 (n)
Courses	97 (29)
Conferences	83 (25)
Organised seminars	63 (19)
Clinical audit/peer review	10 (3)
journals or books	13 (4)
Internet usage	10 (3)
Formal practice based learning	10 (3)
Journal or study club	7 (2)
Case based discussion	3 (1)
Distance learning	3 (1)

In most EU countries, University Dental Schools and Professional Dental Associations were included in the top three most common providers. These were also judged to be the *highest quality providers*.

CPD providing organisation	Most common providers	Highest quality providers	Accredited to offer CPD points	Accredits providers
University Dental School	23	29	16	0
Professional Dental Association	22	22	18	8
Scientific Dental Society	12	19	13	1
Dental Postgraduate Organisation	9	12	11	0
Commercial Company	7	2	3	0
National Regulatory Body	7	3	7	9
Private Education Organisation	4	1	8	0
State Organisation	2	2	2	6

The finding that under half of our respondents knew the criteria for successful accreditation suggests a lack of understanding or agreement about the issue of accreditation.

CPD was most commonly funded by the dentist, university dental school, and 'other'. The main response under the title 'other' was 'funded by employer'.



## Opinions on CPD

Statement	Strongly agree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Slightly agree % (n)	Slightly disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Strongly disagree % (n)
I think that CPD should be obligatory for all dentists	59 (101)	17 (28)	5 (9)	4 (7)	5 (8)	10 (17)
All countries should have an official, national, accredited CPD system	52 (88)	20 (34)	8 (13)	7 (11)	4 (6)	10 (17)
More CPD should be available electronically (e-learning)	28 (48)	23 (38)	18 (31)	18 (31)	5 (9)	7 (12)

## Conclusions

Harmonisation of dental CPD will help to ensure that patient care across Europe is provided to similar high standards.

The majority of respondents agreed CPD should be mandatory for all dentists and that all countries should have a national accreditation system.



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