Marcela's revalidation story

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Marcela is a practice nurse at a GP surgery. She also works some weekends as a band 5 nurse in A&E.

When Marcela first heard about revalidation she wanted to learn as much about it as she could.

> "I am from a different country so when something new comes up it's important to get it right, especially with the language – we might understand it differently," she explains. "Before, I just had all my certificates and reflections together and hoped for the best. But now, with the guidance and templates, I understand clearly what is needed."

Reflective accounts

Marcela found the form for reflective accounts particularly helpful. Whereas before she might have just scribbled down a few notes about a training course or something she'd experienced in her practice, it now feels much more structured.

> "To have all the questions in front of you helps you to think, yes, I have done something good and yes, I have learnt something," she says. "It was straight to the point."

Reflective discussion

When it came to discussing her reflective accounts, Marcela chose to have this conversation with a nurse from another GP practice who she hadn't worked with before.

> "We spent about an hour doing it, which was lovely," she says. "She was interested in what I'd learnt and how it had changed me as a practitioner. I felt like I got a lot out of it, and to have that conversation with someone who doesn't know me at all was amazing. She made me critique what I have actually achieved."

Confirmation

A few days later Marcela had her confirmation discussion with her line manager, who is the senior nurse at her practice. Together they went through Marcela's portfolio, and Marcela describes this part of the process as "much more on a professional level".

> She adds: "Someone is checking to make sure that I have done what I'm supposed to have done." Immediately after the confirmation, Marcela went online to submit her application.

CPD

Revalidation wasn't without its challenges, though, as Marcela explains.

> "I was always used to undertaking CPD in A&E – you're teaching students, you're attending seminars, you're learning all the time. But the participatory part of it I do find more challenging in GP land."

She recognises that there are opportunities; reps will come in and run learning sessions at the regular practice meetings, for example. But it can be hard as a practice nurse, especially if you are working part time, to take advantage of these opportunities.

Marcela has chosen to view revalidation as a way of turning this situation around, though.

> "You know now that every three years someone will be checking your progress," she says. "You can say to them, 'What are you going to do to help me as a practitioner? How are you going to value me as a professional?'. Revalidation is the best thing that could have happened to nurses. It encourages them to push, to be a bit more brave. It will give nurses the power to be able to say, 'This is what needs to be done'."